

July 21, 2025

Ms. Debra Savage
Chairwoman
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: CON Project 25-013
Discontinuation of ICU and Obstetrics services
OSF Saint Elizabeth Medical Center - Ottawa

Dear Chairwoman Savage:

I write in support of the project to discontinue ICU and Obstetrics services at OSF Saint Elizabeth Medical Center - Ottawa. The discontinuations are part of the commitment made by OSF to close these services in Ottawa upon their relocation to OSF Saint Elizabeth Medical Center - Peru. The opening of the services in Peru will occur in August.

As a clinician who has spent 30 years working in this region, I have seen delivery of medical care becoming increasingly challenging in North Central Illinois. While treatment options have become more complex, access to specialty care has become more difficult. Recruiting and retaining highly skilled providers and support staff has become even more difficult in rural settings. The Covid 19 pandemic followed very closely by the closure of both Illinois Valley Community Hospital in Peru and St. Margaret's Hospital in Spring Valley left patients, health care providers, and hospital staff in a state of uncertainty. OSF Healthcare swiftly made their intention to continue to serve the affected communities clear by investing both financially and strategically in the services they provide to the whole region.

I believe OSF's plans to relocate resources and leverage innovation are necessary to continue to deliver high quality care to the patients we serve within a model that allows for:

- **Recruitment & Retention**
Attracting and retaining top medical talent requires facilities that support 24/7 coverage, learning, and collaboration. OSF is committed to allocating resources to bring in strong new colleagues and retain those already committed to the region.
- **Staffing & Peer Support**
Providers require the support of their peers. High-functioning teams and adequate coverage are essential to safe, sustainable care. Centralizing ICU and OB services in Peru strengthens clinical collaboration and reduces burnout risks as well as the risks of physical and cognitive fatigue.

- **Quality of Care**

The consolidated model allows OSF to consistently deliver high-quality care.

- With more consistent patient volume and full-time specialists, we can develop and maintain sharper clinical skills and implement best practices more effectively.
- With higher volumes we can identify trends and opportunities for improvement more quickly.
- With larger interdisciplinary teams we have more opportunities for innovation and creative problem solving.

- **Patient Safety**

Safety improves when we work in environments with access to multidisciplinary teams, diagnostic tools, and rapid-response capabilities. This move enhances our ability to provide timely, coordinated care for high-acuity patients.

- **Efficient Resource Use**

Reducing duplication of services across sites is a fiscally responsible decision. It ensures that basic services (i.e., emergency care) are available close to home, and that more complicated or specialty care (i.e., ICU and OB) are distributed more equally across the region and more available to vulnerable populations, including those without financial or social resources. Regionally limited resources, including staff, equipment, and capital will be directed toward areas where they can serve most people.

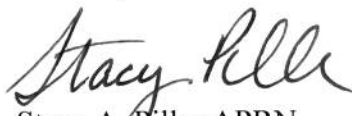
- **Quality of Care**

Patient outcomes improve when patients have support from family and loved ones. By developing highly skilled teams to serve centrally, our patients and their families stay closer to home, even when they are medically complicated.

OSF leadership has shown their commitment to serving beyond community boundaries. This plan for a regional approach ensures basic services for all by keeping Emergency, outpatient, and basic hospitalization services while also increasing the level of care available to all patients by offering more specialty and high acuity care. These services will be available to all who present themselves, including the vulnerable and the needy.

I urge the members of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board to approve the project for the discontinuations of services indicated above.

Sincerely,



Stacy A. Miller APRN
2340 Baseline Road
Mendota, Ill 61342
815-910-7004

CC: Karen Brodbeck, Director of Public Relations, OSF HealthCare
Mark Hohulin, Senior Vice President, Healthcare Analytics, OSF HealthCare