

22nd October, 2025

Ms. Debra Savage, Chairwoman
Mr. John P. Kniery, Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Project 25-013 OSF Saint Elizabeth Medical Center – Ottawa, Discontinuation of Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Obstetrics (OB) Services.

Dear Chairwoman Savage and Mr. Kniery,

I am Dr. Chukwunonye Onyeka Ogbuji, a General Pediatrician with OSF HealthCare at Saint Elizabeth Medical Center in Ottawa, Illinois. I also serve as a Pediatric Hospitalist, providing care in the Newborn Nursery affiliated with the Obstetrics Unit. I am writing to express my strong support for OSF HealthCare's Certificate of Need (CON) application to consolidate ICU and inpatient OB services from the Ottawa hospital to the OSF HealthCare facility in Peru, Illinois.

Since joining OSF HealthCare approximately 18 months ago, I have witnessed firsthand the organization's unwavering commitment to quality, safety, and compassionate care. The proposed regional model represents a thoughtful and forward-looking strategy designed to maintain high standards of care while adapting to the evolving health care landscape across LaSalle, Bureau, Putnam, and neighboring counties.

Given current challenges in health care—such as provider shortages, demographic shifts, and the growing need for specialized expertise—OSF's plan to centralize certain inpatient services while expanding outpatient, emergency, behavioral health, and specialty services locally is both practical and patient-centered. The inclusion of mobile outreach, telehealth services, and regionally distributed OB practices will further ensure that patients continue to receive seamless, high-quality care close to home.

This integrated approach will enhance care coordination, strengthen recruitment and retention of specialized clinicians, and support the long-term stability of essential services across our region. It also reflects OSF's enduring Mission: to serve with the greatest care and love, guided by principles of sustainability and stewardship.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Review Board to approve OSF HealthCare's CON application. The proposed plan offers a clinically sound, equitable, and sustainable model that will improve outcomes and safeguard the future of health care for the communities we serve.

Sincerely,



Chukwunonye Onyeka Ogbuji, MD
General Pediatrician & Hospitalist
OSF HealthCare Saint Elizabeth Medical Center