

October 22, 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 ICU and OB

Dear Chairwoman Savage and Mr. Kniery:

My name is Shai Nyi. I am an Obstetrician/Gynecologist who has worked at OSF St. Elizabeth for 2 years, although I have worked for OSF Healthcare since 1996. I am writing to voice my support for the proposed move of OSF St Elizabeth Medical Center Ottawa to Peru, Illinois. Unfortunately, this will be the second closure of an OB unit that I have experienced during my career with OSF, as OSF closed my original Labor and Delivery unit in Pontiac, Illinois in 2023. That closure was a difficult time for me personally and professionally as well as the people of Pontiac and Livingston County. St. James in Pontiac had provided local health care services and particularly women's health services to Livingston County for over 100 years, prior to the closure of the Labor and Delivery Unit, and the Sisters of the Third Order of St Francis in Peoria were very supportive of having local access to healthcare in rural communities. Like the citizens group of Ottawa, there was some initial resistance. Nevertheless, the healthcare landscape has changed dramatically in my 32 years of practice, and OSF as with any other healthcare corporation, must adapt to those changes or risk being assimilated into an even larger healthcare corporation which may not be as supportive of rural healthcare. Imagine the central Illinois area without any hospital services whatsoever, as opposed to having to travel 30 minutes for healthcare services. The days of independent hospitals and self-employed doctors are almost gone, as 70-80% of doctors are now employed by a healthcare corporation. Healthcare costs continue to skyrocket, as insurance reimbursements plummet. Add to that the difficulties in recruiting qualified doctors, nurses, and ancillary staff to rural medicine, and the challenges of rural healthcare multiply exponentially. In addition, OSF has shown its support to the Ottawa Community by maintaining certain services in Ottawa, with plans to build an entirely new facility, which is a rarity in today's healthcare landscape. The Ottawa facility will also provide sorely needed services through expanding its inpatient psychiatric services. Inpatient psychiatric services are extremely rare in Illinois, especially for pregnant patients, a demographic in which the number one cause of death is mental health and substance abuse issues. Finally, relocating services from Ottawa to Peru will centralize the availability for healthcare in this area, where transportation to appointments can be a challenge. With Princeton, St Margaret's, IVCH, Streator, and Mendota closing or curtailing services, the I80-Route 23 corridor has experienced a difficult contraction of rural healthcare services, and OSF continues to strive to meet those challenges with this relocation.

There is no question. The changes will be difficult. I was downsized out of a job after 29 years. There were growing pains in Pontiac as well. In contrast to Pontiac, where OB services are no longer available, the central Illinois area will continue to have high quality obstetric services as well as access to the highest quality and latest technology in healthcare services through the new location at OSF St Elizabeth Medical Center in Peru.

Sincerely,



Shai J. Nyi, MD
OB/PED Committee Co-Chair

Obstetrics and Gynecology
OSF Saint Elizabeth Medical Center