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Subject: CON #25-033 Lake Forest Hospital Open Heart Surgery - Letter of Support
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Attachments: [CON Open Heart Letter.docx](#)

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November 26, 2025

John Kniery, Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson St., 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Subject: **CON#25-033 Lake Forest Hospital Open Heart Surgery—Letter of Support**

Dear Review Board,

I am writing in support of the establishment of an open heart surgery program at Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital (LFH). As a patient, I have undergone three open heart surgeries over the last 23+ years. For my first open heart surgery in the summer of 2002, I traveled out of state for world-class cardiovascular surgery on the advice of my LFH cardiologist at that time. When it came to needing a second open heart procedure in 2015, world-class cardiac surgery was well established at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago and I had my procedure performed there by Dr. Patrick McCarthy. In the fall of 2024 after spending 4 days at Lake Forest Hospital in advanced heart failure, I was transferred by ambulance to Northwestern Memorial Hospital where I spent 2 months and had my third open heart surgery.

I feel unbelievably blessed to have had access over the last couple of decades to great cardiovascular care. At the same time, it would have been much better not only for myself but especially my wife and family to have had my care closer to where we live. My wife drove to Chicago almost every day for 2 months last year -- 3+ hours round trip daily due to major road construction -- to support me during my hospitalization. During the next 6 months following my 2024 surgery, we made many long drives to Northwestern Memorial Hospital for follow up care visits. It would have definitely been easier for many friends and family to have visited during my hospitalizations had my surgery been at Lake Forest Hospital.

In closing, I reiterate my support for an open heart surgery program at Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital.

Respectfully,
John L. Oberrieder, Jr.
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Vernon Hills, Illinois 60061