

Supporter sign-in sheet instructions:

*Identified supporters should plan to visit the Oak Lawn Library, located at 9427 Raymond Ave., Oak Lawn, IL 60453, between 9:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. on June 10 to sign the project support sign-in sheet. Supporters are not required to stay for the hearing. Once they have signed in, they may leave. Ideally, supporters would sign in as community members or patients, rather than teammates.*

1. Myndee Balkan
2. Laura Parisi
3. Jessica Cook
4. Crystal Olsen
5. Jim Kolaska
6. Jim's wife
7. Raf Lopez
8. Public Safety Officer
9. Terry Frigo
10. Terry Frigo's wife
11. xxxx
12. xxxx
13. xxxx
14. xxxx
15. xxxx
16. xxxx
17. xxxx
18. xxxx
19. xxxx
20. xxxx

**HFSRB Hearing  
Advocate Christ Medical Center CON  
Presentation Remarks  
June 10, 2026**

**Myndee Balkan, Health Facilities Planning (2 mins)**

Good morning, ~~members of the Board and staff~~. My name is Myndee Balkan and I am the Health Facilities Planning Director for Advocate Health Care.

Thank you all for ~~your~~ the HFSRB's consideration of this project and the important work you do on behalf of patients and communities across Illinois.

The application before you today reflects Advocate Health Care's continued investment in Advocate Christ Medical Center and our commitment to ensuring the hospital can

meet the evolving needs of patients across the South Chicagoland region.

As part of our ongoing master facility planning efforts, we regularly evaluate how our facilities are being used, where opportunities exist to improve the patient care environment and how we can responsibly invest in our hospitals to support future demand. Through that process,

we identified ~~an opportunity a~~ need ~~to create~~ for additional inpatient medical-surgical capacity while modernizing important inpatient support services within existing hospital space.

~~This project is not simply about adding beds.~~ In addition to increasing access to needed medical surgical beds, ~~it is about making thoughtful use of existing resources to strengthen patient access, improve operational flexibility~~ and this project will ensure the physical environment keeps pace with the needs of patients receiving care at Advocate Christ Medical Center.

The proposal before you accomplishes ~~these~~ these goals through the modernization of existing space and the relocation of key inpatient services into areas that are better suited to support care delivery for the future.

It also represents a practical and fiscally responsible approach. By leveraging existing space within the hospital, we are able to address an identified need while avoiding a significantly larger and more disruptive expansion project. While there may be differing views on matters beyond the scope of this project, the purpose of this application is straightforward: to expand medical-surgical capacity in a way that supports patient access and strengthens Advocate Christ Medical Center's ability to meet future demand.

For those reasons, we respectfully request the Board's approval of this application.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Jessica Cook, Advocate Christ Medical Center, (2 mins)**

Good morning. My name is Jessica Cook and I am the Director of Operations at Advocate Christ Medical Center. Every day, our teams' care for patients requiring highly specialized care. As a Level I trauma center and major teaching hospital, Advocate Christ Medical Center serves as a regional destination for patients with serious injuries, transplant needs, cardiovascular disease,

neurological emergencies and other complex medical conditions.

That responsibility creates a unique demand for inpatient capacity.

Today, our medical-surgical units routinely operate at very high occupancy levels. The current utilization has continually been above the State Board standard for medical/surgical units for many years. As a result, patients often remain in the emergency department while awaiting an inpatient bed, and capacity constraints can limit the timely movement of patients from higher-acuity settings to the most appropriate level of care.

In 2025, inpatient boarding averaged approximately 45 patients per day. Those numbers reflect the reality our care teams manage every day and highlight why additional medical-surgical capacity is needed. The proposed 22-bed unit will help improve patient flow throughout the hospital. It will allow patients to move more efficiently from the emergency department to inpatient care, support timely transfers from intensive care and specialty units, and provide additional capacity for patients referred to Advocate Christ from other hospitals throughout the region.

The project also increases the availability of private rooms, which improves flexibility in patient placement, enhances infection prevention efforts and supports a better experience for patients and families.

Most importantly, this project is about preserving access. It ensures we can continue serving the communities that rely on Advocate Christ for highly specialized care.

While others may raise separate concerns today, there has been no disagreement about the operational challenges created by our current capacity constraints or the need for additional beds to support patient care.

Thank you.

### **Laura Parisi, Design & Construction (2 mins)**

Good morning. My name is Laura Parisi and I am Director of Design and Construction for Advocate Health Care.

The project before you today is a thoughtful and efficient modernization of existing hospital space at Advocate Christ Medical Center.

The proposal will create a new 22-bed all-private medical-

surgical unit on the fourth floor of the South Tower by repurposing nearly 14,000 square feet of space currently occupied by three ancillary departments: Cardio-diagnostics, Inpatient Dialysis and Inpatient Nuclear Medicine. These services will be relocated to renovated space on the hospital's ground floor, previously vacated. This approach allows us to maximize the use of existing hospital infrastructure while minimizing disruption to patients and caregivers. It also enables the simultaneous upgrade of multiple clinical environments.

The new medical-surgical unit will feature private patient rooms designed to support current standards of care, improve patient comfort and enhance infection prevention efforts, while providing flexibility to care for increasingly complex patients. The project also includes supporting clinical areas, staff workspaces, equipment storage, and infrastructure needed to support efficient care delivery.

The relocated diagnostic and treatment areas will benefit from updated layouts, improved workflows, and new and replacement equipment, including nuclear medicine technology that will support patients well into the future.

The design, modernization, patient care benefits, and merits of this project remain unopposed.

Thank you for your consideration.

### **Crystal Olsen, Government Affairs (2 mins)**

~~Members of the Board and staff,~~ thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Crystal Olsen and I am the Area Vice President for Government Affairs at Advocate Health.

I would like to briefly address comments that may be raised by others during today's proceedings.

Advocate Health Care respects the rights of employees to decide whether they wish to be represented by a union, and we remain committed to complying with all applicable labor laws and established legal processes. The matters raised are currently being considered through the National Labor Relations Board should continue to be addressed through the appropriate channels established for those issues.

However, the matter before the Board today is not a labor proceeding. It is a Certificate of Need application concerning patient access, hospital capacity and the healthcare needs of the communities served by Advocate

Christ Medical Center.

Notably, the concerns raised by opponents are separate from the merit and scope of this project. They do not challenge the demonstrated utilization data, the documented need for additional medical-surgical capacity, the hospital's role as the region's only Level I trauma center, or the benefits this investment will provide for patients.

The evidence before the Board shows sustained occupancy levels, growing demand for complex inpatient services, continued pressure on emergency department throughput, and a clear need for additional medical-surgical beds to support access to care.

This project represents a responsible investment in Advocate Christ Medical Center and the communities it serves. It improves patient flow, expands capacity, modernizes clinical space, and helps to ensure that patients requiring advanced inpatient care can continue to receive it close to home.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



Good morning. Thank you for the chance to address the Board this morning.

My name is Pete Schied, and I'm a proud member of IUOE Local 399. I want to speak plainly: what Advocate is doing to these workers is not a misunderstanding. It is a strategy. Delay, stall, run out the clock – and meanwhile, keep asking regulators for more approvals, more money, more hospital beds.

Eighteen months of delays is not a coincidence. It is a message. And the message is that Advocate does not believe its workers deserve a fair contract. The National Labor Relations Board is now investigating Advocate for alleged surveillance, coercion, and intimidation right here at Christ Medical Center. At some point, we need to call Advocate's actions what they are. Textbook union-busting.

This Board can send a different message today. Approving this project tells Advocate that its behavior has no consequences – That it can treat workers however it wants and still get what it asks for. A no vote, or a deferral, tells them that Illinois holds its hospitals to a higher standard. We are asking you to hold that line.

Thank you.



Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Adrian Cornejo Leon, and I'm a member of IUOE Local 399. I'm here today because the workers who maintain Advocate hospitals have a right to organize and bargain collectively. That's not just my opinion. It's the law. And for 18 months, Advocate has done everything it can to stop them.

I do this work too, and I know what's at stake. These workers are responsible for the systems *and equipment* that keep patients alive: the boilers and chillers, the air filtration, the backup generators, the infrastructure that nobody sees until something goes wrong. These are skilled tradespeople doing essential work. They are not expendable. You cannot expand a hospital safely while driving out the people who know how to maintain it.

Advocate has spent more than a year stringing these workers along while continuing to seek approvals, financing, and room to grow. This Board has the authority to say no. Not until you get your house in order. We are asking you to your voice today. Vote no on Project 26-019, or defer approval until Advocate comes to the table and bargains in good faith with its own workers.

Thank you.



**Jessica Cook, Advocate Christ Medical Center, (2 mins)**

Good morning. My name is Jessica Cook and I am the Director of Operations at Advocate Christ Medical Center.

Every day, our teams' care for patients requiring highly specialized care. As a Level I trauma center and major teaching hospital, Advocate Christ Medical Center serves as a regional destination for patients with serious injuries, transplant needs, cardiovascular disease, neurological emergencies and other complex medical conditions.

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In 2025, inpatient boarding averaged approximately 45 patients per day. Those numbers reflect the reality our care teams manage every day and highlight why additional medical-surgical capacity is needed.

The proposed 22-bed unit will help improve patient flow throughout the hospital. It will allow patients to move more efficiently from the emergency department to inpatient care, support timely transfers from intensive care and specialty units, and provide additional capacity for patients referred to Advocate Christ from other hospitals throughout the region.

The project also increases the availability of private rooms, which improves flexibility in patient placement, enhances infection prevention efforts and supports a better experience for patients and families.

Most importantly, this project is about preserving access. It ensures we can continue serving the communities that rely on Advocate Christ for highly specialized care.

While others may raise separate concerns today, there has been no disagreement about the operational challenges created by our current capacity constraints or the need for additional beds to support patient care.

Thank you.



Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

My name is Gustavo Ramirez and I'm a member of IUOE Local 399. I live in this community, and Christ Medical Center is my hospital. It is where my family goes when something is wrong, and I have a personal stake in whether that facility is safe, well-staffed, and run by an employer that treats its people with basic respect.

That's why I'm here opposing this expansion. Not because I don't want Christ to be a good hospital. But I know that a hospital is only as strong as the workers who keep it running. And right now, Advocate is under federal investigation for how it has treated the maintenance workers at this very facility, along with other hospitals. Before this Board approves millions of dollars in new construction, I think it's reasonable to ask: what is Advocate's plan for the workforce already there?

The people of Oak Lawn deserve a hospital that invests in its workers, not just its buildings. I'm asking this Board to require both. Vote no on Project 26-019.

Thank you.



Staff  
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Good morning, ~~Chairwoman Savage and~~ members of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board.

My name is Mia Korinke and I'm a Project Manager at the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 399. We represent skilled maintenance workers at two Advocate facilities in the Chicago area. These engineers and maintenance employees keep our hospitals running safely every day, and they have been waiting 18 months for recognition of their rights under the National Labor Relations Act and the Illinois Constitution. I'm talking about the right to form a union and bargain collectively.

This Board's mandate under the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act is to ensure that capital expenditures support the delivery of safe, high-quality care. That mandate requires you to look beyond the blueprints, and we'd argue it requires you to consider the workers who keep these facilities running safely.

The workers Local 399 represents maintain the systems that make patient care possible — the HVAC and ventilation systems that control infection, the backup power that keeps life-safety equipment running, the medical gas lines and boilers and chillers that hospitals cannot function without. These are not support staff. They are ~~the skilled tradespeople~~ *highly skilled workers* who ensure that our hospitals are safe places to receive care.

Advocate will tell you this is a dispute happening somewhere else in the system. That's not true. Managers at Christ Medical Center are currently under federal investigation — the National Labor Relations Board is investigating alleged surveillance, coercion, and intimidation at the same project site you are reviewing. But the Board doesn't have to take our word for Advocate's labor record. The federal government is already looking into it.

of skilled maintenance workers.

For 18 months, Advocate Health Care has refused to bargain in good faith with its own workers. While Advocate pursues this expansion at Christ Medical Center — adding beds and square footage to one of the busiest hospitals in the south suburbs — the people responsible for maintaining that infrastructure are still waiting for justice.

Then workers will maintain the IVD will expansion you are reviewing.

The Board should ask: what assurances do we have that this expanded facility will be adequately staffed and maintained? Advocate's track record with this workforce does not inspire confidence. Turnover, deferred maintenance concerns, and a protracted labor dispute are not the foundation on which to build.

We are asking this Board to vote no on Project 26-019, or at minimum to defer approval until Advocate Health Care demonstrates good-faith bargaining and a credible plan to stabilize its skilled maintenance workforce. An expansion built on an unresolved labor dispute is not an investment in patient safety — it is an expansion of the problem.

Thank you.



**Crystal Olsen, Government Affairs (2 mins)**

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Advocate Health Care respects the rights of employees to decide whether or not they wish to be represented by a union, and we remain committed to complying with all applicable labor laws and established legal processes. The matters raised are currently under consideration by the National Labor Relations Board <sup>and</sup> ~~should~~ continue to be addressed through the appropriate channels established for those issues, which have been in place for decades.

The matter before the Board today is not a labor proceeding. It is a Certificate of Need application concerning patient access, hospital capacity and the healthcare needs of the communities served by Advocate Christ Medical Center.

The concerns raised by opponents are separate from the merit and scope of this project. They do not challenge the demonstrated utilization data, the documented need for additional medical-surgical capacity, the hospital's role as the region's only Level I trauma center, or the benefits this investment will provide for patients.

The evidence before the Board shows sustained occupancy levels, growing demand for complex inpatient services, continued pressure on emergency department throughput, and a clear need for additional medical-surgical beds to support access to care.

This project represents a responsible investment in Advocate Christ Medical Center and the communities it serves. It improves patient flow, expands capacity, modernizes clinical space, and helps to ensure that patients requiring advanced inpatient care can continue to receive it close to home.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

