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April 16, 2026

Debra Savage, Chair
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson St., 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Dear Chairwoman Savage,

I am writing in strong support of the Certificate of Need application submitted by Deaconess Illinois Medical Center to reestablish inpatient obstetric services in Marion, Illinois.

Since the loss of these services, residents of our community have been left without local access to essential maternity care, requiring expectant mothers and their families to travel significant distances at some of the most critical times in their lives. That is not a sustainable or acceptable situation for a community of our size and regional importance.

Restoring obstetric care in Marion is a necessary step toward improving access to care, enhancing outcomes for both mothers and newborns, and reinforcing the overall strength of our healthcare system in Southern Illinois. The need is real, and the impact will be immediate and meaningful.

I respectfully encourage the Board to give this application its full consideration and support its approval.

Michael W. Absher, Mayor

www.cityofmarionil.gov

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