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APR 30 2026

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

April 10, 2026

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

Re: Support for CON Application of Deaconess Illinois Medical Center for Inpatient Obstetric Care Service

Dear Chairwoman Savage:

The above referenced CON represents a thoughtful and necessary investment in the health and economic stability of Southern Illinois communities, and I respectfully urge its approval.

Access to healthcare services – particularly maternity care – is a foundational component of community well-being. When families are forced to leave the region for essential services, it places strain not only on patients but also on local economies and support systems.

The proposed project addresses a critical gap by restoring obstetric services in a region where more than one third of women live over 30 minutes from a birthing hospital. By reducing travel times and increasing local capacity, this initiative will help ensure that families can access the care they need close to home.

Additionally, the project's focus on serving Medicaid populations aligns with the realities of our region and demonstrates a commitment to equitable access. Investments like this strengthen communities, support workforce stability, and improve long-term health outcomes.

I respectfully urge the Review Board to approve this CON and support this vital step forward for Southern Illinois.

Sincerely,

Kanci Houston
Chief Executive Officer
Community Health & Emergency Services, Inc.