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Rabbi
Alan Cook

June 10, 2026

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JUN 23 2026

President
Amy Roady

Debra Savage

Vice President
Stacy Trager

Chairperson, Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Treasurer
Samuel Bernstein

Dear Ms. Savage,

Financial Secretary
Arthur Siegel

Secretary
Toni Lachman

I write in support of the proposal brought forward by Advocates for Aging Care (AAC) proposing the construction of a skilled nursing facility in Champaign County. I serve as a rabbi at Sinai Temple, a synagogue in Champaign County, and I frequently have been made aware that congregants are unable to locate beds for themselves or family members in skilled nursing facilities when the need arises. Our community is short at least 300 skilled-care beds, meaning families must incur additional hardships during a vulnerable time by relocating individuals in need of skilled care to surrounding communities. This is a great disservice to our older and medically vulnerable neighbors.

Educator
Rabbi Jody Cook

Rabbis Emeritus
Isaac Neuman Z"l
Norman Mark Klein

Because our community currently lacks the capacity to provide basic care locally for elderly and medically compromised individuals, I believe that this situation has become a crisis. Because the circumstances force Champaign-Urbana residents to seek care elsewhere, families are disrupted, patients lose access to consistent medical care from the doctors and caregivers on whom they have come to rely, and clergy such as myself are unable to provide direct access to pastoral care. As a member of the clergy, I can tell you that a significant part of a patient's wellness comes from the spiritual support and emotional stability that a visit from me or my colleagues can provide. When residents are forced to relocate for care, it is nearly impossible for me to offer such pastoral support.

Approving this facility is essential to help keep those in need of skilled care connected to their families, their community, and their spiritual leaders. Moreover, it would ease strain on hospitals and existing facilities. All these benefits are in keeping with our community's public health goals.

I would urge the Department of Public Health to give full and favorable consideration to this proposal.

Respectfully,

Rabbi Alan Cook