



July 23, 2018

Lyndon K. Jordan, M.D.
Chairman, Technology and Equipment Committee

And

Christopher Ullrich, M.D.
Chairman, State Health Coordinating Council

North Carolina Division of Health Service Regulation
Healthcare Planning and Certificate of Need Section
2704 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2704

RE: Southeastern Health's Petition for an Adjusted Need Determination for Linear Accelerator Equipment

Dear Drs. Jordan and Ullrich:

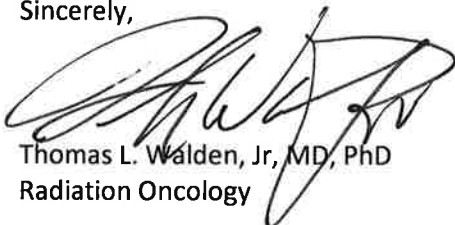
As a practicing radiation oncologist in the area, I am aware of Southeastern Health's expertise and experience in radiation oncology services, and specifically linear accelerator services. I fully support Southeastern Health's petition for an adjusted need determination for one additional linear accelerator in Robeson County. The Gibson Cancer Center has provided radiation therapy services to the region since 1995 and is the only cancer treatment facility in Robeson County. The center has one linear accelerator that is currently being operated well above the 6,750 ESTV threshold standard set forth by the state.

The center has extended treatment times past normal hours to accommodate our patients' needs given the high demand for the linear accelerator. Unfortunately, because many of our patients are weak and in some discomfort, and particularly for those that are older, scheduling treatments into the night is not ideal. Having access to only one linear accelerator in the county also increases our patients' risk for disrupted or foregone treatments due to limited capacity or equipment failure from high use.

There are other unique circumstances in Robeson County that contribute to the need for increased linear accelerator capacity. Our patients have a strong sense of community and cultural identity that manifests in a trust factor unique to Robeson County; our patients are less likely to leave the county for treatment. Many of our patients also face financial and transportation barriers, which make it difficult for them to travel outside the county for healthcare services. To continue to meet the growing demands of our community and to ensure continual and safe care to our patients, we need another linear accelerator. Given these facts, I strongly encourage you to approve Southeastern Health's special need adjustment petition.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Thomas L. Walden, Jr, MD, PhD
Radiation Oncology