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March 5, 2025

Mayor Eddie Melton
Office of the Mayor of the City of Gary
401 Broadway
Gary, IN 46402

Re: Letter of Support – City of Gary & Hard Rock Northern Indiana Proposal for
Lake County Convention Center

Dear Mayor Melton:

As the Director of Community Relations and Marketing for Hospice of the Calumet Area, I am honored to provide this letter of support for the proposal submitted by the City of Gary and Hard Rock Northern Indiana in response to the RFP/RFQ issued by the Lake County Board of Commissioners for a Lake County Convention Center.

Hospice of the Calumet Area fully supports this proposal, as we firmly believe that the City of Gary is the ideal location for a Lake County Convention Center that will serve and benefit the entire region. The partnership between the City and Hard Rock presents the best opportunity to establish a well-run, high-impact convention center that will attract visitors, foster economic development, and create new opportunities for businesses, residents, and organizations like ours throughout Lake County.

We are particularly grateful to Hard Rock Northern Indiana and the City of Gary for their dedication to community non-profits, including Hospice of the Calumet Area. In 2024, we provided over \$3.4 million in discounted, charity, or uncompensated care to those in need. This level of support is only possible through the generosity of partners like you, who believe in our mission to care for patients and families regardless of their ability to pay.

Your commitment makes a meaningful impact, ensuring that those facing life's most challenging moments receive compassionate, dignified care when they need it most.

Northwest Indiana is primed for growth, and our close proximity to Chicago, Michigan, and Indianapolis makes this an ideal destination for economic revitalization and tourism. A convention center in Gary, Indiana would enhance regional collaboration and strengthen the economic fabric of our communities.

We respectfully urge the Board of Commissioners to consider our support when selecting the winning proposal. Please feel free to contact me at (219) 545-3980 or drico@hospicecalumet.org should you require any further information or wish to discuss this matter further.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Damian Rico
Director of Community Relations & Marketing
Hospice of the Calumet Area