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### **Statement from Supervisor Paul O'Grady on Agreement to Preserve the Palos Health and Fitness Center**

“Congratulations to the numerous Orland Township residents, particularly seniors, who for weeks have devoted themselves to the cause of preserving the Palos Health and Fitness Center, a critical healthcare and wellness facility for the local community. We are pleased and gratified that the Fitness Center will remain open to serve these residents with its specialized programs necessary to support their health, wellness and longevity.

“Without question, the force of community opposition – culminating in the lawsuit I filed last Thursday with the Cook County Circuit Court – was instrumental in dissuading Palos Community Hospital from its plan to demolish and close the Fitness Center. Orland Township collected affidavits from more than 500 Fitness Center members, who strenuously objected to the closure and emphasized its value as the only healthcare and wellness resource of its kind in the southwest suburbs.

“It’s highly unfortunate that weeks of letter writing, petition collecting, public speaking and, ultimately, a lawsuit to block the hospital’s demolition plan, were necessary to produce this outcome. If the Village of Orland Park and Palos Community Hospital have indeed for several weeks been working toward a land swap agreement, which will enable the Fitness Center to remain open while allowing the hospital to pursue an expansion plan, those parties should have notified local residents that a potential solution was in the works. The considerable investment of time and effort on the part of residents, and the expenditure of time and resources on the part of Orland Township, could have been avoided.

“Nonetheless, we have achieved the desired result and should be proud. We look forward to learning the details of this agreement and remain hopeful that seniors and other residents will continue to have local access to the water therapy programs, cardiac fitness classes and the comprehensive range of other high-caliber services that they need and deserve.”

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