From: Kelly Wheeler
To: Council Clerk
Subject: Delaware Grady
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I'm writing in today as a mother, grandmother, and longtime supporter of this community.

When discussions about healthcare services take place, we often hear about budgets, efficiency, and statistics. What we do not hear enough about are the families whose lives are directly affected by these decisions.

As a mother, I remember the anxiety and excitement that come with pregnancy and childbirth. As a grandmother, I have now watched my own daughter experience those same emotions while bringing my grandchildren into the world. Nothing is more important than knowing your child and grandchild have access to safe, high-quality care when they need it most.

The decision to close Grady's maternity ward is deeply concerning because it removes a critical service from a growing community that depends on it.

I have seen firsthand the difference local maternity care can make. When my daughter delivered her children, having a labor and delivery unit close to home provided peace of mind for our entire family. We knew that if she went into labor, she would not have to travel long distances or worry about being stuck in traffic during an emergency. We knew she would receive care from healthcare professionals who were part of this community.

I also witnessed the challenges she faced after childbirth, including serious postpartum complications. During those frightening moments, access to local care and experienced healthcare providers was invaluable. Families should not have to wonder whether help is close enough when complications arise.

As a grandmother, I think not only about my own family but also about the many young families who are choosing to make Delaware County their home. They are moving here because they see a community where they can raise children, build careers, and create a future. Closing the county's only labor and delivery unit sends a troubling message about the priorities of those responsible for providing healthcare services.

A growing community should be investing in mothers, babies, and families—not reducing access to care. The decision to close this unit will affect not only current residents but also future generations who deserve the same opportunities and resources that previous families have had.

Healthcare is about more than numbers. It is about people. It is about mothers safely delivering their babies. It is about fathers supporting their families. It is about grandparents welcoming new grandchildren into the world. And it is about ensuring that every family has access to the care they need, close to home.

I urge OhioHealth and the community leaders to reconsider this decision. The loss of Grady's maternity ward will be felt far beyond the walls of the hospital. It will impact families across this county for years to come, and those families deserve better.

Thank you,
Kelly Wheeler
56 Bucine Ct

Delaware OH 43015