To whom it may concern:

I am writing this statement on behalf of being a concerned citizen, Pharmacist and mother and the closing of Grady's maternity ward. Being a mother is one of the greatest gifts someone can be given but is also the most terrifying and exhausting thing that can happen to a woman. I have 3 children and each pregnancy/birth had its own set of challenges. It ranged from morning sickness, to kidney stones (all 3 pregnancies), shoulder dystocia during labor (2 out of 3 deliveries), diminished fetal heart rate due to baby pressing on his umbilical cord as labor was progressing, severe postpartum depression and lastly gallbladder failure following delivery. Some complications were expected but others were not anticipated. However, the safety of myself and that of my children was due to access to proper maternal/fetal medicine.

As a healthcare professional, I understand that hospitals face financial pressures and difficult operational decisions. However, I also understand that healthcare is not simply a business. Somer services are essential because they meet critical community needs, even when they are not the most profitable. OhioHealth's mission is to improve the health of those it serves, providing exceptional care through experiences that earn a lifetime of trust. With two of its core values being the following : **Stewardship**: Being accountable to the communities they serve and ensuring quality healthcare is accessible to all as well as **Inclusion**: Embracing diversity and ensuring that all individuals feel valued and respected. So why would the decision be made to make it more difficult for current and future mothers to find care that take up to an hour to get to. As a pharmacist, I have spent my career helping patients navigate complex medical conditions, medication management, and transitions of care. I understand the importance of timely access to proper healthcare services, especially for vulnerable populations.

It is expected for women to continue have children but those making decisions regarding it are not actually the ones expected to give birth and know the true sacrifices a woman makes to have them. Continually there are steps taken to remove access to proper care and rights for women regarding having children. Why is that the case? Just because at the core women are stronger and society takes for granted how we strong women are and will just deal with things as they come. The city of Delaware is expanding with new developments and families coming in rapidly and the closure of Grady's maternity ward raises serious concerns about access, capacity, and most importantly continuity of care. Redirecting families to hospitals father away will create additional barriers for those with transportation challenges, childcare responsibilities, financial limitations, or high-risk pregnancies. Now as a mother, this issue becomes personal.

I know the comfort that comes from having quality maternity care available and close to home. Having the reassurance of knowing where you will deliver, who will care for you and the help that is available if complications arise is beyond reproach when it comes to all maternal healthcare needs. Childbirth is unpredictable, and every mother deserves access to safe, timely and compassionate care. The message this decision sends to the families who live here and those considering of making Delaware County their home is not a positive one. A growing community such as this should be strengthening healthcare resources for young families, not reducing them. This goes against every training myself as healthcare professional has ever had to think about regarding outcomes, prevention and patient safety.

Decisions such as this can not be made based primarily on utilization numbers or financial performance, it is easy to lose sight of the people behind those statistics. Every birth represents a family. Every delivery represents a mother placing her trust in a healthcare system. The health of mothers and newborns affects the health of families which in turn affects the health of our community. I urge OhioHealth and community leaders to reconsider this decision and to prioritize the long-term needs of Delaware County Families. The families of today and the families who will call this county home in the future deserve better. If it was your mother, daughter or wife wouldn't you want them to have the care they deserve ?

Thank you for your time.

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