From: Kandi Messick
To: Council Clerk; City Council Email
Subject: Letter about Grady Family Birthplace closure
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 12:24:57 PM

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Good evening,

I am here today to speak against the closure of our labor and delivery unit at our county's only hospital.

Delaware County is one of the fastest-growing counties in our state. Families are moving here every day because they see this as a place to build a future, raise children, and strengthen our community. Yet at the very moment our population is growing, we are being asked to accept the loss of one of the most essential healthcare services a community can provide.

Labor and delivery is not a luxury. It is a necessity.

When a mother goes into labor, every minute matters. Complications can arise unexpectedly, even during healthy pregnancies. Closing this unit would force expectant mothers to travel farther for care, increasing stress, delaying treatment, and potentially putting both mothers and babies at greater risk. In emergency situations, distance can make the difference between a healthy outcome and a tragedy.

This decision would affect far more than the families having babies today. It would impact future generations and send a troubling message to young families considering whether Delaware County is the right place to call home. How can we continue to promote growth and attract new residents while reducing access to one of the most fundamental healthcare services families need?

The labor and delivery unit is also a critical part of the healthcare system. It supports prenatal care, postpartum care, emergency services, and women's health. Once these services are lost, they are often difficult—if not impossible—to restore. Communities across the country have learned that when maternity services disappear, healthcare access declines and health outcomes suffer.

We must ask ourselves: What kind of community do we want to be? Do we want to be a county that invests in families, prioritizes health, and plans for the future? Or do we want to accept fewer services at a time when demand is only increasing?

I urge hospital leadership, elected officials, and community stakeholders to work together to find solutions that keep this labor and delivery unit open. The people of Delaware County deserve access to safe, local maternity care. Mothers deserve peace of mind. Babies deserve the best possible start in life.

This is about more than a hospital department. It is about protecting families, supporting our growing community, and ensuring that every mother and child has access to the care they need, close to home.

Thank you,

GFB Staff Member