Angel Smith
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Dear Members of Delaware City Council,

Good evening.
My name is Angel Smith, and I am a registered nurse at Grady Family Birthplace.
I want to start by saying something that may surprise you.
I am not from Delaware County. I do not live in Delaware County. Nobody handed me a personal stake in this community.
But somewhere over the last four years, these families became mine anyway.
I've had the privilege of caring for mothers and babies during some of the happiest, scariest, and most vulnerable moments of their lives. I've celebrated with families, cried with families, and grieved with families. I've watched complete strangers trust me with what matters most to them.
And that's why I'm writing today.
Not because I'm worried about myself.
I'll be okay.
The nurses and staff I work beside will be okay.
What I'm worried about are the mothers and babies who will no longer have access to the care we provided right here in this community.
Babies don't arrive on a convenient schedule. Labor doesn't wait for traffic. Complications don't wait until a mother reaches another hospital.
When maternity services disappear, the burden falls on families. It falls on families with limited transportation and financial strain. It falls on mothers who suddenly have to drive farther for appointments, testing, and care.
I've heard people talk about numbers, so let's talk about numbers.
Last year alone, our team delivered 257 babies.
I've also heard it said that only a small percentage of Delaware County babies are born at Grady.
But I think it's important to ask why.
Over the last four years, I've had countless conversations with families who told us they would have chosen Grady if higher-level neonatal services had been available locally.
The desire for local maternity care was here.
The desire for expanded services was here.
The community has been asking for investment, not less access.

And Grady doesn't only serve Delaware County. We care for families from surrounding communities as well. One of those surrounding counties is already considered a maternity care desert.
So my question is: what happens to those mothers and babies now?
What happens when care moves farther away?
What happens when travel times increase for pregnant women and families?
The families were here.
The need was here.
The community support was here.
And if the response from this community over the last several weeks has shown us anything, it is that people care deeply about having access to local maternity care.
For the last four years, it has been one of the greatest privileges of my life to be trusted with these families and their stories.
The families of Delaware County are speaking up because this matters to them.
This conversation is bigger than my job.
It's bigger than our unit.
It's about access.
It's about community.
And it's about whether the mothers and babies of Delaware County and the surrounding communities deserve local maternity care close to home.
Grady Memorial Hospital deserves to be invested in.

Respectfully,
Angel Smith, RN
Grady Family Birthplace