

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

I am concerned to hear about the decision to close the OB department at the IU Health Paoli Hospital. My family has experienced first-hand just how critical the services that are offered at that hospital and we are aware of how they are important to the larger community. Additionally, I can't imagine a better team of medical professionals that offer evidence-based care and personal support.

Rural areas are increasingly suffering because of decisions made in more populous, affluent areas. We currently only have one insurer to purchase health insurance from in our county. We have a lack of infrastructure that can make things challenging. Rural, impoverished areas around the country are increasingly having scary maternal and neonatal outcomes. The healthcare offered for mothers and babies at IU Health Paoli has done a lot to prevent this from happening in our area, but the decision to close this department in the hospital has me concerned that my community may be facing a negative impact on these outcomes. These are not just numbers; they are lives..

The doctors and nurses that work for this department are so invested in our community and for having a long-term positive impact on these health outcomes, often going above and beyond the normal expectations for their work day. I have been so impressed with their work and I hope that it can continue in some way.

I am hoping that you can consider doing everything in your power to enable quality healthcare for mothers and babies to continue in our community.

I delivered my first son here in 2012, I loved the nurses there they were completely amazing. I had my daughter in 2016 still the same nurses from when I had my son. I loved delivering at this hospital. I only live a few minutes away and to see this hospital shutting down is so sad and not great for the community. Hard working people here it would be awful for these nurses to lose their jobs.

I just delivered my baby boy at Paoli Hospital 10 days ago. I had a great experience and such wonderful staff that were so helpful and caring. I'm very sad that this hospital will no longer allow babies to be born here. I hope you will reconsider and think how much this will affect our town. I have had babies in larger more well-known hospitals and they are not nearly as helpful and caring as the care I received in Paoli. Rural hospitals are essential to this country and I hope you will keep this department open.

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I am so sad to hear of the removal of the ob at IU Paoli Health. I had a wonderful delivery with my third child in 2011. The first two were delivered in Indy at a big hospital and by far my best experience was at our small local hospital. I am also pregnant with my 4th and due April 30th. I am so so sad that I will not be able to use Paoli this time and will just miss it. :( I have fast deliveries and it makes me very nervous to have to travel now to the hospitals far away if the need arises. Dr. Yoder and the midwife Becky care deeply about this community and deliver exceptional services for OB care. They have served many and it is a real loss to not be able to use them in this way. I would love to see IU Health understand the importance of ob and good health care in rural communities. There will now be no ob care in Orange County. This is a huge loss for many who will not be able to seek ob care in this community. I hope you will please reconsider.

I'm disheartened to hear about the upcoming closing of our local OB unit. As a Family Support Specialist with Healthy Families, I have first-hand experience with many expectant moms. The thought of them having to drive an hour or more for proper care is absurd to me! Many will not get proper care due to not having appropriate transportation and the barriers that comes with poverty in general. There will be babies born in the ER or possibly even in vehicles trying to get to the hospital. My family moved to Paoli from Eastern Ky in the Appalachian mountains where the nearest hospital was an hour away. Never, did I expect this to happen in Southern Indiana. I feel like I'm going back in time instead of seeing the future for this community. I feel that the future of our children and the care that families receive should be much more important than money. I know there has to be other options. We should not be punished just because we live in a rural community, our health is just as important!

All four of my babies have been born at this hospital. I am deeply saddened that now expecting mothers will have to travel over 30 minutes to an hour to deliver their babies. I for one, love the small environment of the OB ward. It's much less overwhelming to new mothers. The staff there are so warm and welcoming. That's what new mothers need, the comfort of small town love and hospitality that they provide here! All that will be lost in bigger hospitals that are far away and filled with strangers!

Please do not get rid of the OB ward. My daughter was born here and it was a great place and still is. It's not fair to make pregnant women that live close to travel so far to another hospital. Think of the mother and unborn child's safety. What if they don't make it to the hospital in time. I feel like you're putting mother and unborn child in harm's way if you close down the OB ward. I would recommend using this hospital for anything and for the OB ward.

I feel that removing the nursery from the local hospital is jeopardizing the health and safety of mothers and infants alike. The hospital is an integral part of the community and should serve those in need.

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As a resident of Paoli, I was lucky enough to have had my two daughters, age 6 and 4, born at IU Health Paoli. In retrospect, I wish I had birthed my eldest child there, as the care I received was absolutely perfect. It saddens me to learn you will be closing the delivery services in March. As a patient and parent, it concerns me that I may not have the opportunity for such excellent service should I ever need it again. I understand financial decisions need to be made, but I worry for the citizens in Orange County and surrounding areas losing out on such an important proximate local to bring their children into this world. Safety concerns for health care of women and children should not be overlooked without every opportunity for it to be saved considered. As a nonprofit entity, I am inclined to believe that financial burdens could be considered from other locals, especially considering the expansion being made in Bloomington. As a taxpaying citizen who has insurance and who is a servant to the public, I plead for you to consider other options. The people in this area absolutely benefit from the delivery services and it saddens me that others in my community will not have the same opportunity I did having my child(Ren) delivered in a safe and caring environment close to home.

It would be a travesty to close the labor and delivery in our local hospital. Our town is growing and we have women who choose our hospital because it is local. I fear that forcing these women to travel an extra thirty to forty minutes to a hospital out of town may result in babies being born in cars on the side of the road or, worst case scenario, losing babies and mothers to some unforeseen medical emergency that could have been treated in our hospital, saving both mother and baby. Our hospital may be small but the people in our area have come to rely on it. There is a big difference between traveling thirty minutes in the city as opposed to traveling thirty minutes in the country. Country miles are dangerous due to curves and hills. I personally rely on the services of our hospital as do most of our neighbors.

I am deeply troubled by IU's decision to close the OB department at Paoli hospital. This decision will have a very negative impact on our community and will force mothers to travel at least 30 minutes any way they go to a hospital. This will also put undue strain on our emergency room and ambulance services. Please reconsider keeping the OB program open in Orange County.

This is an area of the country that simply cannot be without this level of child care. No, it's not Appalachia, but it is a very poor area that depends greatly on Dr. Yoder and her team. Please reconsider your decision to discontinue this very needed service.

The news of closing the OB department in Paoli is very sad news. My daughter was born in that hospital thirty -one years ago. There are no other options within a thirty mile radius and our community needs to have this opportunity available to them! Also the staff do a wonderful job in the small hospital setting we all love. I further feel the closing of the OB department may just be the beginning! We need our hospital! Our hospital has functioned for many, many years and would hate to see all of services offered there closed! Please consider our county's request to leave the OB department intact!

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I'm not gonna lie, coming from a big city, I was REALLY skeptical about delivering at IU Health Paoli Hospital. The idea of being in a small town hospital for my first delivery... really scared me, but I couldn't have asked for a better delivery experience (especially with us not expecting to for me to be induced) and post care. Becky Larrison Johnson was a godsend, Dr. Yolanda Yoder was my biggest cheerleader during my delivery, and the nurses were so great! They took such good care of little bit and kept a special eye on her since she was early, but they also watched out for me when I had to unexpectedly stay the rest of the week with BP issues and treated me so well, knowing I was getting frustrated and stir crazy after being there for so long. Above all, [my daughter] was like a local celebrity and got so much one-on-one attention that she wouldn't have received at a larger hospital. It makes me so sad to think that other women won't be able to have that "homey" experience when delivering their little angels. Please reconsider this decision for the benefit of the women in this rural community.

It is sad to no longer offer this service. Their will be babies and mothers lives lost because they did not have access to health care close enough in an emergency.

This is going to take away so many jobs, and there's not enough place for people to work now. I had my child at Paoli and I had to have an emergency C-section. I could not have been treated any better! !!

I'm greatly disturbed to hear that IU Health will cease to offer birthing services in Paoli, IN as of April 1. This is another troubling decision made in what is a steady decline of healthcare services for American's rural communities.

I recently read that mothers who must drive one hour or more to a hospital to give birth are at risk of being put in intensive care or dying in their first year. Maternal mortality is substantially higher for rural and black women relative to urban and white women, respectively. It is not okay that giant hospitals continue to retreat from rural communities where there is great need in favor of urban centers where there they can make more profit.

I hope that our local and state leaders take immediate action and seek solutions for the healthcare system that is failing to meet the needs of the state's most vulnerable families. Instead of supporting big business, invest in the healthcare system, making it more accessible and more sustainable for the healthcare professionals who are serving rural communities.

I'm a Medical Assistant at Southern Indiana Community Healthcare, located next to Paoli Hospital. I see how many OB patients this is affecting, and it makes my stomach turn... We need the OB wing at the hospital.. Majority of our OB patients don't have the financial resources to travel the long distances to deliver their babies. We had to call every single OB patient and inform them of this devastating news.. They are scared.. Not knowing what the plan is or where they are going to deliver. It's so sad.. We need the OB department and delivery services. Enough said!

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

I am writing to support the continuation of OB care at IU Health Paoli Hospital. As the father of two daughters born at IU Health Paoli, I have seen firsthand the outstanding quality of care offered there and I strongly desire to have that care continue to be available for other families in my community. It is not just a matter of convenience, but of life and death. Our first daughter was born under circumstances that put her health and my wife's health at risk--a lengthy drive to another hospital might not have resulted in as positive an outcome as we experienced.

Rural communities are at special risk for losing these kind of services and the loss of such services can be devastating to women and children whose lives are in danger and to the community at large. Losing the delivery unit means that we are guaranteed to experience poor health outcomes for our families. We have many low income families who may not have reliable transportation to get to another hospital and we have a large Amish population that would not be able to go to another hospital when they need to. It means that we will lose choices when it comes to decisions about our healthcare. It means that our community will lose much needed professional jobs. It means that we will lose an institution that bonds us together as community--my family and I regularly see the doctors, midwife, nurses, and other hospital staff who delivered our children and who continue to be invested in their lives. I strongly encourage you, by any means necessary, to search for creative solutions to ensure that IU Health Paoli is able to offer the services that this community and surrounding communities desperately need. Thank you for your consideration.

It will be a tragedy if our OB unit truly does close! Our rural community depends on this service. Many people in our community cannot afford to drive 30 minutes to an hour away for their OB care. I am asking for this situation to be re-evaluated. There must be a way to remedy the situation without closing the unit.

I am saddened by the news of IU Paoli hospital not delivering babies any more. I planned on delivering my second baby there but had an unplanned home birth. When I toured the hospital before I had her, I was very pleased and excited with what I saw. It seems like the hospital was very baby and mother friendly and had many options to help labor with no medicine and delivery naturally. That was very important to me. The tub is also a plus. After I had my baby at home, I was transferred to Paoli hospital by ambulance to deliver the placenta and my baby needed some oxygen. We need more hospitals like this in our area and I had a great stay and experience while I was there. Please reconsider this decision as moms need to know they have options while birthing and I feel like the Paoli hospital doctors and nurses help encourage that.

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I was incredibly saddened and shocked by the recent announcement from IU Health that they are choosing to close the OB department at Paoli Hospital. The negative impact on the community this rural hospital serves will be enormous.

On a professional level, I have worked for this organization for almost 9 years, 7 of those on the OB unit. The care I was able to give to my patients was incredibly personal and the nurse-patient relationships developed were unlike any I have heard fellow nurses talk about. The smile you get from a patient that is coming back to deliver their 2nd, 3rd or 4th baby is heartwarming. These patients CHOOSE to come back to our facility because of the excellent service they received the first time around. The nurses that work on the OB unit go above and beyond to educate themselves on anything related to OB from child birth education to earning their IBCLC's to perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. Our nurses do it all; we are a one stop shop, seeing our patients prenatally, for non-stress tests, to taking their new baby home with them, to coming back for a lactation consultation or to have a one on one meeting with a PMAD trained nurse. We do this because we see the need for those extra services in our community and we want to make sure our moms are as prepared as possible to take their new baby home with them, we empower our moms to be the best moms they can be! We do this out of love for our community and our desire to help in whatever way we can.

I can only foresee negative outcomes coming out of this financial decision. Over my 7 years working on the unit, I have seen several emergent cases come through the door. Cases that can't safely make a 1+ hour drive to another delivering facility, cases that will result in fetal or maternal deaths if not delivered emergently. So many of our patient population also struggle with transportation issues and would struggle to get to a delivering facility so far away from where they live.

On a personal note, I have had 2 pregnancies. I delivered my first at Paoli Hospital with Dr. Yoder. The experience was wonderful, not just because I was "one of their own" but because that is just what our nurses do. They make the experience as pleasant as a labor and delivery can be. My second pregnancy had to be induced before it was safe to deliver at Paoli Hospital. While I had a fine experience at IU Health Bloomington, I truly missed the exceptional care that I received with my first delivery at Paoli.

In closing, I just want to re-iterate my deep concern with this decision. Health care is more than money, which is not what any nurse goes into this profession for. They have a heart and passion for helping people in whatever life stage they are in. Rural healthcare is quickly becoming a "thing of the past" and that in and of itself is terribly heartbreaking. The fact that money has become more important than people is unfathomable to me. Small communities rely on their local hospitals to provide them access to healthcare including OB services. I sincerely feel that this decision was made by people that have absolutely no idea how it will affect the community it serves. How would they feel if their pregnant wife, daughter, or sister were in an emergent situation and had to drive or be transported an hour or more to deliver their baby? This decision is only going to end in poor outcomes, both for babies and mothers. I ask that you please reconsider this decision and the impact that it will have on this rural community.

I am so saddened to learn of IU Health Paoli's decision to do away with the OB Ward.

Orange County is an impoverished county. Without a local facility available for the delivery of their babies, this will create even more of a hardship on many expectant families in the community.

Won't you please reconsider and let Paoli keep its OB Ward.

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I am writing in hopes you will reconsider closing the OB part of the IU Health Paoli Hospital. Our county is in desperate need of having this service. I have delivered 2 babies there in the past six years. I had many complications throughout my pregnancies that required frequent visits to this hospital. There is no way I could have traveled out of town for all those visits. I also have precipitous births, which means I deliver very quickly once the labor process begins, meaning I don't have time to drive 20 or more miles to an out of town hospital! The staff on our OB unit is the absolute best and takes very good care of their patients! I can't say enough good things about Dr. Yoder. She truly cares for everyone she treats and goes the extra mile.

This news is very disappointing and I hope you'll have a change of heart. Providing these services, especially in such a low income community, is crucial to the lives of these babies! These women need this hospital close to home.

Please reconsider the closure of the OB services in an already rural Medically Underserved Area. Two of your top priority needs you are currently addressing throughout the system are access to care and infant mortality. While our OB unit is not profitable at this time, it has potential to be strong once again with assistance in recruiting more healthcare providers, such as Dr. Hunt, OB/Gyn and addiction specialist, more help in marketing the services we are offer and spread the word on the quality of services patients will have if they choose to deliver with us. Time and time again I've heard what great care we give, but I hear it by word of mouth, very seldom marketing. I ask, and pray, for at least an extension of the closure until the end of 2018. Even if costs more money, please carry it out as part of your mission and charity care services or find a solution to subsidize. The nurses who work on OB love their jobs and their community. I know this first hand because I worked alongside of them for many years before transferring to Community Health.

I have a friend who had chosen to deliver elsewhere but didn't make it to that hospital with her first baby and ended up delivering at Paoli. For her second delivery, she chose us first due to the quality care and compassion she received. Our patients are not strangers to us. We know them. They are our neighbors, our family and our friends.

My niece is due to deliver at Paoli in April—Just 3 weeks after the closure set date. She is devastated, and concerned. Something I wish she didn't have to worry about while she's expecting.

She's one of several. Please give this OB department some assistance in recruiting and marketing and provide an extension to help them bounce back from a decrease in deliveries.

I am writing in support of local delivery at IU Health Paoli Hospital. It is vital that our community has this service and without it patients will be traveling great distances. I will be a grandpa again in June and my grandson would have been delivered there and without this service at IU Health Paoli I am uncertain where my grandbaby will be born. Please see that this is a vital need in this rural community and may have a negative impact on our communities future. Please consider looking into other options for a different solution. Thanks so much!!

I have had nieces and grandkids delivered by Dr. Yoder at IU hospital. This is a sad thing that they are taking away from our community. There are a lot of people that could not afford to drive to other counties for baby care. I ask you to rethink this decision. Thank you

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This is to inform you that I am opposed to the decision to stop the labor and delivery services now provided at the IU Paoli Hospital. I had my daughter there in 1960. This is a much needed service. It would be a shame to have to travel out of the county to have your child since we already have a wonderful facility.  
Please reconsider this plan.

The women of Orange County need and should have access to OB care in our county. Our local hospital provides exceptional care to mommies and their babies. Being cared for by your neighbors can give a peace of mind not always found in a larger hospital setting where you may not know anyone and you can easily become just another patient. The level of care given at IU Health Paoli ranks with the best!!! Expectant Mother's should be able to access care within 15-20 minutes of home. Precious time would be lost for mommy and baby having to drive to another county for care. Rural southern Indiana desperately needs Paoli hospital OB unit. Please reconsider closing this vital service to our community.

I would like to express my opinion on the OB unit closing. Honestly, THIS IS BOGUS.  
At 20 I was a single pregnant mother who knew literally nothing about being pregnant, the delivery process, and everything that goes along with it. Every prenatal appointment I had, the staff and my doctor of choice were fantastic, kind and educated and were more than willing to pass on that knowledge.  
When the time came down to it to deliver I was panicking. Thankfully, The OB Unit was phenomenal! They went above and beyond to make sure I had a wonderful experience; not only my experience but my beautiful new daughter, my family, and the several guests that attended.  
If it was not for those specific nurses and staff those couple of days I don't think I would've been near as confident in my ability to be a mother leaving that hospital.  
Since my baby's delivery 5 years ago, I have raved about how fantastic the IU Health OB Unit is. And have been more than proud to say I delivered there. Which is not something that I would have ever dreamed of.  
To deprive future mothers and myself of experiencing this with these wonderful men and women, I believe is a great injustice to them, to me, and to our community.  
I strongly urge you to reconsider this decision and keep in mind the mass amount of people this will impact.

I am writing in regards to the OB closing here at Paoli. Our rural hospital needs the OB unit to stay here. I am afraid many woman in our area will skip out on care because it is an inconvenience to drive elsewhere. I worked for years at Paoli Hospital and I have seen first hand the care that these nurses and doctors provide to rural Orange County. You can't find that in larger hospitals. Please change this decision. It will be a sad day for Paoli Hospital and all of Orange County.

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I am writing in support of local delivery at IU Health Paoli Hospital, it is a vital service and without it patients will HAVE to travel a great distance in order to deliver their babies and this includes my next grandbaby, who will be coming in June and was to be delivered at IU Health Paoli Hospital. This will also affect the wonderful doctors and NP's whom we have left in our community. Please reconsider as this will hurt our community. Please consider looking into other options for a different solution. Thanks so much!!

It is absolutely heartbreaking to hear about the possible closure of our local OB department at IU Health Paoli. The negative impact it would have on our small community is a hard to even wrap my mind around. The loss of employment is just a minor aspect of this change. Let's think about the future babies of Orange County. Sure, most of the expecting mothers could travel a hour away to the next nearest hospital to deliver their baby, but what about the others who need immediate attention? Those are the mothers who NEED the OB wing at the Paoli hospital. I can assure you that if it were a child of the people who are trying to shut the OB unit down, they would think twice about doing so. No family should have to worry about getting to a hospital in time. IU health is big enough to keep our small facility open. Babies shouldn't have to die because of a budget cut.

I am saddened by the news of IU Paoli hospital not delivering babies any more. I planned on delivering my second baby there but had an unplanned home birth. When I toured the hospital before I had her, I was very pleased and excited with what I saw. It seems like the hospital was very baby and mother friendly and had many options to help labor with no medicine and delivery naturally. That was very important to me. The tub is also a plus. After I had my baby at home, I was transferred to Paoli hospital by ambulance to deliver the placenta and my baby needed some oxygen. We need more hospitals like this in our area and I had a great stay and experience while I was there. Please reconsider this decision as moms need to know they have options while birthing and I feel like the Paoli hospital doctors and nurses help encourage that.

The continuation of local childbirth availability to residents of Orange County is extremely important to our community. There are many low income families whom traveling would cause a hardship and could possibly cause death to Mothers and newborn babies who find themselves unable to to make the trip out of the county. I ask that you reconsider this decision to stop OB services at our local hospital

Why would you want to discontinue the Ob unit? Orange County has always had an ob unit. I gave birth to both my children there. This is sad. I first thought maybe because the loss of doctors and maybe it was too much for the remaining doctors but then I realized the doctors were fighting to keep our OB . Please rethink your decision as the people need and want it to stay.

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I am so heartbroken to find out that IU Health Paoli will be closing their OB department. I can't imagine what the Mom's who planned on delivering there are going through right now as they try to decide where they are going to go for care now. How devastating to have change providers in the middle of your pregnancy. Not only that we are in a rural area and now people in our community are going to have to travel an hour to get care and to deliver. This in itself poses a health risk that could result in bad outcomes for these patients. As nurses we always hear "evidence based practice", I'm hoping that evidence based practice is looked at before the final decision is made to close this unit. There is plenty out there that will show that rural communities without access to OB units can result in poor outcomes for Mom's and babies. I just hate this for our community.

I also hate it for all the nurses and physicians who give their hearts and souls to these Mom's and Babies day in and day out. They provide excellent care for their patients and patient families.

I just hope that you can see how important this OB unit is to our community and our community's needs.

After having two children, getting pregnant with a third was difficult. Surgery, two miscarriages and two years trying to conceive, I finally got pregnant with my third daughter. With all of my complications, it was important for me to deliver her near my home. Labor for me, in the past, came without warning and progressed very quickly. But more than anything, I wanted my local family to overfill the waiting room and bombard me with too much company. I wanted to be closer to home so I could be near my two older children. I wanted to know the staff and nurses who'd help me deliver. On 9/17/15, I welcomed a beautiful baby girl into the world. The nurses and doctors treated me like family, literally. I never felt like just a patient and I'm so very happy to have been able to deliver in my hometown so I could share in the experience with my family.

Please don't take this away from our community.

... I am the proud mother of two Kids, both born at Paoli. I was so saddened to hear that IU Health would no longer offer delivery services at our Paoli hospital. My children are 8 and 6 and I vividly remember the experience of my deliveries as wonderful experiences. Many people asked why chose to have my children at Paoli and I told everyone the same two things — I wanted my children born in a small, personal hospital and in my hometown. Paoli did not disappoint and I have continued to recommend Paoli to all my friends. Big hospitals can seem very impersonal and frightening, but Paoli was the opposite. My family got amazing care and I am so happy my children got their start there. Please reconsider what you are doing to our hospital. Generations of children have been born at our hospital, please don't take that away from our community.

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I delivered my oldest daughter at Paoli. My doctor was Dr. Yolanda Yoder. She was absolutely great and the staff in the OB department were so caring and amazingly helpful.

The OB department serves so many women and children in Orange county that closing it would be disastrous to the community.

Unfortunately, there are women and men who aren't very educated in the community (as with any community) and the OB department staff help these new mothers and fathers learn how to care for their new babies properly.

Orange County also has a rather large Amish community that trust Dr. Yoder when it comes to baby deliveries and emergencies. If the OB department closes these women and babies, born or not quite born yet, will have to travel farther which would endanger the lives of both mother and baby.

I understand that it is the bottom dollar that is important. However, a beating heart and healthy mom and baby are MORE important!

I truly hope that the powers to be will reconsider closing the OB department in Orange county. It would be a terrible loss to the community if the doors close.

I have been a nurse for 40 years. I have spent 37 years working at Paoli Hospital. Our little hospital has been through many changes, including it's name. Once again our little family is being torn apart. Our OB department is being made to close and my friends and family are hurting. Can we please fix this. We need to keep our OB here. None of us want any of these nurses to leave. They love each mom and baby they care for and want to continue to give that care.

My grandchildren were all born in Paoli! One of them would not have survived if not for the hospital being so close! Please! DO NOT TAKE AWAY OUR LIFELINE FOR THE BABIES!

It's essential for the growth of our community that the OB unit stays. The effects of this can and will be extremely detrimental to the OB unit and begin the trickle down destruction of the rest of the facility.

There will be catastrophes if there is no Orange County hospital delivering babies. Plus closing one department will weaken all the other departments. Who can trust a hospital that doesn't even deliver babies? Not me. Orange County needs a fully operating hospital. Enough said.

I delivered three of my babies at the Paoli Hospital. I delivered my second, at (a different hospital) and hated the experience (the staff was rude, incompetent, and unprofessional). The staff at Paoli always did a great job that's one of the big reasons I came back to deliver my fourth (that and it's close). I knew if I needed to deliver quickly, the hospital was right down the street. The fourth delivery went wonderfully (probably the best delivery experience I had). The anesthesiologist was the best I've ever had. Even though I don't plan on having any more children, please for the sake of other poor families, keep delivering babies at Paoli IU Health Hospital. Some families can't afford to drive to other hospitals and actually prefer Paoli.

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Our county needs our OB department. We are a poor, rural area. Most ob patients in our community, live pay check to pay check. They can't afford to drive 40+miles to a hospital. Closing the ob department, is going to put moms and babies at risk of the unknown. We need our OB department. The quality of care we get being a small community, you just don't get in bigger cities. People are going to lose their jobs, our little community will suffer greatly. We know you may not bring in as much \$ at our Rural County Hospital, but shouldn't that be expected? We are a Rural Hospital, serving the under paid. Please keep our ob department open at IUHPaoli.

This is the closest OB department to many low income families in the area. Not having the OB department will likely cost lives. Quit thinking with your wallet and think with your heart.

This would be devastating for our town. This hospital has been here so long and thousands of babies delivered healthy here. This would not be in the best interest of our community. Why would you even consider making this horrible decision? Please listen to all of us. We asked that you do not change what has been a monumental successful place to have babies. This is our town!!! Leave it alone!

I am devastated to hear the news of the ob unit closing. Not only was I a patient there and I also work there. I am having to watch competent ob nurses lose their positions and having seen the positive first hand that this ob unit has done for our small community has always made me proud. When I found out I was pregnant I did my research and found Dr. Yoder who is so amazing. When I gave birth at IU Health Paoli it was the best birth experience I have had. The nurses were amazing Dr. Yoder was amazing and they made me feel comfortable at the most vulnerable time in my life. Having this ob unit in our small community is and has always been wonderful. Orange County is not a rich community. A lot of people cannot afford to travel to give birth. I feel like taking this away will only cause problems for this community. I hope and pray we can change their minds.

I worked for Healthy Families for 17 years helping prenatal families and families with new babies. Orange Co is so limited on services for low income families and having transportation out of county is often a real issue If IUHPH cancels services, families will have at least a 30 min drive to the closest hospital if not more. Then there will be the doctor appts that will also be that far in order to have a doctor that is connected to a hospital This will become such a burden it scares me to think of what families might have to do and the safety for the babies. Then, what is to follow? No county hospital for emergencies? Orange Co hospital has been a stable in this community for as long as I know. I was born there, as was my children and grandchildren. We have all used the ER department and have had family admitted there. It is a wonderful local hospital that is needed in the rural community. Not everyone has the resources to go to a city Please reconsider!

Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

This is an injustice to the women and babies of this rural community. If other options are closer, it would not be such a big deal. When you have to travel 45-60 minutes for the closest L & D hospital, this could mean lives. Please reconsider. Thank you.

I delivered all 3 of my children at the hospital in Paoli. I cannot imagine driving to another hospital miles away. Dr Yoder delivered 2 of my 3. She is an awesome doctor. And for her to have to refer her soon to be mom's to another doctor at the end of their pregnancy is crazy. These are local women that want to deliver their babies by a doctor that knows them and their health. Also for them to deliver at a hospital close to home. Some women in our town can't afford to drive many miles from town for the doctor appointments and delivery.

Please reconsider this decision for the safety and well-being of these unborn children.

Our OB. ward delivers so many babies and provides health to so many woman and children of the closest OB ward is 45 minutes away this poses a danger for many women in our county!

Having a local hospital close to us that delivers babies is so important!! The nearest hospital other than Paoli is an hour away in every direction. New mothers like my daughter who is due the end of April ( And was delivered at Paoli I might add!) this makes them very nervous! Paoli has been the best place to go for so long that it would be an absolute shame to stop this service!!! Please think of the new mothers in this part of southern Indiana and DO NOT STOP DELIVERING BABIES THERE!!! Thank you!!

I have been a resident of Orange County for my entire life. I absolutely love the OB department at the IU Health Paoli. I had my son at this hospital. All the staff, nurses and my doctor were amazing when I had my son and during the time I stayed in the hospital. Everyone was very helpful and kind. Please keep the OB department. I don't want to have to go to a different facility due to Paoli no longer having an OB/GYN department.

I heard you all getting rid of the OB. I'm writing hoping you will consider keeping it. a year and a half ago I was told i had PCOS and when I do get pregnant i want to go to a place that i trust!!! I want to be able to have other babies where I had my 1st born and where my sister and I were born... so please keep the OB!!!

Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

I am writing this message to express my deep concern for the women of our community in regards to the closing of the Paoli hospital OB department. This will devastate the women of our community because there are no relatively close, quality OB departments within an hour of us if Paoli closes! Not only the women of the community will be devastated, but the doctors that have devoted their lives to ensuring the healthy deliveries of babies in this area are also losing the opportunity to provide this service! In the last 13 years, I have birthed 3 children in that hospital! I have recently become pregnant again and am beside myself that my doctor is having the opportunity to continue to bring the lives of mine and countless other children into this world ripped away from her! People are lucky if they are able to have a physician's hands that they feel they are able to put their lives within. Well, I do! And the corporate man is saying that I cannot do that!? This is insane! Bedford has multiple hospitals! It would make more sense to close the OB ward there. We have nothing else here. It is more likely that women will choose to not have OB care than to travel an hour to receive care. This will cause so many problems! I urge anyone that will listen to please, please, please reconsider this option!

The news of our local OB department closing has been devastating. Our small community needs a place of safety for our women of birthing age and for the babies birthed. Our small hospital caters to a wide variety of patients-including our Amish community. I delivered 3 children at this hospital and had nothing short of an amazing experience. I always recommend everyone to go to IU Paoli. Not just delivering planned deliveries/cesarean sections, this hospital being the closest within 30 miles- has saved many lives (mommy and baby) during emergency deliveries, hemorrhaging, etc. If this community loses the OB department, I'm scared to think of what else would be lost.

The OB ward in Orange County means the world to me and to most of the women having children in Orange County!!! I wouldn't go to any other hospital!! When I had my son last year in December, the nurses and staff were amazing with me and my son.... they helped me figure out how to breastfeed and much more that most first time moms don't know!!!! I am very upset with whoever decided it would be a good idea to take the labor and delivery unit out of the hospital!!!!

My grandmother was born at Paoli, my mom, myself, and my son. Many other families have also had multiple generations born here. At HOME. How sad it would be if no other babies were born here. No more saying they were born and raised in this small town. Please, please keep the OB open at Paoli. Our community needs this service. Thank you.

I am both shocked and saddened at this intended action and strongly believe it will be very detrimental to the health and well-being of mothers and babies, as well as the long-term well being of our hospital itself. I have 25 grandchildren and one on the way and a huge percentage have been born here in Orange County. My daughter cried all day when she found out the baby she is expecting will not be delivered here, where she has attended the births of many of her nieces and nephews. Having local healthcare for expectant mothers and babies is a critical need and there must be a solution other than discontinuing delivery of babies at the Paoli Hospital.

Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

It is my hopes and prayers that shutting down the OB Ward at IU Health Paoli does not happen. Not only for personal reasons, but for those in the community and surrounding areas that are or will be needing delivery services.

I, myself, have delivered both of my daughters in Paoli and my step-son was also delivered at the Paoli hospital. My daughters have both delivered their first children there and one is pregnant now.

My concern for this shutting down and the people who need this to continue is the idea that they will have to drive a lot of miles to get to a different hospital. And the time it takes to get there, how many will end up delivering enroute.... this is not safe for the mother or baby. I pray that this decision to close the OB Ward is denied. Please keep the OB Ward at the IU hospital Paoli!

I feel this area can't lose OB delivery services. Many women/families can't afford to drive to Bedford, Bloomington, Jasper or New Albany. This will cost families money and precious time! I feel it could be very dangerous. I also fear it will be the start of many other medical services crumbling away.

I delivered both of my children at the hospital in Paoli. I would have been terrified to not have a hospital close by during my pregnancies. When my children, and grandchildren, were born there were family members who could not have afforded to drive out of town to visit, and some older family members who would not have felt safe driving out of town to visit.

It saddens me to learn others will not have access to the care I received with both my girls. The care was superb. Being close to my house when I had children at home was a true comfort. When one of my babies had to be immediately readmitted for jaundice after going home already, it was nice being so close. I cannot imagine how scary it would be to be put in an ambulance or driving an hour away, in dread, unsure of what was happening, over something so routine. When my baby had trouble latching on and I had to return back to the delivery ward to get help, when I had to get monitored daily for my baby's heartbeat because of high BP, when my husband had to leave for a shower and I was left alone, when my other baby had to get tested daily for jaundice concerns and the same nurses who delivered her were just upstairs to talk to, and when I felt safe and secure surrounded by people I knew close to people I love....all of these reasons which happened for my two children being born. My only regret being that my first child was not born there so that when I drive by on a daily basis, I can point to the hospital in my hometown and tell him, that is where he was born, like I can tell my two youngest.

I am scared for the people in this area to lose this. Additionally, it breaks my heart that people invested in this community are losing their jobs. People I know. People who have cared for me and my children.

As a lifelong resident and a person who has taken many roles in our community (Food Pantry Volunteer, Pharmacy Tech, and Retired Teacher) I have seen first-hand many of the needs in our community. One of the most important is meeting then medical needs of citizens in our community. The Orange County hospital provides vital care for the citizens in our poverty ridden area many of who cannot afford to travel to other areas for care. Without OB care in our community, our babies and mothers are at risk. While I realize that many decisions are based on numbers of patients and funding, the safe delivery of infants is not about money. Please consider keeping the OB care in Paoli for the health of our tiniest members of our community.

Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

I am writing to inform you that I oppose the decision to do away with labor and delivery at IU Health Paoli. Many members of the community depend on emergency services/have no way to reach a hospital that is out of the county. I believe that this decision would have a major impact in our county in just a few short years. I've not had any "life or death" experiences myself, but I do know many people who would not be here on this earth today if it wasn't for Paoli Hospital being so close to provide immediate assistance and not 45 minuet away assistance. Paoli Hospital is a must losing all the possible lives is not worth saving a penny.

It is with great concern and disappointment to learn of Indiana University Health Paoli decision to discontinue providing labor and delivery practices as of April 2018. I adamantly oppose this decision with extreme concern for our unborn citizens and their families! This is very discerning and troubling, especially being in a smaller rural based community. The pre-term labor and delivery statistics show evidence that we need to continue to provide these services, \*as well as all full term, non emergency deliveries. It is difficult for many in this area to travel outside of Orange County, which in turn could be placing both mother and child/children at a higher risk of complications due to travel time. In foresight, if these services are discontinued, it could immensely and strategically begin the entire breakdown of other healthcare services presently offered, and would be devastating to our entire community. Paoli has wonderful, competent healthcare providers whom are detrimental to the health and wellbeing of our citizens and we cannot/do not support the decision presented. Please refer to The Hippocratic Oath as well as the Latin phrase: Primum non nocere which means "First, do no harm" while considering the issue at hand.

I'm writing because I just heard if the hospital possibly taking out the OB ward in the Paoli IU Health hospital, and that Dr. Yolanda Yoder is to be speaking to Indianapolis representatives tomorrow. I'm a concerned Paoli resident, as I believe this would really have a negative impact on our community. Not only Paoli, but other surrounding small towns, the mothers and their families rely on Paoli IU Health so heavily. I myself included, would have had no way home from, for instance, Bloomington, if I was forced to give birth further from home. In another birth of mine at Paoli, I was rushed to our local hospital here bleeding and my body was going into preterm labor, literally pushing her out right then, and they called Kosairs to come assist, my babygirl was stillborn....but if not for the hospital being here, she would not have had a fighting chance to begin with. I'm not the only one who relies on this OB ward for our babies, countless others, I pray you get out measage, please don't remove it if possible.

Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

I am writing this because I oppose the decision to do away with labor and delivery at IU Health Paoli Hospital. Many members of the community depend on emergency services and have no way to reach a hospital that is out of the county and completely rely on our local hospital. I believe that this decision would have a major negative impact for our county in just a few short years. It's not JUST closing our OB department down... it will be a domino effect. It will continue to affect the rest of the hospital staff, which will probably result in more jobs lost, less and less need for some of the current healthcare workers there, smaller departments with skeleton crews, with eventually forcing the hospital to be shut down... then it will cause our nursing home, dialysis center, and other drs offices around here to close. Then this area will be in worse health and more poverty than ever before, and more people will move to where there's more job opportunities available, which will end up being devastating to our community. Many people here are too poor to be able to travel out of the county to get good medical care. Orange County is a place that many call home and we would like to see it remain intact as much as possible, and not be blown apart. I am sure bigger cities can't comprehend this happening, but I see it coming and fairly quickly. The hospital is one of the larger employers in this area and I know lots of other people personally that this is affecting immediately and also lots that it will further on down the road. I know it all comes down to money, but I think there has to be an alternative option or another way to save the OB department/our hospital, and/or make money to be able to keep this place open. Think outside the box. If you do plan to keep the rest of the Paoli hospital open or at least the emergency room open, this is bad for business too... because it's giving everyone the impression that the hospital in bad shape and that it is going to all close eventually. A lot of the current nursing staff that's not losing their jobs at the moment as OB, but the other nurse units feel their positions are not safe now. They are already looking for employment opportunities with other employers. It makes people not trust the hospital and gives it a bad reputation and what some people call it a "band-aid clinic". If it is staying open, the current employees need to be fully aware of long term plans, so they won't leave. Otherwise, it will domino and force total shutdown, even if that's not the intention. I hope you will reconsider this unfortunate decision.

I am writing this letter to urge you not to close the OB department at the Paoli IU Health Hospital. We are a very small community with no other hospital as close as Paoli. I would like to tell you about my daughters delivery at Paoli....I lived in town so it only took a couple of minutes to get to the hospital. We pulled up to the emergency room doors because it was after hours and they took me straight up to the labor room because they could tell I was ready to deliver. No sooner did I lay on the labor rooms bed than I had to start pushing. Luckily my wonderful Dr Mosemann was on call and there that night. He went to get dressed in scrubs for the delivery and the nurse had to go get him before he got done because I was pushing and the baby was coming. In the process of delivering her his pants fell down and the nurse had to pull them up and tie them for him. It was a total of 6 minutes from the time I got there to she was born. What would I have done if I had to drive an hour or 45 minutes away to the nearest hospital? She would have been born in the car. Please rethink your decision and leave the ob department open in the hospital. Please think about the people your decision will be impacting not only the hospital but our only clinic in Paoli . Please don't put profits before the welfare of the patients.

Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

Many people rely on Paoli's OB floor. Whether it is because they don't have transportation to make it elsewhere, bad weather makes it impossible to make it to another town, or they just enjoy the doctors and nurses on the floor. My son was born at 25 1/2 weeks. I live 10 minutes from Paoli Hospital and I had no idea I was in labor. I was very shocked when the doctor said I was already 8 cm dilated when I arrived to the hospital. If I would have had to drive to Bedford or Jasper I would have delivered in the back seat of our car. Many people will be at risk if Paoli gets rid of their OB floor. Please reconsider getting rid of it, as many many lives depend on it. Thank You.

I have heard that the ob ward at Paoli IU Health is closing as of April 1st. This makes me very sad. I delivered my son there in Feb 2016 and had a wonderful experience! All the nurses and doctors were very helpful, informative, and nice. I had plans of delivering all of my future children there. If you shut the ob ward down this will be devastating to our community. They are the closet hospital to us. We would have to drive 30-45 minutes away to deliver our babies, not to mention they are the only ones close enough that does tubals, this would be very inconvenient for everyone involved! All the jobs that will be lost. Paoli IU health is a great hospital and this is not something that will be good for our community. I hope you please reconsider this decision and really think about if this is a good decision or not.

I am writing this letter in regards to potential closer of the IU Bloomington Health Hospital OB department in Paoli, IN.

I myself have had two cesarean deliveries at IU Paoli Hospital, both being high risk. A risk that would have been a lot higher if I was not able to receive the health care provided to me near to my home. Paoli is in a rural area and in so, OB care that is close and available is so very important. I had to have monthly, bi-weekly, and eventually weekly testing and monitoring done during my pregnancies. Services that I would have had to travel over forty-five minutes to receive else where. I was diagnosed with High Blood pressure , and towards the end of pregnancy any sort of long distance travel would raise my blood pressure and start early contractions. So being able to receive care close to home, was not only wonderful but necessary.

The care and compassion that I always received from the staff was amazing. My children and I were always monitored and taken very well care of. My daughter was born early and developed pneumonia. The nurses caught her condition very early on and took fast measures to help her. She was transported to Kosairs Children Hospital to the NICU department. But the nurses on staff that day, stayed with her long after their shifts were over, to ensure all was okay and that she was transported safely.

The Doctors and Nurses at IU Health Paoli, don't just clock in and clock out. They don't just work for a paycheck. But they each work for and in our Community. They help hold the hands of mothers performing one of life's greatest miracles and hardest jobs. They care for families during a loss and are a shoulder to cry on. They each become invested in the lives they touch , and only help our small rural community for the better.

If IU Health Paoli OB department is closed down, it will be closing the chances to many future healthy deliveries. Women in this community will be forced to seek care elsewhere, that involves more travel and more risks. There are some that won't even be able to see their Doctors as often as needed for OB appointments and checkups due to lack of transportation or time restraints because of travel.

I am just one of so many that have benefited from having an OB delivery department in my own community. I whole hearted believe that my pregnancies were as healthy and successful as they were, because I was able to receive health care close to home.

As a student nurse, a mother, and a former social worker, I find the news of IU Health Paoli no longer delivering babies to be disturbing and detrimental to our rural community on several fronts. First and foremost, I formerly worked with low-income patients, such as those who make up the majority of Orange and surrounding counties, and my biggest fear is the lack of resources these patients have to get them to and from medical appointments and delivery in a neighboring area. Most of these expectant mothers will not have the financial means or reliable transportation to get them to and from appointments over 40 minutes away from home! How are these patients expected to get to these appointments? Medicaid transport is unreliable at best, unfortunately, and requires advance notice. Medical conditions an expectant mother might have cannot always wait. Is IU willing to put the lives of these babies and mothers in danger? There are no transportation services for young women that run from the Paoli or French Lick area to the Bedford or Jasper area. Local transport services run in-county, only, and charge a fee. Financially speaking, it doesn't make much sense for IU Health to lose the income from these deliveries to the St. Vincent or Little Company of Mary system, because the majority of people will not travel over an hour to Bloomington for healthcare. When I worked in Bedford, many of the Bedford patients would refuse to go to Bloomington!

Second, a pregnant woman never knows how fast her delivery will be. While the average patient may have plenty of time to get to a neighboring county to deliver, she doesn't necessarily know. This will tax our ambulance system, be it small, with an escalated number of out-of-county runs, possibly leaving the county uncovered at times. This will lead to the need for more ambulances and EMS personnel.

Third, of large concern, the two closest hospitals - Jasper and Bedford - are both Catholic owned. They are good hospitals, but they do not offer tubal ligation. This causes two issues. First, a mother will have to go through a cesarean surgery and then go through a second surgery for tubal ligation. Do we not have a responsibility to our patients to do what is in their best interest? How is causing a second, unnecessary surgery in their best interest? Let's not forget that many have to pay for these services, and this is not a high-money-making area. Furthermore, those who do not follow through on getting a ligation at another facility will likely have unplanned pregnancies which will also fall on the state insurance and welfare programs. This is not far fetched. In order to get the second surgery, they will need another doctor. They will need to be established as a new patient out of town somewhere before they can be seen to discuss getting this surgery, (and let's face it, many of them will not).

Fourth, I have concern for the nursing and unlicensed assistive personnel at IU Health Paoli and it's neighboring doctor's offices. If OB is no longer functioning, this means many will undoubtedly lose their jobs. Paoli hospital will have lower numbers of patients on the floor, obviously, and less people coming in for ultrasound or labs, and many patients will simply see doctors who actually practice with St. Vincent or Memorial Hospital. As of yet, I have not heard of these hospitals allowing out-of-the-system doctors to deliver in their facilities. (I could be wrong, but this is not standard practice.) Our local non-profit clinics will be in jeopardy, and the income of many in the community will diminish. Once jobs are found, they will be out-of-the-area and will affect family life/time and income due to cost of travel, etc.

I really look forward to possibly working at one of these local clinics or IU Health Paoli one day, and would hate to see that option go away because services are so limited for our community. It is already an issue that folks must travel so far for broken bones or certain major surgeries. Let's please not add any more burden to the list. After all, everyone in the medical community is charged with doing what is best for the medical needs of the area, and nurses (and student nurses) are charged with advocating for our patients, as I am doing my best to do.

Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

I'm saddened to hear of the decision to close the Labor & Delivery Department of the IU Health Paoli Campus. I understand that decisions must be made that make financial sense for your organization but I urge you to reconsider your decision on this matter.

My personal experience with the staff of IU Health in the delivery of my daughter was nothing short of wonderful. My nurses Jamie, Carissa, and Ida were very attentive to both me and my newborn. Ida went above and beyond in helping my baby and myself with breastfeeding. My daughter was borderline failure to thrive and without her support, I know we wouldn't have overcome that hurdle which was the first of many.

The staff helped ease my anxiety of my daughter's spinal cord defect and prepared me for the testing we would go through at the Bloomington and Riley campuses. These are just a few of the group of amazing healthcare professionals that are an invaluable asset to our small community.

Paoli is a rural community with a large population of underprivileged/low income families and individuals. Taking away a service as important as the Labor & Delivery Department will be a huge disservice to these people. I'm aware that they will be able to seek prenatal care through the local medical practice with Dr. Yoder, which is a blessing. However, what are these people to do when it's time to deliver? Many of them will not be able to find transportation, reliable transportation, to Bloomington - or possibly even Bedford to another hospital.

Your presence as a medical facility in our small community is so important for our residents - from Labor & Delivery, Emergency Department and Med-Surg. Please reconsider the importance of your presence in our small community and how important your services are to the health and well-being of our residents.

I'm speaking out as a local, home birth mom in Orange County, Indiana on behalf of IU Health Paoli Hospital's Labor & Delivery.

While both my children were delivered at home, I cannot stress enough how grateful I was & still am (my youngest is 2) for the local back up support the hospital had to offer me as a mom planning a home birth.

I saw Dr. Yoder once every trimester (as recommended by both her & my midwife) in my pregnancies. A plan was in place should I need to transfer to the hospital during labor, after or should my newborn need emergency care. This is vital to local mothers choosing to home birth, many of which are Amish (and most Amish mothers in our community home birth).

Many will likely still home birth, even knowing there isn't a back up hospital down the road & the distance they'll have to travel for emergency back up care can lead to devastating results.

Again, I cannot stress enough how much this department of our local hospital is needed & so much appreciated by all women of Orange County (home & hospital births). We're growing & depend so much on our little but invaluable local team of doctors & nurses to help bring life into this world.

If there's anything else we can do to stress this need & show our support, please let us know.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

I am deeply saddened about hearing that the OB department in Paoli is closing and would like to share my experience with them.

I gave birth to my son there... and had such a wonderful experience. My pregnancy was a difficult one because I had problems with my pregnancies with my daughters and I also had two miscarriages in 2013. I worried about losing my son the entire pregnancy and started showing signs of preeclampsia. Dr. Yoder was amazing throughout my pregnancy. I'm sure I about drove her crazy with all of my worrying, but she was always there to listen to me and was on top of things when something didn't seem right. The last few months of my pregnancy I had to go to the OB department in Paoli for non stress tests and I was always treated with the up most respect. With my frequent visits I got to know [the staff] pretty well and I think the world of [them]. I didn't feel like I was just another patient. I felt like I was important to her as well as the other nurses. I was very impressed at how much the OB department had improved since I gave birth to my daughter there in 2007.

While I do not plan on having any more babies, anything is possible. I feel that the decision to close down the OB department needs to be reconsidered. Our county will suffer greatly from this loss. Not everyone in our community has transportation to go out of town. I'm very afraid that mothers will not get the proper prenatal care and babies will suffer because of this. Please reconsider your decision. There has to be a way to keep our OB department open.

I delivered one of my kids at Paoli OB and they did a great job with me during my delivery. I was able to get in the hot tub to help with the pain before I delivered him. My children have been to these doctors in Orange County since they were younger. And the Paoli hospital is the only one I do trust with them if they have to stay overnight. My daughter delivered my grandson in 2014 and they did a great job with her and the delivery progress. And she is pregnant again and I hoping she is able to deliver with the Dr. Yoder cause she really likes Dr. Yoder and the OB at IU Health Paoli. Also hope they understand they have a great OB floor and some great nurses. When the momma is tired or family that is helping the momma out they will take the baby for a while for momma to get some rest. Hope they make the right decision to keep the OB floor open to the moms that keep on coming back for deliveries because they like it there so much and they do such a great job.

I am so saddened to hear about the decision to close the OB ward at IU Health. what will be next? This community desperately needs this facility. Please what can we do to keep this very needed health care facility in Paoli The hospital facilities here have been awesome for many years ,it breaks my heart to think that we can no longer have children born here. I pray we can do what it takes to keep this from happening.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

I am concerned to hear about the decision to close the OB department at the IU Health Paoli Hospital. My family has experienced first-hand just how critical the services that are offered at that hospital and we are aware of how they are important to the larger community. Additionally, I can't imagine a better team of medical professionals that offer evidence-based care and personal support.

With my first child, I transferred to IUHealth Paoli after attempting a homebirth and needed a c-section. While my situation wasn't a tragic emergency situation, I know that those kinds of cases do exist, especially among the Amish communities here. IU Health Paoli literally saves lives in these kinds of cases when an hour drive is dangerous.

For my second, I was hoping to have a VBAC and toward the end of my pregnancy, it was unclear whether Paoli would be able to accommodate this. I frantically called around to area hospitals but was unable to find a provider. Some did not take my insurance. Others were unwilling to take me on as a patient because I lived too far away. Paoli ended up having the necessary staff to handle my VBAC when I went into labor, so it all turned out well, but the whole situation made me so grateful that IU Health Paoli exists at all in this rural area. I don't know where I would've gone had it not all worked out.

Additionally, even if it had worked out to go to IU Health Bloomington, I would have had an hour drive while in labor--a labor that ended up progressing fairly quickly. I can't even imagine what that drive would've been like. And for someone that had a previous c-section where the chance of rupture is greatest at 5-7 cm dilation, it would have been risky to have that long drive without monitoring.

Rural areas are increasingly suffering because of decisions made in more populous, affluent areas. We currently only have one insurer to purchase health insurance from in our county. We have a lack of infrastructure that can make things challenging. Rural, impoverished areas around the country are increasingly having scary maternal and neonatal outcomes. The healthcare offered for mothers and babies at IUHealth Paoli has done a lot to prevent this from happening in our area, but the decision to close this department in the hospital has me concerned that my community may be facing a negative impact on these outcomes. These are not just numbers; they are lives.

The doctors and nurses that work for this department are so invested in our community and for having a long-term positive impact on these health outcomes, often going above and beyond the normal expectations for their work day. I have been so impressed with their work and I hope that it can continue in some way.

I am hoping that you can consider doing everything in your power to enable quality healthcare for mothers and babies to continue in our community.

I have worked at IU Health Paoli Hospital for 39 years. Thirty two years of that time has been on the OB unit, first as a tech and then as a nurse since 1989. The reason I chose to return to OB after graduating from nursing school was because of the passion that the nurses on the unit had for their mothers and babies. I don't work with the same nurses that I did when I started but that same passion continues with each and every nurse that works on the unit today. We are sad that we are losing our positions on OB at IU Health Paoli Hospital but each of us has voiced our concern of how this affects the OB patients in the community. Depending on where they live they could have an hours drive to a physician/hospital to delivery their newborns. Over the years I have been involved in many deliveries that have occurred in just minutes after arriving to the hospital. These patients are at risk of delivering in their car while traveling to a hospital that could be an hour away. Most babies do well at delivery but for those that do not need the skills of OB doctors and nurses to provide the immediate care to help them to transition to live outside the womb-whether this is one baby or 100's of babies isn't the live of a newborn worth it. Please help us to keep our OB Unit open-our community needs it.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

Please keep the OB open...i was delivered here and so were my kids. We need an OB close instead of driving hours during pregnancy. In the time when a birth can go quickly and have complications which could result in mother and baby dying you can't wait to drive hours to get to another hospital.

I think that the OB should not be closed down. Paoli has offered this for several years and people who can't afford to travel to appointments or to hospitals for birth is going to affect them and the babies health. I think that the OB should stay open. Raise the cost to having a baby in the hospital to be able to keep the funding available for birth. Birth is such a blessing and I think everyone at Paoli hospital does such a wonderful job delivering and being there to support also. Save the OB

When I heard the news about the OB department at, IU Health Paoli, it saddened me.. In 1997 I was born and delivered by Dr. Luke Mosemann. In 2016 I gave birth to my first son. He was delivered by Dr. Matthew Main. I had a great experience. It was so peaceful and everyone made me feel like I was at home. I loved all my nurses! I pray that the OB Department does not shut down. Our county needs this!

I myself delivered my firstborn in Paoli Hospital, and experienced services by Dr. Yoder and Becky Johnson. They are highly trained and compassionate. I think it would be unwise to force women to travel unnecessarily, when there is a modern delivery unit right here, and qualified staff that put a lot of effort into making it the best place to birth. It is also more stressful for mothers to have an unfamiliar doctor present during delivery. I think patient - doctor relationship is extremely important. Let's look beyond the money, to comfort and safety of mothers and babies!

I have been a nurse for 17 years at what is most recently IU Health Paoli. 6 of them years were spent working in OB. I have first hand experiences of what it means to be part of the OB staff and how it feels to be the patient in a rural hospital OB. Yes, we're rural, and yes we are primarily low end middle class and below. It is financially a struggle the way it is for most families in this area to get proper prenatal care. Another 45-60 min may not seem like a big deal with a reliable car, family support, and a secure bank account, but that's not here. And, it DOES NOT make the people and children of this rural community less important. It's not only the financial reasons. I have delivered at a larger facility and my youngest at Paoli. I have been, or accompanied family, to larger ERs, outpatient, and inpatient facilities. Sometimes the services a larger hospital offers is required, but the care is never as personal and as hospitable as the care given in a rural hospital. I can tell you as an IU health Paoli employee, who started at Bloomington Hospital of Orange County 17 years ago, this is more than money, this is what we were called here to do, and that is to take care of others, regardless of anything else. If that's not the case for IU Health, or, any healthcare system so blinded by money that inhumanity is the result, you can add my salary to your profit, it's NOT what I chose to a part of.

It is vital to retain baby delivery services here in Paoli as well as other health/hospital services. Health care is economic development. Orange County has been attracting young people and retirees to the area, but both groups need health care right here at home. In this time it feels immoral to have to travel an hour away for services, especially delivery services. Let's keep working on this.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

My family has used Paoli hospital for various reasons for the past 40 years...my 4 grandchildren were all born there.. I cannot say enough about the excellent care we have received from the doctors and nursing staff at this hospital...I am so deeply saddened to hear the news that the ob unit will be no more...This hospital serves this community....please reconsider this decision.....

We desperately need this hospital to stay open. IU Paoli hospital is very important to this community and all of Orange county this hospital is very much needed to this community

The baby delivery services at BHOC have helped bring countless babies into our small communities over the years. A handful of those lives were my family. I am one of six children. My mother gave birth to each one of us at BHOC. My parents now have 14 grandchildren. The majority of them were birthed at BHOC as well. Ten years ago, the amazing Dr Yolanda Yoder, delivered my daughter, my nephew and two of my nieces in a three month time span. Those babies were myself and my sisters' first children. My sister gave birth to Aly on March 2, 2007, next sister Chelsie had Payton on June 16, 2007, next I had Madelyn just two short weeks later on June 30, 2007 and lastly sister Cara birthed a big healthy boy, Ace, on July 9th 2007. Dr Yoder delivered them all right there at BHOC. Ironically enough, they were all born in the same hospital room.. room number 223. Although it is just a hospital room to most...it is much more to my family. My family has given birth to several babies there. I went on to give birth to, two more children at BHOC. Dr Yoder delivered my boy February 6, 2014. His heartrate started to decline as I was pushing. Dr Yoder and the nurses handled it so well that I was unaware of the issue until she stated we were going to hurry him along a bit and used the suction. Dr Yoder pulled him out to find the cord tightly around his neck. She snatched it off of him so fast it sounded like a rubber band. He was healthy and perfect and received the best care just as I did at our small but loved BHOC. On January 22, 2016 I had my final check up at Dr Yoders office. I was a few days shy of 40 weeks pregnant. As I was lifting my son in my SUV to head home I felt a little off...I don't live far from the facility. Through the country it's only a 10-12 minute trip for me. When I got out of the car at home my water literally came gushing. My husband was at work so I ran inside, grabbed my hospital bag and a few towels and drove myself back to Paoli to BHOC where I gave birth to my last child that evening. These are just my stories. I can't imagine how many other women have benefited from the delivery services at BHOC. No, it's not the biggest and fanciest delivery facility. But ours and why should our community have to give it up? I would prefer the small, welcoming environment at BHOCs ob dept over a big hospital any day. Why make women travel further to give birth to their babies when we have a perfect place locally? Please do not take away something our small community needs and deserves.

This is what happens when the local hospital boards sell out to a larger corp. It is absolutely not sensible to close down the OB section and make pregnant mothers take the chance on losing their baby or their life trying to get to a hospital many miles away. To not have a local OB section is repugnant. I am backing SIHCC in keeping our OB section local.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

As a new resident of Crawford County from Louisville, KY, one of my main concerns has been access to health care. Our county boasts more Dollar General stores than ambulances. We have driven our Amish neighbors to Harrison County Hospital for emergency services, only to be turned away - not just once - and sent to Louisville because they didn't have the resources to handle "certain conditions" (pregnancy). You can imagine how frustrating and frightening this can be - valuable time wasted on an already too-long commute for health care.

I've been so pleased with the care I've received from the doctors and my midwife at SICHC. I would even argue that I've received more timely, compassionate, and effective care from them than any doctor I've seen in my 12 years in Louisville.

Now that I am in my third trimester of pregnancy, I have learned that my trusted resource for health care, will be unavailable to deliver at Paoli Hospital after April 1st. This leaves me with so many questions. What are the reasonable solutions to this problem? Where am I to go if there is an emergency with my birth? I am apparently over an hour away from a hospital that can handle the condition of pregnancy. Studies have shown that this simple variable alone can mean life and death - thriving or floundering - for mothers and their babies.

Our nation's health care system is so broken. I see this denial of access to a close, safe birthing center as a symptom of a system that no one can afford. The hospital can't afford to staff a birthing center for the rural communities that surround it, the citizens of those communities can't afford to pay the exorbitant and inflated prices of health care, and Medicaid doesn't pay the hospital enough for their services.

Where is the money going if not simply between those receiving care and those giving it? Why are these parties suffering while the insurance companies prosper?

Though those problems may be at the root of the tragic - and I don't believe I'm overstating when I use that word - situation we're experiencing at Paoli Hospital, I feel crippled to know what to do. I'm appealing to those in power to see that this decision has dire consequences for me and the people in my community. How can we save this program? How can we plan to have safe births for the residents of Crawford County and surrounding areas both now and beyond?

I'm so thankful for the care I've received both through Paoli Hospital and SICHC. I hope to be able to make them my choice for my young family's needs for many years to come.

This letter is in regards to the closing of the OB department at IU health Paoli.

In 1973, I was born at Orange County Hospital and delivered by Dr. Roberts.

In 1993, my first daughter was born at Orange County Hospital and delivered by Dr. Luke Mosemann.

In 1995, my second daughter was born at Orange County Hospital, delivered by Dr. Luke Mosemann.

In 1997, my third daughter was born at Orange County Hospital, delivered by Dr. Luke Mosemann.

In 2000, my son was born at Orange County Hospital, delivered by Dr. Luke Mosemann.

In 2016, my first two grandsons, born 5 days apart, were born at IU Health Paoli, delivered by Dr. Matthew Main.

From 1993-2016, the above mentioned births also shared one or more of the same nurses.

With this being said, I ask that you look at the pattern of my letter.

Three generations have been born at this hospital. Please consider not only my story, but all of the dedicated patients that chose and continue to choose, to have their babies at a hospital that always made us feel at home.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

In 1995 I was delivered at Paoli as well as my son in 2016. They treated me wonderfully and even more so with my son.. I'm very thankful for the nurses and staff members! This hospital is AMAZING. I feel in my heart that the OB- department should continue we have many pregnant women in our county that needs this option available to them. I give my full respect to this hospital, in hopes that this option will not be taken from us. Our county needs this! Thank you!

I believe it's of utmost importance that women have the opportunity to have their babies delivered at IU Health Paoli Hospital! The need to drive to another city adds unneeded stress to an expectant mom. And, complications can arise that need immediate care! I support efforts to keep this vital service in Orange County!

I am deeply concerned about the proposed closing of the OB unit at IU Health Paoli Hospital. I myself delivered three children at Paoli and was extremely impressed with the quality of care that I received there.

Studies have found that the rate of death and negative outcomes for women and babies rise when they have to travel more than an hour to reach delivery services. This makes the closure of the Paoli Hospital OB absolutely irresponsible. Women in Crawford County, south of Paoli, are at particular risk. Most are already disadvantaged financially, which increases their chances for negative delivery outcomes, and the significantly increased distance which they will now have to travel may result directly in deaths of women and babies in the coming years. The large Amish population in that county are particularly at risk. Many Amish women successfully birth at home, but when problems arise during a delivery they need close access to medical care. Their culture and financial circumstances often lead them to wait until the last moment to seek help. The extra travel time that they now face could be catastrophic.

I understand that a large reason for the closure is that a high percentage of the OB patients are on Medicaid, which doesn't pay well enough to cover your costs. But people's lives are more important than money. Delivery services farther from home directly correlate with more negative outcomes. Being on Medicaid should not be a ticket to lower-quality health care, and I believe that delivery services farther from home qualifies as lower-quality care.

I urge IU Health to reconsider the closure of the Paoli OB unit. People's lives are at stake. You have a responsibility to "first do no harm," and I sincerely believe that you are neglecting your duty to the women and babies in the Paoli area.

Thank you SICHG for bringing this to our attention. I hope we don't lose this service in our area. It puts mothers and babies that are high risk in danger. I hope they reconsider taking this service away.

I believe the decision to stop OB care at the Paoli Hospital is a terrible and insensitive move on the part of the IU Hospital board. Orange County has been very fortunate to have this hospital not just for OB but for emergency care, visiting physician care and laboratory and radiology services. I believe that it is important that these services continue to be available to the residents of this rural county. Patients will most likely avoid medical care if they are forced to travel long distances to receive the care they need. I hope the good of the county and its residents is a factor in the decision of the fate of this wonderful facility and not just the bottom dollar for the IU Health Care System.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

Losing obstetric services in Orange County could risk the lives of newborn babies in this rural community.

Many residents have limited reliable transportation options in this rural, economically depressed county. Having local obstetric services is very important to residents who have limited resources to be able to travel to further communities. Some mothers may make a choice to not pursue obstetric services outside of this community and may decide to pursue more risky delivery options that are not supported by trained medical personnel. Some may decide to go to the emergency room in Paoli when their delivery time arrives instead of traveling to another location further from their homes.

As a mother myself, I would be concerned about changing care providers late in my pregnancy to switch to a different provider in a location where delivery is offered.

I hope that this decision by IU Health will be reconsidered. I am concerned that this is just another step toward removing more medical services in our area.

I have had all five of my children and IU Health in Paoli In. And have had a wonderful experience each time memories I will never forget or get to have with the birth of my grandchildren there someday if it does not offer deliveries anymore. I had my first child there 18 years ago scared to death but the doctor and staff made me feel comfortable and was a beautiful experience. With my second child ,my first son, now 12, if IU Health Paoli didn't offer baby delivery then, my son would have been born in the car! He was in a big hurry to get here and there is no way I could have been drove to Bedford or anywhere (maybe St Vincent in Salem would get many of the women in a hurry but that's still a far drive when you're ready to deliver). When I got to the hospital with my second son I was dilated to 6cm and within an hour he was born it progressed so rapidly! No time for an epidural he was here! With my third child my youngest son he ended up being breech, I was absolutely terrified when I went in for the csection.....but everyone again was absolutely wonderful and helped make some of the scariest moments into a beautiful moment. With my youngest who are twins I also delivered them at the Paoli Hospital my doctor said they were healthy over 6 pounds each and I was 38 1/2 weeks pregnant with them...they were the first set of twins born there in 10 years back in 2012. I was so scared because with each of my children's births were so different, There was at least 15 people in the delivery room, 3 doctors (two for me and one for the babies). They were very prepared and again the birth of my twins were a beautiful experience all at IU Health Paoli. Although I won't be having more children I can not imagine what mother's locally will do that want their family and younger children close that live in the area so they can visit without the drive, or women who would need emergency csection! Or like my son who may have been born in the car or ambulance, if I would have had to go anywhere else....

Having an OB ward close to home is essential in our rural community. Many people in our community are low income and do not own a vehicle, they have no way to travel an hour or more outside our community to give birth. It is heartless and negligent to take this away from our rural community. Please consider what this will mean to us all and how many new lives may be lost because of this.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

As a member of the Orange County community, a father of 4 and grandfather of 5 (so far), I implore you to reconsider this potentially devastating decision. The loss of OB care in our area would detrimentally effect multiple generations of families. I also fear this decision would create a domino effect in loss of other services (and jobs), such as ambulance service. The loss of medical services and the jobs that depend on them would cripple our already struggling citizens. Please reconsider.

It breaks my heart hearing about the upcoming closure of the OB Department at IU Health Paoli Hospital. I just recently delivered my daughter there on December 21st and am so grateful for their services. They were so helpful and supporting and I truly enjoyed my time there. Dr. Yoder was my provider for prenatal care and she was absolutely amazing. I was diagnosed with gestational diabetes and she was so helpful in teaching and guiding me through it. The OB staff was wonderful. Not only with me, but with my significant other and my daughter. They all went above and beyond and gave me so much knowledge in raising and breastfeeding my daughter. I am forever thankful for the staff there and was planning to have my future children there. Please rethink this notion as it affects many of us women who depend on these services. I couldn't have done it without them!

I'm writing to express my interest in keeping the OB at IU Health Paoli. I think it's extremely important in a rural community to offer these services. Allowing patients and families access to care closer to their home provides better support for the new family. Please reconsider keeping the OB department open!

I had my daughter at this hospital. I would love to see many more daughters or sons deliver right here in Orange County.

The thought of losing Dr. Yoder's Services in the delivering room saddens me greatly. She is an amazing doctor that is both thorough and comforting to her patients. When I received my prenatal care for my daughter I drove over an hour to Paoli, specifically to see Dr. Yoder. I never missed an appointment with her and any concerns I had throughout my pregnancy she was only a phone call away. The night I went into labor I made the hour drive to IU Health at Paoli so that Dr. Yoder could deliver my daughter. She was there shortly after I arrived and stayed the entire night until I delivered early morning. She is an essential part of the healthcare system in Orange County. Without her services I feel that many women of all ages will struggle to have quality prenatal and delivery care. The cost of delivery itself is so great, many women cannot afford to travel to a bigger hospital so having the OB unit or a specialty delivery service would be very beneficial. I decided after my daughters birth that when it comes time to my next pregnancy I will have Dr. Yoder for that child as well whether I drive an hour or not.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

I truly hope a solution can be found that continues to give local women an option for labor and delivery that is both close to home and beyond comparison! I found myself in Becky Johnson's office at 37 weeks pregnant; having just moved home after a failed attempt to relocate to South Carolina, I was scared and nervous about starting over with a new OB/GYN a mere 3 weeks before my baby was due to arrive. However, all my fears were quieted the first time I met Becky and Dr. Yoder (since they were unsure who would be doing my delivery I met them both at my first appointment).

My amazing experience with my delivery was not wholly on their shoulders, though, the staff and setting of Indiana University Health Paoli Hospital was more than I ever could have asked for. I was grateful for the compassion, joy, and professionalism that surrounded such a beautiful time in my life and I am more thankful than words can say that I was able to deliver at Paoli Hospital.

My baby girl was adored in the hospital. She was the only baby there at the time of our stay and the nurses showed so much excitement and love to my family. I was truly upset when I was discharged, even being a homebody and so badly wanting to sleep in my own bed, I was afraid I would never be able to show Indiana University Health Paoli Hospital just how much I appreciated everything they did for my family. They gave me personalized experience, laughter when I thought I would lose my mind those first couple nights of motherhood, and safety in a time where I felt totally vulnerable as I transformed into a new mom.

Living in Mitchell, I had the decision to go to Bloomington Hospital as well since I'm covered by the IU Health Plan insurance. However, Paoli is a much shorter drive which was very important when I went into labor and needed to get to the hospital as soon as possible. The remote location is perfect for an enormous number of expecting women, as there are very few other hospitals offering comparable care within many miles. The distance of a hospital during labor can be a matter of life and death in some cases and it is extremely important to continue to offer delivery services to a rural location.

I truly hope a solution can be found. Having just had my daughter in August, I am not yet ready to bear another child. However, I was extremely hopeful that I would be able to experience the compassion shown at IUH Paoli Hospital again when I do have another child, as I know now that I will be using Becky Johnson and Dr. Yoder again for prenatal care (hopefully for more than 3 weeks this time!).

In a moment that a mother will never forget, a moment that a family will never forget, I was thankful to have IUH Paoli Hospital so close to home and so excited to see my family grow! I was supported, encouraged, and respected during a time that my family was vulnerable and changing. I, personally, believe this decision to stop delivering at IUH Paoli Hospital is a huge loss to the community and the women that would benefit from the care they provide. It's absolutely heartbreaking that I may not get such a wonderful birthing experience again as I did in August 2017.

Please find a solution that keeps a trustworthy name on a delivery room in this rural area. I am sure that I am not alone in hoping other women receive the same beautiful memories of bringing their little one(s) into the world as I did!

I'm greatly disturbed to hear that IU Health will cease to offer birthing services in Paoli, IN as of April 1. This is another troubling decision that continues the steady decline of healthcare services for America's rural communities.

It is not okay that giant hospitals continue to retreat from rural communities where there is great need in favor of urban centers where they can make more profit.

I hope that our local and state leaders take immediate action and seek solutions for the healthcare system that is failing to meet the needs of the state's most vulnerable families. Instead of supporting big business, invest in the healthcare system, making it more accessible and more sustainable for the healthcare professionals who are serving rural communities.

## Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

My daughter had her baby there in 2015. We all loved the smaller hospital. It was more personable than your larger hospitals. The staff was excellent and very helpful, they just made you feel at home. When my daughter pressed her call button they were right there no waiting unlike your larger hospitals where there are too many patients. At IU Health in Paoli you were made to feel very comfortable. I think it's important to keep the smaller hospital and it's OB department open. There are families who need this here in our community and the surrounding communities. These ladies who took very good care of us deserves to keep their care going and have jobs to support their families. Thank you for your time. Please keep this open.

I just have to say I am just sick to hear about the closing of the O.B. department at the hospital. 3 years ago I walked onto the O.B. floor 19 weeks pregnant with my "miracle" baby and having contractions. After exams and ultrasounds it was found that my cervix was opening and I could at any point rupture my water and lose my son. They nurses and doctors there were amazing!! They were right on top of what needed to be done and how to do it. They got me to Louisville in time for an emergency cerclage to close my cervix. My son was born healthy at 36 weeks. There is no doubt in mine or my doctor at the time's mind that if I had been any further from the hospital that day I probably would have lost my son. Paoli is a critical midway point between other hospitals and losing these services could be deadly to mothers and babies unable to make it in time to other hospitals further away.

What a shame you are taking this from us we serve several towns for health care and having babies you take this away and woman will have to travel further then Paoli to have their babies brought into this world by caring nurses. I hope you reconsider this. Thank you

This news brings great sadness and concern. Being the youngest in my family, I was the only one born at Orange County Hospital in Paoli. I was born so quickly my parents wouldn't have been able to make it to a hospital in Bedford or Salem before delivering me. While that story has always brought a smile, it now brings worry about other parents that might not be able to safely make it to a hospital in time to deliver their babies.

We live in an economically depressed area. What kind of burden are we placing on our local families if we make them seek OB services out of our area? I have only heard wonderful things from new parents about the care they have received at our facility in Paoli. Don't we owe it to our community to help families to start off with great local care and less stress?

Please reconsider your decision for the sake of our community.

Please keep all parts of the Paoli Hospital open. Sometimes there is not time to drive to another town.

Letters of Support for IU Health Paoli Hospital OB Unit

As a resident of Orange County, I am deeply saddened to hear the news of the dismissal of the obstetrics department in our hospital. Although I am past the age of bearing children, I was devastated of the news. This news formulated many emotions at first, but after the initial shock, I must say that the taste left in my mouth is all but pleasant.

Orange county is one of the poorest counties in the state, I am quite aware of this. I also know that this is not a new variable added to the equation. I am not one to pull out when things get tough. As a 50+ woman, I have just received a BSW because I yearn to help this county and help the residents of this county to have better days. I assumed when IU Health bought the hospital, they were of like mind. I fear I may have assumed wrong.

After reading your mission, vision and values, I felt that those were simply words with no meaning for hospitals that were not as vital as those located in bigger more populated cities. Somehow, I feel there is no good to come of this for my home town. I do foresee the emergency department being the knew OB. I foresee more ambulance trips delivering OB patients to Bedford, Indiana, and I foresee the added difficulty for expectant parents in planning the coming of their newborn.

Lastly, but certainly not the least, I foresee the hit that my primary care physician is going to take by not caring for this county's expectant mothers. Dr. Yoder has given her life to this community and is the only primary care physician in Paoli. SICHC, which is a non-profit organization, has been carefully placed here in Paoli and operated by God and his stewards. I can only assume how devastated Dr. Yoder was at hearing the news. Knowing her loving and giving heart, as well as the commitment she has given to the healthcare of this county, I can only pray.

Again, as only *one* resident of this wonderful county, I am saddened and so very disappointed at the ability of a conglomeration such as yourself to put more value in the almighty dollar and in to the "reports" of "being named" one of the best hospitals in various "reports" and "polls". Your mission, vision and values sound ethereal in print, but for those of us that don't fit into your cookie cutter vision.....they are simply words. I pray that you rethink this decision for the people of this county; not for yourself, but for others.

The closing of the OB at IU health is very concerning to me. Where can women turn to give them pregnancy care and deliver healthy babies. I am concerned for the health of both mothers and babies. We need a place women can depend on in Orange county. Driving far away may not be an option for some. The community could get together and have fundraisers like 5k, dances, dinners for the ob unit.

I am saddened to hear Paoli will close down it's OB dept and parents will need to travel 45 minutes to an hour to have their babies delivered. We live in a rural and very poor area and this makes another difficulty for the local people to obtain care. I hope you will reconsider this decision and not close the OB dept. We have some great staff who really care about your patients and many wonderful doctors who would be missed. Please reconsider, thank you.

As a nurse of over six years at IU Health Paoli Hospital and a lifelong resident of Paoli, I have been incredibly saddened and upset since getting the news that our obstetrics unit is closing in March. I can't give words to how I feel, other than I am completely heartbroken for our community. As nurses, we will find other jobs; our patients are who will be hurt from this decision. We serve one of the poorest areas of the state and we serve each and every mother who walks through our doors with the utmost respect and compassion, regardless of who they are or what they do. Each and every patient we serve is given the care that we would give our own family members, because for the time we are caring for them through one of the most difficult times of life, that is how we consider them: like family.

Take a minute to look at our quality data; we are among some of the lowest C-section rates and the highest breastfeeding rates in the state. Both of these are accomplished in part by the nursing staff and providers who pour themselves into this work, but also because of how we operate. Our OB unit operates like no other unit I've spent time on; while we may have lower volumes than what you or others think we should have to provide quality and competent care, our lower volumes gives us the opportunity to provide one-on-one care to our patients. We are given the opportunity to truly labor with our patients, not just stick a head in the room every half an hour and spend the day charting. We are given the opportunity to sit at a mother's bedside and help her, sometimes for more than an hour, figure out how to help her baby easily and comfortably latch on and stay with her while she nurses her baby to encourage her and tell her what a wonderful job she is doing so that she can go home with the confidence that she is able to effectively feed her baby. As nurses we go to work day in and day out, we voluntarily leave our children and families to care for others on nights and weekends, Christmases and birthdays. We do this because we know our community needs us and without us being there ready to answer the call any hour of the day our state's infant mortality rate will continue to rise.

Over half the rural women in our country live more than 30 minutes away from the nearest delivering hospital. Being 30 minutes from an obstetrics-capable hospital would mean the mother I cared for last year who came in to our unit sitting in a puddle of blood after having a partial placental abruption, who was in the operating room in thirty minutes and was able to delivery a healthy baby girl before the rest of her placenta separated and her baby was completely cut off from a blood supply would have most likely delivered a stillborn infant.

Being 30 minutes from an obstetrics-capable hospital would mean that the mom who came in at the beginning of my shift who was only 32 weeks and almost completely dilated who went on to deliver a baby girl before the neonatal transport team arrived would not have had NRP prepared staff and the appropriate equipment at the bedside to provide the premature infant the support she needed to stay alive and she likely would have suffered long-term and severe disabilities, if she survived until the neonatal team arrived.

Being 30 minutes away from an obstetrics-capable hospital would mean that the mom who came into our unit who rapidly progressed to 8 centimeters dilated with a breech baby would not have immediately gotten an emergency C-section and her baby's life would have been risked attempting to vaginally delivery a baby feet-first.

Being 30 minutes away from an obstetrics-capable hospital would mean that the countless mothers I have stood by and supported during a normal, healthy delivery that happened so quickly we didn't even have time to finish our admission process would have instead happened on an emergency room cot or on the side of a road in the passenger seat of a car or in the back of a bumpy ambulance ride, all without the specially trained nurses and providers there to make sure mom and baby are both safe and cared for through the process.

No immediately available and competent OB care will result in nothing more than a huge spike in bad outcomes. How can you take a mom who is bleeding directly to a C-section if you don't have the ability to perform such? There is no "stabilize and transfer" in a placental abruption or uterine rupture or impending delivery situation. There is either immediate and high-quality action or there is death.

Most of the research on reforming healthcare in our country is taking place in urban settings, while almost twenty percent of the people in our country reside in rural areas. Out of Indiana's 48 rural counties, 23 of them are non-core rural, including Orange and surrounding counties. From 2004 through 2014 Indiana's non-core rural counties had a 17% reduction in available obstetric services. We must have a seat at the table when these decisions are being made. We have simply become another statistic, but we aren't just statistics. We are people, men and women who answered a calling to serve the needs of others.

How can we call ourselves a non-profit healthcare organization when we are turning our backs on some of the most vulnerable populations in the state? We are continually being told these decisions are being made for "purely financial reasons" but why do hospitals, namely non-profit and critical access ones, exist in the first place?

Please, reconsider this decision. The citizens of our community cannot afford to lose yet another resource because no one is willing to invest in them.