

## Written Testimony in **Support of H8203, H7272, and H7626**

Dear Chair and Members of the House Health Committee:

I am writing to strongly support NOT closing the Newport Hospital Birth Center based on my career experience as an OB/GYN. I have worked in all levels of maternity facilities (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3) and can attest that all are necessary to ensure safe and healthy deliveries for the areas they serve. I am recently retired after 34 years in practice, the last 10 at Newport Hospital.

I can attest that Newport Hospital does not just provide low risk care.

Emergencies happen! Delays in treatment, measured in minutes, can often result in lifelong neurological damage, or death, to the child; and/or increase the risk of maternal morbidity or death. Examples of the most common conditions include fetal malpresentation (such as breech) in active labor, hemorrhage, placental abruption, premature labor and delivery (often more rapid than full-term labor), uterine rupture, and umbilical cord prolapse. Emergent treatment within 30 minutes is considered standard of care to minimize these risks. Waiting for an available ambulance, distance, seasonal traffic and weather conditions all affect the travel time to another hospital.

Besides obstetricians and nurse midwives, Newport Hospital is staffed with highly trained obstetric RNs, neonatal nurse practitioners and pediatricians who can treat and stabilize newborns who may still need to be transferred to higher level care.

Newport Hospital Birth Center additionally provides numerous outpatient services including infusions, outpatient fetal testing, and urgent triage. The latter is often to tourists as well as local women.

Over 10 years ago, there was a lawsuit resulting from a delay in care and death of a neonate. Part of the settlement was the requirement that Newport Hospital hold an annual safety conference, in memory of Kenney, to stress the importance of timely and coordinated care.

Again, I do support the proposed bills and do not support closing the Newport Hospital Birth Center. This would be a step backward in quality care for the pregnant people and their infants on Aquidneck Island and vicinity. Although the delivery numbers are small, any increase in morbidity and mortality that could have been prevented is, in my opinion, not acceptable.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Carreau, MD