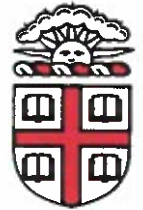


April 5, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the House Health Committee,

I write in strong support of the passage of H8203, H7272, and H7626. Keeping open the Noreen Stonor Drexel Birthing Center at Newport Hospital is of paramount importance for the communities of Aquidneck Island, and the people of Rhode Island.

1. As an emergency physician based at Newport Hospital, I am responsible for caring for any and every individual who presents to Newport Hospital Emergency Department. One of the most dangerous and fraught situations with which we can be faced is a woman in labor.
2. We had a near miss regarding a cord prolapse a few months ago. Cord prolapse is an obstetrical emergency that risks the death of the fetus with each passing minute. The umbilical cord gets squeezed by the baby's head, cutting off the baby's own blood supply, leading to hypoxic brain injury, cerebral palsy, or fetal demise. The only fix is an emergent cesarean section in the operating room immediately. Emergency physicians are not trained to perform c-sections. General surgeons do not perform c-sections. A 45-minute trip to Providence would mean arriving with a dead baby.
3. Delivering a baby in the Emergency Department can be the equivalent of running a cardiac arrest resuscitation, for hours. It can require the physician to be at the bedside without interruption, making it impossible to take care of the rest of the ED. There is only one physician on duty overnight at Newport Hospital. Once the baby is delivered, there are now two patients. The baby may not be breathing. The mother may be bleeding heavily. I shudder to imagine managing a delivery while a patient rolls in with a stroke, heart attack, respiratory distress, or severe trauma. To be the family member of any of those patients, and to be told the doctor might be busy for hours with another patient, would be intolerable.
4. Without The Birthing Center, EMS crews from the region would be forced to transport laboring patients off Aquidneck Island, putting them out of local service for at least 2 hours each time. Those are hours during which they are not available for injuries, chest pains, breathing difficulties, fallen elderly, or children in respiratory distress in Newport County.
5. Women's health care involves much more than delivering babies. Adequate prenatal care is crucial to having uncomplicated births. Gynecologic problems abound, requiring trained OB/GYNs. Women are often the drivers of health care within families. A strong women's health care program creates a nexus of local health care utilization, keeping local hospitals healthier.



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I strongly encourage you to pass H8203, H7272, and H7626, for the sake of our patients, families, and communities.

BROWN PHYSICIANS, INC.

A Clinical, Research and Teaching Affiliate
of the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DLindquist', written over a horizontal line.

David G. Lindquist, MD FACEP (he/him/his)
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