

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

Mr. Erik Wexler  
President and CEO  
Providence Health & Services  
PO Box 389672  
Seattle, WA 98138-9672

August 26, 2025

Dear Mr. Wexler:

We write today to express concerns regarding Providence's plan to close its inpatient obstetric and newborn care services at Providence Seaside, including labor and delivery, well-newborn inpatient care, and outpatient prenatal/surgical gynecologic care with an OB/GYN, effective October 4, 2025.

We anticipate that this decision will hurt the health and safety of expectant mothers, newborns, and families, who will no longer have local access to obstetrics care. Providence Seaside Hospital has served a wide geographic area along the Oregon coast for nearly 50 years, and its closure could force patients to travel long distances to receive both routine and emergency obstetric care. In addition, this closure would likely create an undue burden for many families, especially those with limited funds, limited transportation, or complex medical needs, and it may cause them to bypass necessary care.

We are aware of the economic challenges that are squeezing the finances of labor and delivery units across Oregon. Low volumes of births and challenging reimbursement rates driven by inflation, workforce shortages, and rising supply costs make it difficult for hospitals to continue offering birthing services. In addition, we expect these challenges will only get worse given the Republican reconciliation bill that gutted the health care system by \$1 trillion, thereby making it harder for rural and isolated maternity units to survive. As a result of these cuts, rural and small hospitals will be forced into impossible choices and unpopular operational decisions, like cutting labor and delivery services, in order to keep their doors open.


However, we have also seen the negative impacts of labor and delivery unit closures on Oregon mothers and families, particularly in rural communities. Minutes matter for parents and newborns. Providence is forcing families to travel more than 30 minutes to Astoria or more than 75 minutes to Tillamook just to deliver babies. These cuts will harm caregivers and the health and safety of communities up and down the coast, leaving mothers and families with fewer choices, longer waits, and worse healthcare.

As Providence Seaside closes down labor and delivery services over the next 6 weeks, we urge you to assist expectant families to find alternative options for safe maternal health care so they do not suffer disruptions in their obstetrics care. In addition, we urge you to provide meaningful support to the physicians, nurses, and other clinicians whose jobs will be affected by the reduction in obstetrics care at Providence Seaside. Finally, we urge Providence Seaside to engage in a transparent process with the community it serves as it winds down local obstetrics care.

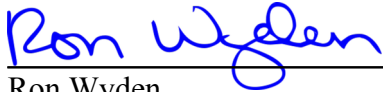
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Thank you for your attention to this letter and for your commitment to serving the health care needs of Oregon families.

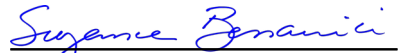
Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress