



CHELLIE PINGREE
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
1ST DISTRICT MAINE

July 31, 2026

Dr. Andrew Mueller
Chief Executive Officer
MaineHealth
110 Free Street
Portland, ME 04101

Ms. Marie McCarthy
Chair
MaineHealth Board of Trustees
110 Free Street
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Dr. Mueller and Ms. McCarthy,

I understand that MaineHealth is currently deliberating over the future of labor and delivery services at MaineHealth Lincoln Hospital. As that process continues, I'm writing to echo the deep concerns I've heard from constituents about the potential impact that closing the unit would have on families and communities across the Midcoast.

Lincoln Hospital has a long history of providing safe and quality care to maternity patients, guiding new parents through all kinds of childbirth experiences. I sincerely appreciate that there are structural challenges to the continued delivery of that care, but the consequences of a closure – on patients, hospital staff, and the surrounding towns – could be devastating. I urge you to explore every possible avenue to preserve access to labor and delivery services in Damariscotta.

Beyond the specific circumstances at Lincoln Hospital, I fear the continued erosion of maternity care access statewide. I delivered all three of my children at hospitals in the Midcoast that no longer provide labor and delivery care. In total, Maine has lost 10 birthing units in just the past decade. We must decide to draw a line somewhere, or risk sending the message that you cannot raise a family in Maine outside of our biggest cities.

Rural maternity care that is truly sustainable will require substantial policy change – from restoring the historic cuts to Medicaid in President Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill Act, to training more providers across rural settings, to boosting reimbursement rates. I'm committed to advocating for that change on the federal level, and I welcome your continued partnership in that fight.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

