



Carmella R. Mantello
Mayor, City of Troy

Office of the Mayor
City Hall
433 River Street
Troy, New York 12180

Phone: (518) 279-7130
Fax: (518) 270-4546

January 25, 2024

Governor Kathy Hochul
Office of the Governor
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the planned closure of the Burdett Birthing Center by St. Peter's Health Partners. As the Mayor of Troy, I am gravely troubled by the potential consequences this decision may have on the residents of not only Troy but also Rensselaer and Washington Counties, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged and reliant upon public transportation.

Maintaining maternity services in our community is crucial, especially for those experiencing economic challenges. The closure of the Burdett Birthing Center would disproportionately impact vulnerable populations who may not have easy access to alternative maternity services. The reliance on public transportation further exacerbates the difficulties faced by expectant mothers seeking adequate care.

Your 2024 State of the State address, outlined a comprehensive six-point plan to combat rising infant mortality rates and we believe that accessible and quality maternity services are integral to the success of such initiatives. The closure of the birthing center would undoubtedly hinder the state's progress towards achieving these goals.

At the same time, St. Peter's Health Partners are seeking to close the Burdett Birthing Center; we learned during the holiday season of the scaling back of behavioral health services at Samaritan hospital for the second time this year. The importance of mental health services cannot be overstated, and any hindrance to their accessibility is a disservice to our community. These actions bring into stark relief the question is St. Peter's Health Partners, as a not-for-profit entity, fulfilling its moral, ethical and legal responsibility to serve the community.

The closure of essential services like the birthing center, the reduction of mental health services contradicts this commitment, and I implore you to scrutinize the potential consequences for our residents.

The real and planned reductions of services have all been exacerbated St. Peter's Health Partners poor communication throughout this process. Transparent and constant communication is crucial when it comes to matters of public health, and the confusing and haphazard efforts have caused unnecessary anxiety among our residents. I request that your office investigates this issue and ensure that St. Peter's Health Partners adheres to higher standards of communication.

Finally, as you know, the availability of quality healthcare services is an essential component of urban development, influencing the vitality and appeal of a city. A robust healthcare system contributes to better public health outcomes, enhancing the overall quality of life for residents. In addition to positively impacting the economy by attracting skilled professionals, accessible healthcare plays a crucial role in attracting talent and supporting community resilience during crises. To continue Troy's renaissance we must maintain access to high quality health care services.

Governor Hochul, I appreciate your commitment to the welfare of New York State residents and your dedication to addressing the critical issue of rising infant mortality rates. I trust that, with your intervention, we can ensure the continued provision of essential maternity services in our community. We stand ready to meet and provide any assistance we can in this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your support in preserving the Burdett Birthing Center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carmella R. Mantello". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "M".

Carmella R. Mantello
Mayor
City of Troy