

Commissioners
Denny Malloy
Rick Hernandez
Tony Bernard

TRUMBULL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

160 HIGH STREET, N.W.
WARREN, OHIO 44481-1093
330-675-2451
Fax: 330-675-2462

Clerk
Lisa DeNunzio Blair

To the Residents of Trumbull County and All Affected Healthcare, Public Safety, and Community Partners:

The Trumbull County Board of Commissioners are deeply concerned about the announced closure of Mercy Health's OB/GYN services and the significant impact this decision will have on the residents of Trumbull County and the surrounding communities.

Access to obstetric and gynecological care is an essential component of a healthy and sustainable community. The loss of these services represents far more than the closure of a medical office or service line. It creates a significant gap in access to care for women, expectant mothers, families, and patients who rely on local providers for timely and ongoing healthcare.

Trumbull County is already facing challenges related to access to healthcare. The reduction of local OB/GYN services further contributes to what is commonly recognized as an obstetric care desert, placing additional burdens on patients who may already face transportation, financial, childcare, employment, or other barriers to obtaining care outside of their community.

The County Commissioners are particularly concerned about the effect this closure will have on patients requiring urgent or emergency care. When appropriate services are not available locally, patients may have to travel significantly farther to receive treatment. For pregnant women and patients experiencing obstetric emergencies, additional travel time can have serious consequences.

This issue also directly affects our local police, fire, emergency medical services, and 911 systems. Longer distances to appropriate hospitals and specialty care can result in increased transport times, greater utilization of EMS resources, and emergency units being unavailable in our communities for longer periods of time. Those additional miles and minutes matter—not only to the patient being transported, but to the next resident who may need an ambulance, fire department, or law enforcement response.

The closure also places additional pressure on neighboring hospitals, physicians, emergency departments, and healthcare providers who will be expected to absorb patients previously receiving care locally. We are concerned about whether sufficient capacity, staffing, specialty coverage, and resources exist to accommodate this increased demand.

The Board of Commissioners strongly believes that decisions affecting essential healthcare services should first and foremost be halted immediately. Furthermore, Mercy should be, at the very least, provide a clear and comprehensive plan for how the needs of the affected population will be met.

We therefore have called upon Mercy Health and the appropriate healthcare stakeholders to first and foremost halt the closure, and to secondly provide greater transparency regarding the closure, including:

- What specific services will no longer be available locally;
- How existing patients will be transitioned to alternative providers;
- What providers and facilities will be available to accept these patients;
- How transportation barriers will be addressed;

- How high-risk pregnancies and obstetric emergencies will be accommodated;
- How the increased demand on neighboring hospitals and emergency departments will be addressed;
- How the closure will affect local EMS, fire, police, and 911 operations;
- What steps will be taken to prevent further deterioration of access to women's healthcare in Trumbull County; and
- What long-term plan exists to ensure that women and families in our community continue to have reasonable and timely access to appropriate care.

We recognize that healthcare organizations must make difficult decisions regarding operations and resources. However, those decisions have consequences that extend well beyond the walls of a healthcare facility. When a critical service is removed from a community, the impact is felt by patients, families, employers, emergency responders, healthcare providers, and taxpayers alike. The residents of Trumbull County deserve to know how their healthcare needs will be met.

The Board of Commissioners is committed to advocating for the health, safety, and well-being of our constituents. We strongly encourage continued dialogue among Mercy Health, local healthcare providers, emergency services, community organizations, elected officials, and other affected stakeholders to identify meaningful solutions and ensure that patients are not left without accessible care.

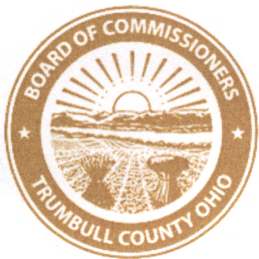
The health and safety of Trumbull County residents must remain at the center of this discussion. The Board of Commissioners asks that all questions, comments, and concerns be addressed directly to Mercy Health as well as their Board of Directors.

330-841-4000 (St. Joe's General Line) ; 283-229-5551 (Mercy Health PR) ; pr@bsmhealth.org ; CAWray@mercy.com ; <https://www.mercy.com/about-us/leadership/youngstown-region> ; <https://www.mercy.com/about-us/leadership/cincinnati-region> ; chancery@youngstowndiocese.org

Sincerely,

Trumbull County Board of Commissioners

Tony Bernard, Rick Hernandez, Denny Malloy



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RE: Discontinuation of Labor and Delivery Services at Mercy Health – St. Joseph Warren Hospital

Dear Ms. Gardiner, Et. All:

On behalf of the Trumbull County Board of Commissioners, we are writing to express our strong disagreement and serious concern regarding Mercy Health's decision to discontinue labor and delivery services at St. Joseph Warren Hospital and consolidate deliveries at Mercy Health – St. Elizabeth Boardman Hospital. Equally as concern is the loss of emergency gynecologic care. With elimination of the OB/GYN on call coverage, women presenting with miscarriages, ruptured ectopic pregnancies, severe vaginal bleeding, hysterectomy needs, and other life-threatening gynecologic emergencies will no longer have immediate access to an OB/GYN specialist at St. Joseph's in Warren.

Emergencies such as those listed above will not disappear simply because Mercy has eliminated the service. Women will continue to present to the emergency department. Often in critical condition. Absent the specialized care previously available what are the women in Trumbull County to do.

While we recognize Mercy Health's stated goal of providing coordinated and specialized maternal and newborn care, the County cannot accept the assertion that this decision necessarily represents an improvement in access to care for the residents of Trumbull County. For our constituents, particularly those who live in Warren and throughout Trumbull County, the elimination of local labor and delivery services represents a significant change in access to essential healthcare.

The County is particularly concerned that the announcement does not provide sufficient information regarding the specific impact this decision will have on Trumbull County residents. Before such a significant healthcare service is discontinued, our constituents deserve a clear understanding of the facts, including:

- The number of Trumbull County residents who currently utilize labor and delivery services at St. Joseph Warren Hospital;
- The projected number of Trumbull County patients who will be required to travel to Boardman for delivery;
- The anticipated increase in travel time for patients and emergency medical transportation;
- How Mercy Health has evaluated the impact on emergency obstetric situations where time is critical;
- The capacity of St. Elizabeth Boardman Hospital to accommodate the additional patients, particularly during periods of peak demand;
- The specific staffing, physician, nursing, bed and emergency department resources that will be added to accommodate the increased volume;
- The anticipated impact on local EMS availability and response times;
- What contingency plans are in place when Boardman reaches capacity or is unable to accept an emergency patient;

- How Mercy Health evaluated the impact of this decision on Trumbull County's existing healthcare infrastructure; and
- What specific measures Mercy Health will implement to ensure that residents of Trumbull County continue to have timely and equitable access to obstetric care.

The County is also deeply concerned about the effect this decision will have on our local police, fire and emergency medical services.

When a woman experiences an obstetric emergency, minutes can matter. A pregnant patient experiencing complications, a woman in active labor, or a newborn requiring immediate medical attention cannot always be treated as a routine transportation matter. Moving these patients farther from their local hospital necessarily has the potential to increase transportation times and place additional demands on our already critical public safety and EMS resources.

Longer transports can mean an ambulance, paramedic crew and other emergency resources are committed for a longer period of time. That resource is consequently unavailable to respond to another emergency in Trumbull County. This creates a concern not only for the patient being transported, but for the entire community's emergency response capacity.

The County is also concerned about the broader implications of this decision for what is already a significant obstetric access problem in our region. Removing labor and delivery services from St. Joseph Warren Hospital further reduces local access to obstetric care for residents of Trumbull County. Regardless of how the remaining services are characterized, the reality is that a Trumbull County resident who previously could receive delivery services at a hospital in Warren will now have to travel outside the community for that service. That is a substantial change for our residents.

The Board of Commissioners believes Mercy Health has an obligation to provide the County and the public with more than general assurances that the consolidation will create a "more coordinated experience." We need to understand how this plan will work in practice, particularly for patients experiencing urgent or unexpected complications and for those who may face transportation, financial, geographic or other barriers to accessing care.

We also recognize that Mercy Health has stated that St. Joseph Warren Hospital will remain an important healthcare resource for Warren and Trumbull County. However, the loss of labor and delivery is itself a significant loss of a core hospital service, and it should not be minimized by the addition or expansion of unrelated services.

The Board is therefore requesting that Mercy Health leadership first and foremost stop the closure in totality, further for Mercy to provide greater detail, data, and information necessary for us to share with all our constituents and other political entities, townships, cities, as well as our Police, Fire, Ems, and more to understand its impact on our community.

The Board of Commissioners is committed to ensuring that the residents of Trumbull County have reasonable, timely and reliable access to essential healthcare services. We strongly disagree with the decision to discontinue labor and delivery at St. Joseph Warren Hospital and believe the County and its residents deserve a much more comprehensive explanation of how this decision will affect access to care and emergency response.

We respectfully request that Mercy Health keep all its OB/GYN services in Warren operable. Additionally, please provide the facts, data and operational details supporting this decision and discuss meaningful measures to mitigate its impact on Trumbull County residents.

Our constituents are counting on us to advocate for their access to healthcare, and we fully intend to do just that.

Sincerely,

Trumbull County Board of Commissioners

Tony Bernard, Rick Hernandez, Denny Malloy

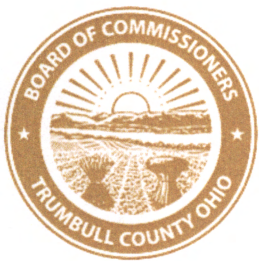
CC: Ohio Department of Health

Ohio Department of Medicaid

Mercy Health Board of Directors

Mr. John Luellen, MD, Market President Mercy Health

Bishop David J. Bonnar: chancery@youngstowndiocese.org



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Ohio Department of Medicaid Complaint – Filed 10/30/26

The closure of OB/GYN services at Mercy Health St. Joseph's, in Warren Oh, is an access to care complaint being placed by the Trumbull County Board of Commissioners on behalf for all our constituents on Medicaid within Trumbull County. Mercy Health is therefore denying access to OB/GYN care to our Medicaid recipients. By closing the only OB/GYN services in Trumbull County at the St. Joseph's Hospital Mercy Health is creating an obstetric desert that directly mitigates their Mission Statement, leaving many Trumbull County Medicaid recipients with no immediate access to care. Please note Mercy Health's Mission Statement: "We extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus by improving the health and well-being of our communities and bring good help to those in need, especially people who are poor, dying and underserved."

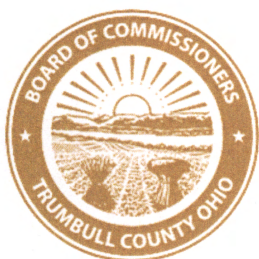
We have contacted Mercy Health and insisted a HALT to the December closure. We are imploring Medicaid, the State of Ohio, the Governor, our State Representatives, and all Federal Congressional Leaders to hear our concerns and engage and assist.

Additionally, we have asked that MERCY respond with:

Before such a significant healthcare service is discontinued, our constituents deserve a clear understanding of the facts, including:

- The number of Trumbull County residents who currently utilize labor and delivery services at St. Joseph Warren Hospital;
- The projected number of Trumbull County patients who will be required to travel to Boardman for delivery;
- The anticipated increase in travel time for patients and emergency medical transportation;
- How Mercy Health has evaluated the impact on emergency obstetric situations where time is critical;
- The capacity of St. Elizabeth Boardman Hospital to accommodate the additional patients, particularly during periods of peak demand;
- The specific staffing, physician, nursing, bed and emergency department resources that will be added to accommodate the increased volume;
- The anticipated impact on local EMS availability and response times;
- What contingency plans are in place when Boardman reaches capacity or is unable to accept an emergency patient;
- How Mercy Health evaluated the impact of this decision on Trumbull County's existing healthcare infrastructure; and
- What specific measures Mercy Health will implement to ensure that residents of Trumbull County continue to have timely and equitable access to obstetric care.

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Ohio Department of Health Complaint – Filed 10/30/26



Information

BUREAU OF SURVEY AND CERTIFICATION OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH COMPLAINT FORM

You may file this complaint ANONYMOUSLY by NOT providing us your name and address. **Skip to Section II if you wish to remain anonymous.** If you remain anonymous, ODH will not be able to contact you to obtain additional information or notify you of the results of the complaint investigation. Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Section I Complainant Information

Complete only if you wish to receive our acknowledgement and notification letters with the results of the complaint investigation.

Complainant Name : Trumbull County Board of Commissioners
Street Address : 160 n high st nw
City : warren State : OH Zip : 44481
Primary Telephone : 3306752460 Secondary Telephone :
Email : commissioners@co.trumbull.oh.us

NOTE: All person-identifiable information is confidential.

Section II Facility Information

Facility Name : * Board of Commissioners Facility Type : * Other Healthcare Facility
Address : * 160 n high st nw
City : State : Zip :
Telephone : (330) 675-2451

Section IV Alleged Wrongdoer(s) Information - if applicable or known

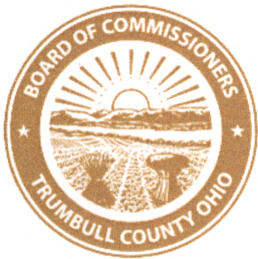
Name : MERCY HEALTH Title : St. Joseph - Closing of OB/GYN services in Warren Oh

Additional Name(s)/Title:

Name and Title : Mercy Health Board of Directors

Name and Title :

Name and Title :



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Section V Narrative Description

Provide a narrative description of your complaint which should include **date, time and location** of the incident. Include name and phone number of any witness(es), if applicable.*

Notes :

On behalf of the Trumbull County Board of Commissioners, we are writing to express our strong disagreement and serious concern regarding Mercy Health's decision to discontinue labor and delivery services at St. Joseph Warren Hospital effective December and consolidate deliveries at Mercy Health - St. Elizabeth Boardman Hospital. This is not only an access to care issue but one that directly goes against Mercy Health's Mission statement: "We extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus by improving the health and well-being of our communities and bring good help to those in need, especially people who are poor, dying and underserved."

Equally as concern is the loss of emergency gynecologic care. With elimination of the OB/GYN on call coverage, women presenting with miscarriages, ruptured ectopic pregnancies, severe vaginal bleeding, hysterectomy needs, and other life-threatening gynecologic emergencies will no longer have immediate access to an OB/GYN specialist at St. Joseph's in Warren.

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CC: Ohio Department of Health