

Jacqueline Levesque
Bar Harbor
LD 1578

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Committee,
My name is Jacqueline Levesque, and I reside in Bar Harbor. I am writing to express my strong support for LD 1578. Recently, MDI Hospital announced the closure of the labor and delivery department without prior discussion or input from the Mount Desert Island community. This decision is a significant setback for our towns. The elimination of this essential service will adversely affect women's health care for individuals of all ages.

I worked for many years at MDI Hospital, first as a Registered Nurse in the Emergency Room and later as a Family Nurse Practitioner in the Health Clinic. In both positions, I relied on the Nurse Midwives and Physicians who provided obstetric care for various women's health concerns, particularly those related to pregnancy. If an expectant mother came to the ER, an OB provider was always available to assess her health, regardless of the stage of the pregnancy. Now, these patients will need to be transferred to their OB providers or another facility.

I understand that this bill is untimely for the MDI labor and delivery department, but I hope it can be approved to prevent the degradation of health services in rural communities in the future. It should ensure community input and a thorough review process.