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Statement on Closure of Laurel Regional Hospital Maternity Ward

*Maryland Maternity Access Coalition Calls for Birth Injury Fund &
Commonsense Reforms to Protect Families*

LAUREL, MARYLAND (October 12, 2015) – Today, Beth Laverick, Volunteer President of the Maryland Maternity Access Coalition issued the following statement on the closure of Laurel Regional Hospital and the negative impact it will have on a woman’s access to healthcare.

“With the closure of Laurel Regional Hospital’s maternity ward, Prince George’s County will now have only one hospital that provides a full-range of obstetrical healthcare services for women. Women and children in Maryland deserve better. They deserve quality accessible healthcare.

“The closure is yet another wake-up call for the General Assembly to take action to ensure that all Maryland women have access to obstetrical health care services. The legislature should implement a Birth Injury Fund and other commonsense reforms to protect families and the financial viability of maternity services.”

In late 2014, a Department of Health & Mental Hygiene Task Force urged the Maryland General Assembly to [pursue the creation of a Birth Injury Fund](#), paid for by hospitals, to reduce medical liability risk in the field of obstetrics, in order to safeguard women’s access to maternity care.

The proposed fund, similar to ones that have been successfully in operation since the late 1980s in Florida and Virginia, enjoys bi-partisan support from voters across the state. [A statewide poll released last year](#) found that Maryland voters support creating a birth injury fund by a 3-to-1 margin, with 62 percent in favor and only 21 percent opposed. In the poll, voters strongly support the concept of families giving up their right to sue in exchange for being guaranteed an award from the fund if a child suffers a permanent birth injury.

The Maryland Maternity Access Coalition is a broad a coalition of concerned citizens, organizations, and healthcare providers formed to protect and preserve access to high-quality maternity care for the women of Maryland.

For more information on the Maryland Maternity Access Coalition, visit the coalition’s Facebook page and website at www.facebook.com/mdmaternityaccess and www.mdmaternityaccess.org.