



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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**ATTORNEY GENERAL TONG STATEMENT PRAISING OFFICE OF HEALTH STRATEGY PROPOSED DECISION
REJECTING APPLICATION TO CLOSE LABOR AND DELIVERY SERVICES AT SHARON HOSPITAL**

(Hartford, CT) – Attorney General William Tong today praised a proposed decision by the Office of Health Strategy rejecting the application to close labor and delivery services at Sharon Hospital.

Attorney General Tong had urged OHS to thoroughly review the community impact of the requested closure after receiving hundreds of petitions from concerned community members. The OHS decision references [comments submitted by Attorney General Tong](#) raising concerns regarding the disproportionate impact the closure would have had on families of color who are already disadvantaged by higher maternal and infant mortality and low-income residents who struggle with access to healthcare in the Sharon community.

“Miles and minutes matter intensely when it comes to labor and delivery. This decision is a major victory for the Sharon community and all who organized to protect access to community-based maternal healthcare. I thank OHS for thoroughly reviewing this application, and for giving careful consideration to the disproportionate harm this closure would have had on communities of color and low-income residents of the northwest corner. I remain deeply concerned by the cascading consequences of healthcare consolidation in our state, particularly in our rural communities. I look forward to continuing to work with OHS and other state leaders to identify ways to safeguard rural healthcare in Connecticut and to ensure lifesaving access to affordable, community-based care for all residents,” **said Attorney General Tong.**

In his comments, Attorney General Tong had recognized the challenges presented by the hospital, including limited financial resources, declining birth rate, and challenges attracting and retaining professional staff. That being said, Attorney General Tong noted that these reasons must be balanced with the needs of the community. He noted the hospital’s own 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment that identified “women’s and maternal healthcare” as an issue of high importance to area residents. That report cited “wide disparities” in access to prenatal care among people of color, as well as a disproportionate number of people in the hospital’s service area receiving late or no prenatal care as compared to the state average.

The alternate labor and delivery locations identified by Sharon Hospital were Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in Torrington (25 miles away), Danbury Hospital (40 miles away), Fairview Hospital in Great Barrington, Massachusetts (25 miles away), Northern Dutchess Hospital (32 miles away) and Vassar Brothers Medical Center (34 miles away), both in New York.

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