



**TESTIMONY OF ANDREW MACKENZIE, MD, FACOG, DAY KIMBALL HEALTHCARE  
SUBMITTED TO THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2016**

**HB 5044, AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDITURES  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 5044, An Act Making Adjustments To State Expenditures For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017**. This bill represents yet another in an ongoing series of drastic cuts to healthcare services across our state. But on a local and personal professional level these cuts also represent a likely tipping point in the ability of my employer, and by extension myself, to continue providing crucial obstetrical and maternal fetal medicine services to the entire region of Northeast Connecticut.

Day Kimball Healthcare has now experienced three consecutive years of loss totaling more than \$20 million, largely as a result of these repeated cuts to supplemental and small hospital funding on top of significant cuts to Medicaid reimbursement rates for a number of key services, obstetrical care among them.

As Chair of OB/GYN services, Medical Director of Maternal Fetal Medicine, and Medical Director of Maternal Child Health at Day Kimball Healthcare, I am the only provider of high-risk pregnancy care in the region. I also provide prenatal ultrasounds for uncomplicated pregnancies, genetic screening and counseling, and also function as part of the larger obstetrical service, assisting in routine prenatal care and deliveries.

When I joined the Day Kimball Healthcare OB/GYN team in 2012, I was excited to be part of an innovative and cooperative team of obstetrician gynecologists within a tightly-knit small community setting. I was proud to contribute to that team and to that community much-needed specialized care for the many high-risk pregnancies that occur in the region. My wife Dr. Elena Poloukhine was already a part of the DKH OB/GYN physician network. We, along with the other obstetrician gynecologists in the DKH network at the time, were proud to be providing such important and essential care for our region's women and families.

By this summer I will be one of just two remaining delivering obstetricians at Day Kimball Healthcare and in Northeast Connecticut, down from the full complement of four delivering obstetricians. In 2015 one of my fellow obstetrician gynecologists left the practice, one reduced her scope of work to not include delivery, and later this year a third will be relocating out of state.

Despite significant efforts by DKH to recruit new obstetricians into the practice, efforts have thus far been unsuccessful. I have no doubt that the continued significant cuts to hospital funding in our state, and in particular the deep cuts to Medicaid reimbursement rates for obstetrics deliveries, are a major cause of that difficulty. The additional rate cuts for obstetrical diagnostic ultrasound are also placing my Maternal Fetal Medicine practice in jeopardy as well. In a region with such a high percentage of Medicaid patients, such rate cuts are unsustainable, especially on top of the broader losses to Day Kimball as a result of cuts to supplemental and small hospital funding.

Quite simply, these cuts are forcing vital medical care out of a region and community that needs it most. There are no other options for comprehensive maternity care nearby to Northeast Connecticut. Given the economic realities of our region, many of our patients are challenged even to make it across town for every scheduled appointment. What will happen to their care when they must travel forty minutes or more?

I fear for the fate of maternity care in Northeast Connecticut. I fear for the health of the 550 or so expectant mothers who receive obstetrical and labor and delivery care through DKH every year, and for those women and babies among them who are facing high-risk pregnancies.

We need a sustainable healthcare environment in our state, not more cuts and taxes. Vote "No" on the hospital and healthcare cuts contained in HB 5044. Thank you for your consideration.