

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: James Hallinan

April 21, 2016

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Attorney General Balderas Expresses Grave Concern over Loss of Critical Services for Women in Northern New Mexico; Urges Healthcare Providers and Lawmakers to work together to Ensure Swift Reinstatement

Attorney General writes letter to stakeholders urging action and offering support through solution identification and implementation process

Santa Fe, NM—Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas sent a letter to the CEO of Alta Vista Regional Hospital, Las Vegas Mayor Tonita Gurule-Giron, members of the Las Vegas City Council, and members of the San Miguel County Commission, regarding Alta Vista Regional Hospital’s recent closure of its obstetrics program. The resulting loss of critical services for women creates an unacceptable gap in care for mothers across northern New Mexico.

“Having grown up in a small community north of Las Vegas, I am well aware that this regional hospital is the patient destination for the majority of residents in the Northeastern portion of our state. Services for expecting mothers must be reinstated immediately in order to ensure an adequate continuity of care,” said Attorney General Balderas. He continued, “My office stands ready to assist in any way it can to ensure that women are receiving the services they need.”

The closure of Alta Vista’s obstetrics program means that women have to travel an hour or more to receive pre-natal care. The Attorney General maintains that this creates unacceptable barriers to service for women in need. In his letter, he expresses support for the efforts being undertaken to remedy the situation, and urges all parties to remain accountable throughout the process and work quickly to find workable solutions.

Please see attached for a copy of the letter.

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STATE OF NEW MEXICO
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



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April 20, 2016

VIA: U.S. MAIL & ELECTRONIC MAIL

Chris Wolf, Chief Executive Officer
Alta Vista Regional Hospital
104 Legion Drive
Las Vegas, NM 87701

RE: Closure of Alta Vista Obstetrics Program

Dear Mr. Wolf:

As Attorney General, it is my duty to act in the best interest of all New Mexicans. As such, I am writing in regard to the recent closure of the Obstetrics Program at Alta Vista Regional Hospital in Las Vegas, New Mexico. As you are no doubt aware, this closure creates an unacceptable gap in services for women across the northeastern part of the state, placing vulnerable New Mexicans at risk.

Having grown up in a small community north of Las Vegas, I am well aware of the importance of having a high caliber medical center in northern New Mexico to provide a range of services to residents from across that region of our state. The closure of the Obstetrics Program at Alta Vista means that women have to travel an hour or more to receive pre-natal care. This creates an unacceptable service barrier for expectant mothers.

I fully support the efforts being undertaken by the newly convened San Miguel Study Group to find a workable solution to this untenable situation. I urge the study group, and decision makers at Alta Vista, San Miguel County, and the City of Las Vegas to work diligently and participate fully in this process. My office stands ready to assist your efforts in any way that it can in order to ensure the reinstatement of services as quickly as possible.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns about this correspondence.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "HB", with a flourish extending to the right.

Hector H. Balderas
Attorney General

cc: Mayor Tonita Gurule-Giron
San Miguel County Commission Members
Las Vegas City Council Members