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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-0545

April 9, 2026

Mr. Chad T. Lefteris  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
UCI Medical Center  
101 The City Drive South  
Orange, CA 92868

Dear Mr. Lefteris:

I write to express my deep concern about University of California, Irvine (UCI) Health's decision to close the pediatric department and pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) at Fountain Valley Regional Hospital in March 2026. As the only academic health system in California's 45<sup>th</sup> congressional district, Fountain Valley Regional Hospital provides essential pediatric health care services and contributes to the well-being of children in the region. I urge UCI Health to uphold its commitment to patient-centered care by ensuring transparency and clearly communicating transition plans to patients, families, providers, and local stakeholders.

As you know, on April 1, 2024, UCI Health added Fountain Valley Regional Hospital to its network as part of its acquisition of Tenet Healthcare's Pacific Coast Network. As part of a significant expansion of its footprint in Orange County, there was an expectation that UCI Health's stewardship would strengthen, not diminish, care and health care access for vulnerable populations, including children. According to UCI Health's own press release, this acquisition was meant to "expand unrestricted access to healthcare for Orange County and beyond." But closing these units without advance notice to the public, to patients, or to families who depend on them has direct implications on the communities we serve.

I was deeply disappointed to hear about the abrupt closure of pediatric services at UCI Health Fountain Valley, which will result in significantly reduced access to hospital-based care for children and families in the surrounding community. Hospital-based pediatric units play a critical role in ensuring that children experiencing acute illness or medical emergencies can receive appropriate, specialized care. The loss of the pediatric department and PICU will have negative, cascading effects across Orange County's health care system and place an undue burden on families, who must now travel to alternative locations for their child's health care.

Furthermore, I have heard directly from nurses, patients, and community members who are alarmed by the speed of this closure without warning the public or UCI Health's employees. According to National Nurses United, a child requiring surgery appeared in the emergency department the day after the unit was shuttered, only to be redirected elsewhere. This incident

underscores the real and immediate risks to patient safety and risk to continuity of care when essential services are withdrawn without adequate planning or notice. It is critical that UCI Health work with regional partners to mitigate the impact of this closure and take all appropriate steps to support continuity of care, particularly as neighboring providers work to absorb increased demand and prevent gaps in access.

Given these concerns, I respectfully request a briefing from UCI Health on this matter no later than April 30, 2026. I further request that UCI Health provide information by April 30, 2026, on its rationale for closing the pediatric units; the process by which this decision was made; how long ago the decision was made; whether it considered alternatives to full closure of the pediatric units, including reduced-capacity operation; and how the health system plans to care for children's health in the longer term at this facility and beyond.

I look forward to hearing from you promptly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek T. Tran". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "D" and a horizontal line above the "T".

Derek T. Tran  
Member of Congress