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Commentary: Hoag abortion ban is a step backward

May 10, 2013

Abortion advocates challenge

Hoag ban

June 15, 2013

Mailbag: As doctors, we oppose abortion ban

June 11, 2013

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The second point that we wish to refute is that patients undergoing elective abortion at Hoag do not receive, as they put it in their commentary, the "full complement of services" required, including "a comprehensive range of education and support, such as pre- and post- procedure support services, counseling and a full array of reproductive family planning services." Apparently Mr. Braithwaite and Mr. McKitterick are not familiar with what obstetrician/gynecologists do outside of the confines of the hospital. These women are our patients, and we care for them before they are admitted to a hospital and after they are discharged. We are experts in providing the "full array of reproductive family planning services" to which they refer as lacking at Hoag.

While Mr. Braithwaite and Mr. McKitterick like to tell us all how the Hoag-St. Joseph affiliation will improve the efficiency of and fill gaps in health care in Orange County, the banning of elective abortions at Hoag does just the opposite. Instead of being cared for by her own doctor during an emotionally traumatizing period, Hoag will step into the patient-doctor relationship and require that the patient go elsewhere for care, creating unnecessary delay and potentially added cost and worry for the patient. This is not only inhumane and inefficient — it is bad medicine.

Finally, we are concerned about one more point made by Mr. Braithwaite and Mr. McKitterick. The California attorney general requires Hoag to continue providing all other women's health services for at least 10 years. What will happen after 10 years? They state, "[T]he Hoag board will maintain decision-making authority of clinical services". We are not reassured.

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Lisa Abaid, M.D.

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Merle Robboy, M.D.

Beverly Sansone, M.D.

Hoag Hospital

Newport Beach

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