

**PE1839/D**

Edward Mountain MSP submission of 8 February 2021

I am aware that you will be considering petition PE1839 on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. This petition relates to the review of maternity models in rural areas.

Unfortunately due to the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee meeting at the same time as the Petitions Committee, I am unable to attend.

I have read the Scottish Government's response, which is full of warm words and platitudes. The fact of the matter is that these words will be cold comfort to the pregnant women who have to be 'blue lighted' to centralised hospitals to give birth due to the lack of local services. In the case of Caithness this journey will often exceed two hours. Until there is more enlightened use of 'air recovery teams' or the forward deployment of specialist staff to rural hospitals, those who would give birth in Caithness Hospital, or any other rural hospitals without full maternity services, will feel apprehensive and under increased risk of complications.

I understand that, due to the little time left in this session of the Parliament, there is little more that the Committee can do with this petition than to close it.

If this is your decision, then I suggest that this must be done in the full knowledge that the problem has not gone away. Indeed, it has in fact just been swept under the carpet until the next mother is transported, in labour, in the back of an ambulance for two hours to get to a centralised urban hospital.