

Dear Chair and Members of the House Health Committee,
I am a student midwife and mother of three children, two of whom were born at home with midwives. We live in Portland. I am writing to encourage you to vote yes on HB 2845 to increase access to midwifery care for those who would choose it. In addition to being a student midwife, I also work with many people who choose to give birth in hospitals (as a professional doula) and so I am very familiar with both models of care. I can say without a doubt that midwives who attend community births provide excellent care, not only during pregnancy and at births but in the postpartum period. The failures of our current hospital system during the vulnerable postpartum time have been increasingly covered in the news lately; women who give birth in hospitals receive little to no support after being discharged. Compare this to the standard of care provided by community midwives: frequent, usually in-home, visits, with both parent and baby. This makes it possible to intervene before any challenges get out of hand. Community birth also provides huge savings to both consumers and insurance providers, with the cost of a home birth currently at around \$4,000. I was lucky enough to have insurance coverage when my children were born, but as a student working with rural clients in Canby, OR, I see time and again that people who want home birth are paying out of pocket for their care. Many of these families are not well-off, and paying for their births is a financial sacrifice. I would love for them not to have to struggle to have the care they want, and for midwifery care to be an option for those who just can't afford to pay out of pocket. Please vote yes on HB 2845 so that all Oregon families have true choice in their own pregnancy, birth, and postpartum care. Thank you for the work you do to support the health of women, families, and babies.

Sincerely,
Sarah Dinger
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