

Please **support Oregon HB 2845 to increase access to Midwifery care** for Oregon families whether they choose to give birth in a hospital, birth center, or home with Licensed Direct-Entry Midwives, Certified Nurse Midwives, or Naturopathic Physicians.

I am a mother of 8 (5 of which were born at home), a midwife with 27 years of experience, and a birth center owner for nearly 8 years. I serve women and families in rural Linn County. 60-80% of the women I serve are on medicaid and could not access birth center birth without medicaid coverage. I am one of the few birth centers still taking medicaid and have medicaid clients that travel over 100 miles to birth at my birth center. These families value the kind of care they receive with midwifery care so much they go to great lengths to plan the birth they want.

Please support this bill because:

-Currently about 50% of pregnant women do not have access to midwifery care especially in an out of hospital settings (ie. home or birth center) because their insurance will not cover the services. This bill would require insurance policies that cover Maternity Care to include coverage for all provider types and all locations giving women more choice with where and with whom the give birth.

-Midwifery coverage including out-of-hospital birth saves healthcare dollars for an option that is proven to be safe, decreases low birth weight and premature birth.

-Midwifery coverage in all settings increases breastfeeding rates which also decreases health care costs for the child reducing SIDS rates, illness including asthma and type 2 diabetes, and increases the child's IQ; decreases health care costs for the mother such as decreased breast cancer rates and type 2 diabetes.

Please make mothers and babies in Oregon a priority by supporting proven, evidence based care.

Debbie Cowart, CPM, LDM
Growing Family Birth Center, LLC
701 N 5th St,
Bldg B-1010
Lebanon, Oregon 97355
(541) 259-2500