

Dear Chair Prusak and Members of the House Health Committee,

My name is Rosemary Campbell and I currently work as a Professional Midwife's Assistant and Birth/Postpartum Doula in Lane County. I am writing with overwhelming support for HB2388 which will increase access to midwifery care and improve outcomes for thousands of birthing families each year in Oregon. This bill will allow healthy, low-risk pregnant women the right to choose a licensed Direct-Entry Midwife, Nurse Midwife or ND to attend her in the birth setting she chooses. Parents deserve the right to choose where, and with whom, they give birth. This right is currently being denied to Oregonians.

I currently attend home births as a midwife, and hospital births as a doula. I have regular, first-hand experience with families carrying excellent insurance that will not cover their preferred choice of maternity care. I've also watched midwives take the financial impact of being grossly underpaid or not paid at all by insurance companies. I previously worked at a free-standing birth center in Eugene that was one of the 1/3 of Oregon birth centers forced out of business between 2013-2018. Under or nonpayment by insurance was a primary cause for it's closure. Out-of-hospital birth is overwhelmingly cheaper and consistently shows healthier outcomes for mothers and babies. Black and Indigenous women are especially impacted with barriers to safe, affordable maternity care options and women and babies of color stand to benefit the most from the option to birth away from the hospital setting.

Consumers are seeking an out-of-hospital birth for multiple reasons. These include: a desire for the individualized, family-centered, midwifery model of care, having had a medical trauma or a negative previous experience with hospitals (maternity-related or not), an empowered, positive previous experience with home or birth center birth(s), a cultural or familial tradition of home birth, wanting to avoid unnecessary COVID exposure in doctor's offices and hospitals, and evidence-based data showing better, safer outcomes for healthy, full-term mothers birthing at the location of their choosing.

Often, families who are facing increased financial strain since COVID, are forced to pay out-of-pocket for the birth they want, and more often are funneled into birthing at the hospital due to what their insurance will cover. I watch professional midwives who struggle financially when the cost of their care hugely outweighs the amount of insurance payments. This doesn't make fiscal sense, and it is not meeting the needs of our communities.

I urge you to vote yes on HB2388 and support safe, affordable access to midwifery care for all Oregonians who seek it.

Thank you for your time and for considering my points of view,  
Rosemary Campbell  
124 Hansen Lane  
Eugene, OR 97404