

As a father of two children born with midwifery care, I strongly support HB 2388. Midwifery care is hands-down evidence-based the best choice for low-risk births. Research has demonstrated midwifery care produces improved outcomes in neonatal mortality, mother-infant bonding, breastfeeding, lower risks of Caesarean sections - you name the health metric, midwifery care excels at it. Midwifery care has strengths in more cultural sensitivity and ability to provide care across cultures, in a moment when health disparities and equity are major issues.

But freestanding birth centers have been closing in recent years. Why? Because, as small businesses or nonprofits, these organizations rely on insurance reimbursements. Currently, insurance companies are allowed to practice unfair discrimination against midwifery care (which has faced discrimination and sexism for decades in this country), and can choose not to reimburse or to reimburse at outrageously low rates. This bill doesn't take agency away from insurance companies, but it does give midwives a fair shot and ends the worst discrimination and unfair practices. I strongly support this bill and urge you to pass it out of committee as soon as possible for a vote on the house floor.