



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
900 COURT ST NE
SALEM, OR 97301

May 8, 2013

Dear Sen. Devlin, Rep. Buckley, Sen. Monroe, and Rep. Komp,

Please consider our request to subsidize the Direct Entry Midwifery (DEM) licensing fee over the next biennium. We believe that Oregon will save costs in the long run as more women deliver babies at home safely.

HB 2997, Mandatory Licensing for Direct Entry Midwives, passed the House Health Care Committee unanimously. We believe it will increase safety of home births by licensing the vast majority of home birth midwives. Exempted midwives will have to provide a letter of informed consent to patients, which should incentivize safe birthing choices.

However we are concerned about access. Providers may not be able to afford the current licensing fee of \$1200/year and the costs of meeting the newly strengthened educational requirements. This may affect pregnant women's access to a home birth if many midwives stop practicing due to financial barriers.

The DEM board's new licensing requirements and procedures under the leadership of OHLA interim director Holly Mercer should lead to safer outcomes and fewer investigations, ultimately reducing the DEM board's costs. But because this will take a couple of years to implement and to process pending complaints, the cost of the DEM board will be high over the next biennium.


We suggest a subsidy per midwife of \$700 to reduce the current annual fee of \$1200 to \$500. We encourage the following allocation over the next biennium:

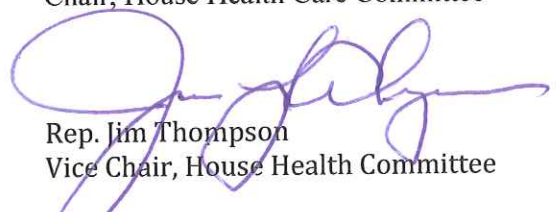
\$168,000 = \$700 x 120 midwives x 2 years


\$20,000 = \$500 x 40 x 1 time basis: additional subsidy to waive first year for all currently unlicensed midwives, since we now waive first year fee for new licensees

\$188,000 TOTAL for the biennium

Thank you for your consideration,


Rep. Mitch Greenlick
Chair, House Health Care Committee


Rep. Jim Thompson
Vice Chair, House Health Committee


Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer
Vice Chair, House Health Care Committee
Co-Chair, Interim Midwifery Work Group


Rep. Julie Parrish
Co-Chair, Interim Midwifery Work Group

cc. Bruce Goldberg, OHA Director; Holly Mercer, OHLA Interim Director

