

Dear Members of the House Committee on Health Care,

I have previously testified against the mandatory licensure of direct entry midwives, stating that I was incredibly pleased with my pre-natal care with an unlicensed midwife, but I'm writing to today to ask you, my representatives, to support House Bill 2997. Let me tell you why I changed my mind.

I am currently the manager of a small, local publishing company. I am the mother of a beautiful, three year old girl. My partner and I own our home in NE Portland. Our pregnancy was planned and we consciously chose an unlicensed midwife. Wanting my birth to be at home and above all safe, I educated myself about the differences between a direct entry midwife and a nurse-midwife. I knew that an unlicensed midwife would come without haemostatic drugs, oxygen, and other emergency medical interventions. Still, I made my choice happily.

Despite a remarkably happy and healthy pregnancy, I had a long labor and after failing to progress for a number of hours, we became concerned. After a discussion with my unlicensed midwife and my back-up (also unlicensed) midwife, we decided to transfer to a nearby hospital where I could get necessary fluids and assistance in progressing my labor. My homebirth turned into a hospital birth.

House Bill 2997, like my homebirth transfer, is an example of the natural birth community and the medical community working together for the good of mothers on their birthing day. I want to emphasize how important the exemption part of this bill is. Allowing families to choose an unlicensed midwife for religious or philosophical reasons is essential in keeping the spirit of choice alive in this bill.

Thanks for reading.

Sincerely,

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