

Co-Chairs Greenlick and Thompson and members of the committee, Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address this very important issue for women and children of our state.

My name is Augustine Colebrook, I am a nationally certified and Oregon state-licensed midwife in practice for 10 yrs. I practice in southern Oregon offering families the option to deliver their babies in one of the two OR licensed birth centers that I own and operate or in their own homes (within a 20 min radius of the I-5 corridor.) My group practice, comprised of CPM's and CNM's, is committed to providing compassionate, evidence-based care with true informed decision-making by the woman we serve. We strive to offer low-risk families the highest quality care available with thorough risk-assessment and appropriate referral or transfer when necessary.

I am passionately supportive of HB 2997 not only because it establishes an excellent standard of care for out of hospital birth providers, but also assures the public that the midwife that they hire has current and relevant skills to safely serve at out of hospital births. Professionalism by midwives is demonstrated by culturally-competent, evidence-based, individualized care. The women of Oregon deserve nothing short of the best we can give. I feel confident that this bill requiring mandatory licensure for midwives will be giving women choice in birth location and provider without sacrificing safety or quality of care.

I am especially pleased to see that in addition to our current legend drug prescriptive authority of postpartum antihemorrhagics, Rho(D) immune globulin, epinephrine, intravenous fluids, local anesthetic and oxygen, the addition of Group B Streptococcal antibiotic prophylaxis, and tocolytics is included. These two legend drugs being added to the bill further protect women's safety when giving birth with licensed midwives. I humbly suggest that the addition of antifungals to treat breastfeeding infections should also be added. These simple additions to our formulary, will decrease a women's risk of going untreated thereby endangering her baby or herself, as well as decrease the frustration and challenge present for a women who needs to seek prescriptions from providers not present in her care just to be able to treat using the community standard of care.

Midwifery standards of care that are consistent with the community standard are what ensure safety for women and babies. It is our duty to offer an initial education and continuing education for midwives that confers competency in all out-of-hospital maternity care skills. It is also our duty as a community of midwives to use our collective body of knowledge and experience to oversee the profession of direct entry midwifery. For this reason I am supportive of the language in the bill that creates an independent board of midwifery. No one can govern better than our own peers who are dedicated to this important work and driven to protect the very people whom we serve.

With the passage of this bill our state will be the gold standard nation-wide in providing choices in childbirth. Mid-level providers are the future of health care as a sustainable model that is patient-focused and cost-effective. With demand for midwifery care on the rise, it only makes sense to standardize the education and practice model. Within this bill are provisions for the requirement of reimbursement of midwives by *medical assistance programs such as the Oregon Health Plan*. Based on extrapolations from a Washington state cost-benefit analysis, use of CPMs that are state-licensed will

save the state millions in Medicaid dollars annually without eliminating any services or reducing reimbursement rates.

In conclusion, as stated at the end of this bill, I do believe that This 2013 Act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety. I do believe that mandatory licensing of midwives through this well-researched and fairly-presented bill is an emergency and this 2013 Act should take effect on its passage.

Thank you again.