

March 19, 2015

RE: HB 3023

Dear chair Representative Mitch Greenlick and the House Health Care Committee,

My name is Silke Akerson and I am submitting this testimony on the behalf of the Oregon Midwifery Council which represents Direct-Entry Midwives in Oregon and promotes evidence-based maternity care and maternal-child health policies for all families in our state.

We urge you to support House Bill 3023 so that timely dental care, an important element of safe maternity care, is available to all pregnant women in Oregon including those women who are Fee-for-Service or Open Card. Delays in access to dental care can have significant health impacts for moms and babies yet current statute and rule do not provide for timely access to dental care for pregnant women covered by Fee-for-Service. This leaves these women and babies vulnerable to the risks of untreated dental problems in pregnancy.

HB 3023 creates a simple solution to this unnecessary risk for women covered by Fee-for-Service and brings their coverage into alignment with that of other pregnant women on Medicaid. Fee-for-Service coverage is not uncommon for pregnant women and it needs to be considered in all public health decisions. This type of coverage covers many Native American women and all women on Medicaid who plan to give birth in a home or birth center setting.

Please help ensure appropriate and timely dental coverage for all of Oregon's pregnant women by supporting HB 3023.

Thank you for your consideration,

Silke Akerson, CPM, LDM
Oregon Midwifery Council