

February 9, 2018

RE: HB 4133

Chair Greenlick, Vice-Chairs and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Midwifery Council, I respectfully request your support for HB 4133 which would create a Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee for our state. Mothers are dying from complications in pregnancy and birth in the US and in Oregon at a rate beyond that of any other industrialized nation. Your support for this bill is a first step to addressing this problem and will make a huge difference in the health and safety of mothers in Oregon.

The Oregon Midwifery Council represents midwives in Oregon and promotes family-centered and evidence-based maternity care for all families in our state. In our work with childbearing families we see, day after day, the huge health and social impacts that barriers to care, racial bias, poverty, and inadequate or inappropriate care have on birthing people and their families and communities. When a mother dies or has severe health issues from giving birth, the impact on the family, community, and economy is enormous. All of us working in maternity care need more information and concrete recommendations for improving care and outcomes for mothers in our state.

The Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee would be able to study in detail each of the worst outcomes in our state to understand inequities, gaps in care, systems issues, and other problems that contributed to the outcome. The Committee would then be able to make recommendations for maternity care providers, hospital systems, social services, policy makers and payers that could save lives and preserve the health of Oregon mothers.

It is time to put mothers first. Please support HB 4133. Thank you for your consideration,

Silke Akerson, CPM, LDM  
Oregon Midwifery Council