

Dear Members of the House Health Committee,

My name is Margaret Porter and I am a Staff Midwife and Clinical Care Manager at the Bella Vie Gentle Birth Center. I have been a licensed midwife for 10 years in the McMinnville area. I am writing to ask you to support HB 2845, to support increased access to midwifery care in all care settings.

My clinic has experienced the sad reality of the vastly differing coverage that insurance companies provide for midwifery and community-based (Out of Hospital) care services. Many families are terribly disappointed that their insurance will not pay at all for their desired prenatal and birth care. Some are able to pay the full fee out of pocket, and while it is worth it, this cost is prohibitive for most expectant families. It is a deep sadness to meet with healthy, low risk, motivated mothers who can't afford to give birth with their chosen, state licensed, care providers, in a setting and with a model of care that is proven to *prevent* much of the most expensive medical care in the world.

Personally, I have given birth with licensed midwives in the community setting three times: the first time with private insurance coverage that paid for my chosen care providers; the second time with medicaid coverage of my chosen care providers; and the final time with no "out of network" benefits from my insurance, meaning we paid for prenatal, birth, and postpartum care, in full, out of pocket. It was a huge financial commitment for a young family, but worth every cent.

In addition, as a birthing center staff member, I ask that you support our small business, as the whims of insurance plans and coverage seem to change with the weather. Pregnancies last longer than many insurance plans. In fact, more than one client has found that their previously excellent coverage was changed with a renewal.

Once again, I ask you to please support HB 2845 to increase access to midwifery care in Oregon.

I appreciate your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Margaret Porter, CPM, LDM, IBCLC

Bella Vie Gentle Birth Center Staff Midwife and Clinical Care Manager

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