

Dear Chair Salinas and Members of the House Health Committee,

I am writing today because I feel strongly that we need to increase access to midwifery care in Oregon.

As a new mother, my midwife team provided excellent care for me and my (now 5 year old) son's prenatal, birth, and postnatal needs. My experience with the midwives from Three Sisters Midwifery in Jacksonville, Oregon was outstanding. I felt supported, informed, and most importantly, safe during my pregnancy, birth experience, and postnatal care.

During the time of my pregnancy, my family was low income and there were many barriers- both financial and systemic- with many difficulties navigating the health care system in order to access midwifery care.

I was an Oregon Health Plan (OHP) recipient who used the services of a midwife at home. Having access to this midwifery care throughout my pregnancy ensured I had a healthy and wonderful pregnancy experience being supported and very well-cared for by the midwives of my choice. In fact, the most stressful part of my pregnancy was negotiating my rights, waiting on hold (for at least an hour per phone call), and having OHP feel unreliable, misleading, and misinformed about my rights to access of midwifery care. It is ridiculous and counterintuitive to be uninsured for the second trimester of pregnancy!! OHP lost my application and I spent hours on hold in the last few weeks of my pregnancy applying for OHP with limited results.

Although it was not an emergency, my midwives advised to have me be transported to the hospital after 24 hours of labor at home. I calmly and with full trust birthed my beautiful son at Ashland Hospital, my midwives by my side the entire time. Despite having wonderful, caring, and experienced midwives, OHP paid nothing for my son Tanner's care. They keep getting back "RA's" (Remittance Advisory) full of \$0.00's. What they normally received for newborn care is \$370-\$470, depending on number of visits and any acute conditions that come up.

Please vote yes on HB 2845 so that the mothers like me can have insurance coverage for the safe and cost-effective care midwives provide. Peace on Earth begins with birth!

Thank you for your time and consideration of my request to vote yes on HB 2845.

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