

Dear Chair Greenlick and Members of the House Health Committee,

I am a mother of 3 in Florence and am writing to ask you to vote yes on HB 2845 to improve access to Midwifery care in Oregon.

Homebirth midwives provide excellent and safe care for both mom and baby. My midwife became a part of our family and supported me with all of my pregnancies and births. She provided thorough prenatal, childbirth and newborn care education, often meeting me in my own home, creating a trusting relationship with my partner and I. I felt she was prepared and educated during the birth to support me with any complications that may have arisen and was knowledgeable of transport procedures had I needed to go to the hospital. I believe that my ability to feel safe and trusting with my provider increased my birth outcomes and birth satisfaction.

Midwifery care provides large cost savings to insurers and health systems but many families still can't access midwifery care because about half of Oregon insurers (both private and OHP) provide limited or no coverage for birth center or home birth midwifery care. This was a barrier for me and I had to borrow money from family in order to birth in the environment where I felt safe.

HB 2845 would increase access to midwifery care for Oregon families whether they choose to give birth in hospital, birth center, or home with Licensed Direct-Entry Midwives, Certified Nurse Midwives, or Naturopathic Physicians. In our community we are very limited in our options of birth locations, it is either the hospital or home birth if you can find a midwife that will travel from over an hour away to support you. This bill will allow for other options to be created within our community, not only supporting mothers but also creating jobs in our community.

In conclusion, I ask that you please support HB 2845 in improve our access to midwifery care in Oregon. Thank you for the work you do to support the health of mothers and babies.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Nelson
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