

March 4, 2019

Dear Chair Salinas and Members of the House Health Committee,

I am a mother of 4 with another baby on the way, living in Salem, Oregon. I am writing to ask you to vote yes on HB 2845 to improve access to midwifery care.

I am currently pregnant with my 5th child and am unable to access the midwifery care I truly desire due to the restrictions that my health insurance carrier requires. I have experienced the exemplary midwifery care with the birth of my second child, which is why I would love nothing more than to seek out a homebirth with the care of a midwife for this pregnancy.

Currently, our insurance will not cover the fees or expenses of any provider which is outside of their limited network. Their OBGYN office in Salem has one midwife and 5 OB's on staff. As a patient, you are left with no choice but to deliver at the hospital with whichever provider is on call at the time. Unfortunately, a home birth under midwifery care is out of the question for us right now as we are unable to afford this option without the assistance of insurance coverage. This is incredibly frustrating. We pay a good amount of money each month toward health insurance through my husband's employer, and yet, as a childbearing woman, I am left with no options surrounding my prenatal, birthing, and postpartum care.

House Bill 2845 would increase access to midwifery care for families across Oregon whether they choose to give birth in a hospital, birth center or at home with Licensed Direct-Entry Midwives, Certified Nurse Midwives or Naturopathic Physicians. This would mean that I would be able to pursue midwifery care for the birth of my 5th child; having the assurance that my birth would be attended by my midwife, within the comfort of my own home and without the stress of paying out of pocket.

Please vote yes on HB2845 allowing women and families in Oregon access to midwifery care.

Thank you for the work you do to support the health of women and babies.

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