

Hello,

My name is Sara Doegah. I am a mother of soon-to-be five and I strongly implore you to support our families and pass this bill!

After attending two of my nearest and dearest ladies in their hospital births I realized that was never going to be the place for me if the day ever came that I would have a baby myself! I could not believe the kind of care they received nor the lack in continuity. They went into birth having NO IDEA who was going to be there to deliver their babies. They had no control whatsoever over who entered the room when, how they were approached, or even how bright the lights were. It is up to each hospital and their policy (not the individual pregnancy/birth at hand) that dictates whether or not these mothers could even drink water!! I am not even kidding when I say I was utterly FLABBERGASTED to witness nurses walking into the room and not even acknowledging the birthing mama at all!!! They just went over to the machine, and checked it, and walked back out!

Giving birth is literally THE MOST intimate and vulnerable event of a woman's life. If handled right, she will walk away from it empowered. Science has shown that when a mother does not feel absolutely safe and supported, it can, and does, stall her labor's progression and in some cases stops it all together. Any farmer or breeder can tell you that when an animal is birthing you leave them alone; and yet here in the states, we don't even grant our mothers that same right or level of respect for the tender work that is giving birth. From what I witnessed in the hospital we as a society have forgotten what a normal birth looks like.

When the day came that I learned I was pregnant, I knew immediately what I wanted to do, and that was to go with the midwifery model of care. I have stuck with midwives throughout all of my pregnancies and I have always given birth in the comfort of my own home. The continuity and level of care I have received each pregnancy has been profoundly wonderful! I LOVE knowing that when I call, it is my midwife who will be the one to attend to my needs! I LOVE that I can literally call her anytime, day or night, and it will be HER on the other end of that phone! I love that each decision to be made has been fully detailed, communicated, and consensual! I love that I feel so honored and supported the entire way through!! I even love knowing that, should some crazy, highly unlikely 3% chance thing arise that requires a transfer, she will even be accompanying me to the hospital!! She is there with me every single step of the way, whatever that looks like! (To reiterate: You do NOT get that from a doctor! No one I've ever known who goes to the hospital for their baby's birth knows for sure if it will be their medical provider delivering their baby, and sure enough in both hospital births I witnessed- it wasn't!)

I also love that every study I have ever found, in all of my years of research, has shown that there are infinitely better results under the midwifery model of care!!! From the World Health Organization down to specific birthing centers, every study agrees! We see fewer complications, SIGNIFICANTLY lower rates of cesarean, better rates and ease in nursing, less interventions like episiotomies, a MUCH smaller occurrence of things like using pitocin in labor, and the list goes on and on!! Even the location in which birth is given, does not denote any better or safer outcomes! Rates of transfer are so low! In fact, from what I've seen, the numbers show that my best chance at giving birth naturally (meaning without any interventions) raises significantly if I stay out of the hospital! When it comes to the cost of midwifery care- even that is infinitely less expensive than the hospital!! Every which way you turn in this discussion it is so obvious and clear that we need to support our families in getting the best care possible!

Every single mama, baby, and family deserves the safest possible care for their pregnancies and their births! They deserve to have that covered by their insurance! This should not even be a question,

especially given the immense amount of data available to us that proves not only the safety and effectiveness of this model of care, but also the utterly huge opportunity to save massive amounts of money for both the insurance companies that would be funding these births and the healthcare system itself! Regardless of birthing location, be it at home or in a birthing center, every single family deserves access to midwifery care being an option because insurance completely covers it!

Thank you so much for your time in reading my testimony.

Sincerely,

Sara Doegah
3834 NE VIEW PL
GRESHAM, OR 97030
(541) 720-1042