

Meredith Mance, CPM, LDM, IBCLC
Aurora Birth Center
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Aurora, OR 97002

March 4, 2019

Dear Chair Salinas and Members of the House Health Committee,

My name is Meredith Mance, and I am a Certified Professional Midwife and Certified Lactation Consultant, and am licensed in the state of Oregon. I have been practicing for 4 years and have delivered upwards of 350 babies. I currently work in private practice with Aurora Family Health and Aurora Birth Center, where we offer full lifespan care through our Family Nurse Practitioners, and natural birth in our birth center facility with licensed midwives. I am writing in support of House Bill 2845.

Currently, the United States' birth statistics are increasingly problematic, with a Cesarean section rate above 33% (the World Health Organization recommends <10%), and maternal mortality at the highest rate of any other developed country in the world. Time and time again, the evidence supports midwifery care for low risk mothers as a clear path out of these poor statistics. I pride myself on offering safe, evidence-based, and affordable birth care to women of Oregon, in hopes of lowering these national statistics and improving outcomes for women everywhere.

Unfortunately, as it stands now, it is very difficult to provide this healthcare and be compensated fairly by insurance companies. Many do not recognize birth center care or midwifery care as equal to obstetrical care, and this care (which is much cheaper than hospital birth) is not accessible to many families due to over half of Oregon insurers providing limited or no coverage for midwifery care. Ultimately, House Bill 2845 would allow us to serve more Oregon families and continue to improve maternity outcomes in a way that costs the government very little. In fact, this bill would allow for better access to these care models, which would effectively lower the cost that insurances are paying out for expensive hospital stays and unnecessary interventions, and save the state money in the long run – all while creating healthier babies and birthing people!

I urge you to please support and pass House Bill 2845, in hopes of improving maternity care and access for all birthing people in our state, and providing more resources for trained midwives to provide this care to the community. Please vote yes on HB 2845 so that the mothers I work with can have insurance coverage for the safe and cost-effective care I provide. Thank you for your time and consideration, and please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Meredith Mance, CPM, LDM, IBCLC
Aurora Family Health and Birth Center