

Dear Chair Salinas and Members of the House Health Committee,

I am a mother of two in Portland. I had my first baby at a midwifery clinic, my second at home with midwives. I am writing to ask you to vote yes on HB 2845 to improve access to midwifery care.

I received the most excellent care for both of my pregnancies and births. The home birth model seems to prioritize taking time with patients and understanding the unique needs of each woman and baby. Because I always met with the same midwives, I felt they had a deeper understanding of my health and were able to steer me toward the right treatments earlier in the pregnancy. Additionally I was able to birth in a safe and comfortable environment, which I'm certain contributed to my incredibly smooth and uncomplicated labor.

It concerns me that the price tag of a home birth is many, *many* times lower than a hospital birth, yet the out-of-pocket cost is higher. Combine this with the fact that so many women are terrified of giving birth at a hospital (for good reason, considering the cesarean rates), and it leaves us with a lot of women choosing to have an unassisted home birth. Unassisted home birth is not a very safe option, but for many women, paying for a midwife to attend their birth is not a reality.

Greater access to midwifery care would mean safer births for so many women and babies, and ultimately lower healthcare costs for all of us. This is a win-win in so many ways. Please vote yes on HB 2845 so that all Oregon families have access to midwifery care. Thank you for the work that you do to support the health of mothers and babies.

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