

Dear Chair Prusak and Members of the House Health Committee,

I'm writing to ask you to vote yes on HB 2388 to improve access to midwifery care. I'm a Licensed Direct Entry Midwife in Portland, Oregon. I own home birth practice that serves the greater Metro area. Midwives like me provide safe and effective care to families in the comfort and safety of their own homes. The families who come to us have a high satisfaction rate and very low rate of medical interventions such as Cesarean sections. The data in Oregon and across the world show that midwives are safe and effective providers of maternity care.

It is devastating to me when I lose business because someone is reliant on insurance coverage, and that company or policy won't pay us. There are many mothers who are excellent candidates for home birth and midwifery care, but can't afford to pay us out of pocket. This is unbelievable to me because compared to a hospital birth, we are actually a cost savings! This is in part because our usual fees are lower than hospitals but also because we lower the rates of expensive procedures such as Cesarean sections. Still, many insurance discriminate when it comes to provider type and place of birth. This bill would support my business as well as the families I serve. If insurance was unable to deny coverage based on provider type or place of service, then many more families would have access to midwifery care.

I don't believe anyone should be denied a type of medical care that is safe, effective, and reasonable based on ability to pay. Unfortunately, that is the effect of the current policies in Oregon, but this bill can help change that. HB 2388 provides for insurance coverage for any place someone chooses to have a baby (home, birth center, or hospital), with any type of Licensed midwife (LDM's like me, Naturopathic Doctors, or Certified Nurse Midwives).

Please vote Yes on HB 2388 so that any mother or family who wants to have a baby at home, with a midwife can do so. Thank you for the work you do to support the health of Oregonians.

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