

Dear Chair Prusak and Members of the House Health Committee;
Firstly, thank you for reading and considering this bill, which is very important to families and women's reproductive rights.

This legislation will profoundly impact my life, as I am currently pregnant with my 3rd child. I have had two babies already and understand the intensity and risks of labor and delivery. I have been fortunate to have two completely uncomplicated, natural, vaginal home births. Thus far, my 3rd pregnancy has been completely healthy and normal. In light of all the factors, it seems unequivocally clear to me that delivering my baby at home with the same midwife who supported us during my other two home births is by far the safest option I have.

Unfortunately, I have a different insurance than I had with my other two babies; the previous insurance covered 70% of the total costs of my home birth midwife. Now, I am insured through my partner (who works in a hospital, as a nurse!) and they will cover 0%. As an advocate for maternal birthing rights, even under normal circumstances I believe much change is needed to our healthcare systems' handling of women's healthcare, prenatal care, birth, and postpartum care; and yet, these are anything but normal circumstances. Given the pandemic that has been raging across the world for over a year now, there is solid information about the threat of contracting Covid-19 while in a facility.

My particular insurance plan stipulates that the birth must occur in "an appropriate facility," and home is not deemed appropriate. As the wife of a nurse who spent the first 10 months of the pandemic working in Good Samaritan's EMergency Room in Corvallis, OR, I have a clear and solid understanding of the risks of exposure there. I believe that there has never been a better time for this legislation!!

I have been so very happy with the care I received from my midwife during the two home births I've had so far, and very much hope I will be able to have the same option this time.

Please vote yes on HB 2388 so that all Oregon families have access to midwifery care. I am full of gratitude for the work you do to support the health of mothers, families, and babies.

Sincerely,
Autumn Benton
Corvallis, OR 97330