

My name is Teresa and I live in Springfield, Oregon. I am writing in support of HB 2388. I had the privilege to choose a community birth center to have my baby in 2018. The building was beautiful and calming, and the staff was skilled, well trained, and patient centered. This choice should be available to all Oregonians.

There are lots of important reasons that increasing access to birth options and midwifery care are important for Oregonians. As a public health professional what motivates me to write today is the evidence of improved birth outcomes with a midwifery model of care. Especially since these improved health outcomes for families also come with improved patient experience AND lower costs to the healthcare system. We need to remove all policy barriers to success.

Now, more than ever, as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic it's important that communities have access to out of hospital birth options so that we can conserve hospital resources and reduce risk of exposure to COVID-19. It's also important that we invest in and support independent businesses. Midwives and naturopathic physicians practicing outside of the hospital are often small business owners or non profits dedicated to serving the community. These dedicated healthcare professionals deserve an opportunity to negotiate fairly with health insurance providers, who are often much larger and wield significant influence.

Thank you for considering this issue and this perspective.