

February 22, 2021

Dear Chair Prusak and Members of the House Health Committee,

I am a midwife in a small home birth practice in Portland. I have been in practice for 9 years. I am also the mother of two boys, both born into the hands of midwives, one at the hospital and one at home. I am writing to ask you to vote yes on HB 2388 so that the families I work with can have insurance coverage for the safe and cost-effective care I provide. Voting yes on HB 2388 will improve access to midwifery care for all Oregonians.

Midwives provide safe, individualized and evidence based care. Outcomes with midwifery care are excellent and help close the gap on inequities in outcomes among people of color. In addition, midwifery care provides large cost savings to insurers and health systems but many families still can't access midwifery care because about half of Oregon insurers (both private and OHP) provide limited or no coverage for birth center or home birth midwifery care.

My clients always appreciate the high quality and attentive care we provide. And, during COVID this has been even more apparent. With the isolation that is happening, pregnant people and new parents are needing even more support. Midwives take the time to support their clients both physically and emotionally. In the postpartum period we see our clients 4 times in the first 2 weeks of their baby's life. These visits are critical for establishing breastfeeding and bonding and for supporting healing in the mother. Our care is much more comprehensive than what most people receive from an OBGYN.

Thank you for your consideration and again I urge you to vote yes on HB 2388 so that all Oregon families have access to midwifery care. Thank you for the work you do to support the health of mothers and babies.

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