

Dear Chair Prusak and Members of the House Health Committee,
I am a mother of four children, with a fifth on the way, in Portland and had all but one my babies at home with midwives. I am writing to ask you to vote yes on HB 2388 to improve access to midwifery care.

Midwives provide excellent and safe care that is woman focused. My first birth was in a hospital where I wound up with several interventions, including an unnecessary episiotomy which mutilates female genitalia, because doctors were tired of waiting for my baby to arrive. I have also had two pregnancy losses, one a late loss in a hospital setting and was asked by the attending surgeon when I declined a cervical exam before operation, "Why are you even here?" Of my 7 pregnancies the best outcomes for me and my children have always been with midwives, who limit the number of families they see which provides more time for prenatal care an experience paramount in better birth outcomes and maternal mortality, believe in birth as a natural, healthy experience for low risk women, and who are dedicated to the safety and well being of mothers and children.

While any individual discussion is anecdotal there are many studies proving the safety of and financial benefits of home births, "Of particular note is a cesarean rate of 5.2%, a remarkably low rate when compared to the U.S. national average of 31% for full-term pregnancies. When we consider the well-known health consequences of a cesarean -- not to mention the exponentially higher costs -- this study brings a fresh reminder of the benefits of midwife-led care outside of our overburdened hospital system (Cheyney, et al).

Please 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.

Sincerely,
Emily Canibano M.ed

Cheyney M, Bovbjerg M, Everson C, Gordon W, Hannibal D, & Vedam S. Outcomes of care for 16,984 planned home births in the United States: The Midwives Alliance of North America Statistics Project, 2004-2009.