

2/25/21

Representative Rachel Prusak  
House Health Care Committee  
900 Court St. NE, H-489  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Prusak and Members of the House Health Care Committee,

My name is Terah Van Dusen and I live in House District 8. I am passionate in asking for your support of House Bill 2388 to improve access to midwifery care. When I became pregnant in 2018, we were referred to a birth center in the Eugene-Springfield area. We live in the Noti-Walton region of western Lane County. As first-time parents, we did not know what to expect in the months leading up to our daughter's birth. But that quickly changed with our regular prenatal appointments at the birth center. We were provided with wellness checks that were professional and empathetic—involving many discussions and not involving excessive testing or interventions. For example, I believe we had only two ultrasounds leading up to our daughter's birth. This is one example of cost-effective midwifery care.

At each prenatal appointment we spent a few minutes listening to her heartbeat. We had informed midwives available to us continuously, and the birth center had a library with books on prenatal care and childbirth. We also took advantage of the childbirth preparation classes. My fiancé was my support person, and thanks to the classes, he did a really good job supporting me through a long labor. Our daughter was born healthy, without cesarean, into the arms of a certified nurse midwife.

After our daughter's birth, we drove 45-minutes one way for lactation support. I know that other rural families have had to drive further for services. I am an advocate for reimbursement for midwifery services in rural areas like ours. House Bill 2388 would get us closer to assuring that midwives are available in our communities, and remain accessible for rural families like ours. This bill is important in maintaining birth as a positive experience, and increasing access to midwifery care for the benefit of all. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Terah Van Dusen