

Chairwoman Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Denson, and Members of the House Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee – thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on HB 496.

My name is Angela Callahan, I am a mother of two and a small animal veterinarian by profession. I live in Cincinnati, Ohio. I support House Bill 496 because it will provide certified midwives the proper support and recognition within the medical and legal community they so deserve. HB 496 gives licensed midwives legal access to life saving medications and requires hospitals, their staff, and EMS to universally recognize midwives as legal providers, making transfers more smooth and safe and providing continuity of care and comfort for the family in a transfer situation no matter which hospital they go to or provider they encounter there. It requires licensed midwives to maintain their professional license with continuing education to ensure the most current care recommendations for their patients. I have the advantage of experiencing the parallels in care having had both a hospital birth with an OB/Gyn group and a home birth with a midwifery group. My husband and I chose to have a home birth with a midwifery group for our second child because we wanted a more relaxed environment and a more whole-health approach for our second pregnancy. I feel the quality of medicine provided by my midwives was not only equal to the medical group, but often exceeded the medical group. My second pregnancy also had a medical issue that required close monitoring that I am confident would not have been managed as gracefully if I were in the OB/Gyn group. My midwives were current on the most recent medical research and recommendations as it pertains to maternal and infant care. They focused on whole health of my pregnancy. My OB/Gyn group seemed to focus on numbers and statistics and was more of an assembly line rather than really listening to me as my pregnancy progressed. HB 496 gives licensed midwives legal access to lifesaving medications as well as other routine medications that parents have the option to provide for their infants such as vitamin K, eye ointment and Rhogam. These medications are currently difficult to access by midwives and their clients under the current legislation. Along the same line as having legal and safe access to medications, a family that chooses to utilize the service of a licensed midwife should also have legal, nondiscriminatory access to ultrasound and labwork from reputable sources. Midwives should also be granted similar legal protection for their services. People already use and will continue to choose midwives. It is important that consumers have safe, competent, trained providers who can help them access ultrasound and labs to make sure women are low risk and increase safety.

This is why I am in support of HB 496, thank you for your time,

Angela Callahan, DVM