

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

I am a mom of 4 children (3 of whom were born at home with a midwife). I have been cared for by midwives during my pregnancies, birth, and postpartum and feel passionate about the level of care I received from my homebirth midwives.

I support licensing and regulating midwives in Ohio for many reasons. First, HB 496 allows licensed midwives to legally obtain emergency medications. In the case of hemorrhaging, having access to those medications is crucial. HB 496 also requires hospitals and their staff to recognize midwives as legal providers, which makes transfers smoother, easier and safer. Having a safe and accessible back-up plan for when a hospital is needed makes home birth safer for all. I also feel strongly that all people should have the right to choose where to give birth. HB 496 gives midwives access to ordering labs and ultrasounds, as well as medications that may be needed, all of which provide better care for women who choose to birth at home. By supporting HB 496, birthing people and their babies will have safer, more accessible home birth care. People have and will continue to choose home birth, and HB 496 ensure access to trained, competent providers who have access to labs and ultrasounds which can identify problems early. Additionally, HB 496 ensures that midwives are accountable for their practice and safety. Without these safety measures, "midwives" who aren't trained can provide unsafe service in the home birth community- HB 496 would help prevent this from happening. As a 3-time home birthing mother, I feel that if HB 496 had been passed before I had my babies, my care would've been easier to access and I would've had access to medications I did not have access to. I want this to pass for future parents so they can have a safe, comprehensive home birth/midwifery experience.

In conclusion, this extensive list of reasons is why I am in support of HB 496.

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