

Chairwoman Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Liston, 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 Amarycca Thacker, and I'm a mom of two beautiful girls. I've both received traditional hospital provided care for one child and midwifery supported care for my other child. In my experience, the level of personalized care received through a midwife has far exceeded any medical care I've received for myself and for my children.

I support HB 496 because I think it's extremely important for mothers to have a choice to birth how they want and where they want. Informed consent is extremely important to me and I see so many mom's unaware of their options. I was told numerous times while pregnant with my first (traditional hospital provided care) that I couldn't do certain things, but with no real reasoning or explanation behind it. I felt rushed, forced and was not informed of several situations that, I felt, lead to me receiving a cesarean section. No one should be forced into medical care they aren't comfortable with. HB 496 will allow midwives easier access to medication, routine lab work, and easier second opinions would be beneficial for all. It will help take the ease of crowded hospitals and over worked medical providers, and keep births safe. People will continue to birth how they wish, making is safer should be the number one priority to all.

Being under the care of midwife saved my family money and time. I was able to be home with my older child immediately after giving birth to my younger child. It gave me 40 weeks to pay up front, known costs associated with having a baby rather than receiving multiple, hard to interpret bills post-birth. I was able to learn my baby's needs without strangers in my space. Breastfeeding was easier because I was comfortable and had undivided attention and support through my midwives and lactation consultants. Having a VBAC was important to me and my midwives (especially after confirmed medical ultrasounds) were confident in my abilities, while many OB's just spit out statistics making it seem impossible. My team of midwives prepped me, educated me, and referred me to what I called my birth team that gave me the confidence I needed to birth my baby how I wanted. Every parent should have that right and that support.

These, among many other reasons, are why I support HB 496.

Thank you for your time,

Amarycca Thacker