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DATE: November 29, 2022

TO: Chairwoman Manchester, Ranking Member Denson, and Distinguished Members of the Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee  
[familiesaging&humanservices@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:familiesaging&humanservices@ohiohouse.gov)

FROM: Domenica T. Tortelli

RE: Opposition to HB 496

I am writing in **opposition** to HB 496 and in support of community midwives and the legal rights of birthing families in the State of Ohio.

I am writing as both a consumer of homebirth and as a person who supports birthing families through childbirth education, birth doula support, and lactation counseling services.

Ohio's community midwives have a long history of providing safe, affordable, and humanistic maternity care to homebirthing families that is unattainable through typical obstetric services managed by large corporations and complicated medical systems driven by profit and self-preservation.

Ohio's birthing families deserve options. Seeking to criminalize the very professionals who can offer them an alternative to overly medicalized birth experiences in which one-third of healthy mothers nationwide undergo major abdominal surgery and a variety of other birth-related morbidities to birth their babies is a crime in and of itself.

It is equally unfair and nonsensical to establish the Ohio Board of Nursing as the regulatory body of non-nurse community midwives, in which there is no commonality.

I implore you to do the right thing by respecting Ohio's community midwives for the excellent service they provide our families and supporting them to continue practicing as they currently do.

Sincerely,

*Domenica T. Tortelli*

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