

To Who it My Concern

Hello, my name is Joy Steiner and I have the great privilege of giving birth to two of my children in my home with the assistance of an unlicensed midwife. The more I hear about HB496 the more I have become concerned with how this could affect me and my family!

Birth is a normal life event, not a medical event. Midwives have been safely and satisfactorily serving families choosing to birth at home for many decades in Ohio. Each family should be allowed the right of choosing the best birth place and care provider for their family/circumstances.

The part of the bill (Sec. 4723.54-2) that states an unlicensed midwife is a criminal and prohibited from practicing and further guilty (Sec. 4723.99-A) of felony charges for serving families in home birth as she always has done. This is particularly concerning because it will interfere with my freedom of choice of birth place and care provider and will increase risks for those unable to utilize a midwife as they deem appropriate.

I personally received much better care with my homebirth team than I did with a licensed hospital midwife. My homebirth midwife would spend at least an hour with me at each prenatal appointment and was always willing to answer my questions! I was just a number at the hospital, as with being at home I was given individualized care specific to my needs!

I would beg of you to not let this house bill pass in Ohio! It breaks my heart to think I possibly wouldn't be able to give birth at home in the future or would have to make the very difficult decision to have an unassisted homebirth. This is so wrong to put mothers in that horrible spot! Birth has been happening without a hospital for centuries! I am so grateful for a hospital and advanced medical care when needed but an average birth isn't in need of those interventions.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story!

Joy Steiner  
Wooster, Ohio