

Testimony in Opposition to HB 496 and its Substitute.

Chairwomen Manchester, Vice-Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Denson and all members of the Families, Aging and Human Services Committee,

I am Sarah Weaver. Growing up in GA., I vividly remember my Mother having 7 unassisted home births, because she could not find a midwife. They were either non-existent or underground. Which drives me to plead for proper changes in HB496

I want to thank Rep Koehler for recognizing midwives. After reading and studying the bill and the new substitute bill. I oppose HB496 for the reasons I want to address.

I have to wonder whether Rep Koehler and the committee here at large understand how many different midwives there are?!

Most people in the state of Ohio hear "midwife" and they think that it is a CNM, the N for Nurse, certified nurse-midwife. To be a CNM the individual must already be a RN, Registered Nurse and then they want to specialize in delivering babies! So they go on to the Nurse Midwife school and become Certified Nurse Midwife, CNM. The laws of Ohio have been established for CNM'S for a number of years already.

Certified midwives, CM, are graduated from the same certified school as the nurse midwives, except they are not nurses. Currently there are no known CM's in the state of Ohio.

Current Ohio law does not forbid or restrict or criminalize midwives in general. Let us look at some other types of midwives.

Direct Entry Midwives, DEM, also known as Traditional midwives, which I am one of those. Who have been primarily trained by apprenticeship. There are approximately 75-100 Direct Entry/Traditional midwives in Ohio. But there are 2 different kinds of Direct Entry/Traditional Midwives, there are those who feel the need to get a more professional title and go through the process of getting Certified through North American Registry of Midwives, who then can hold the title of certified professional midwife, CPM. "P" for professional. North American Registry of Midwives, NARM, was formed in 1992, as a way for midwives to register as a group among themselves. $\frac{2}{3}$'s were Direct Entry/Traditional Midwives, $\frac{1}{3}$ being Nurse midwives. They then created a testing system to allow for certification, creating certified professional midwives, CPM's The "P" for professional! Most CPM'S were Direct Entry Midwives.

A side note about North American Registry of Midwives, NARM, is that there is a group of those same midwives who have put into place what they call "the big Push", their goal is to make it legal for CPM's in every state, which sounds noble and good. But they are doing so under the disguise of making midwifery legal, but making other midwives illegal. Unfortunately they are

willing to do this by making the sister midwives, those Direct Entry/Traditional Midwives who are not willing to join their ranks of becoming a CPM and pay their dues of money, illegal. A lot of CPM'S will tell you that they really don't practice any different being a CPM vs. when they were just a Direct Entry/Traditional Midwife.

Unfortunately this bill only addresses CPM's and CM's. It does not address Direct Entry/Traditional midwives. Instead these midwives (Direct Entry/Traditional Midwives) who make up approximately half of the 75-100 midwives that this bill and the substitute bill will affect, will be put out of business and no longer able to serve the women they currently are serving. The charge of a felony on page 98 in the current substitute bill in section 4723.99 should be Removed and replaced as a misdemeanor in section 4723.99 (B) Doing this would at least keep the families of these midwives partly safe and keep those midwives from becoming a felon. Another area that needs to be changed to help protect these Direct Entry/Traditional midwives who have already been doing a good job for decades, and here, I want to quote, Rep Koehler, "the midwives providing care in Ohio are not causing a problem, they do not need to be fixed." If he really believes this then there should be no problem in reinstating this into the bill and protecting these Direct Entry/Traditional midwives. So on page 76 in the current substitute bill in section 4723.54, (B) (2), g. This wording should be changed to read as follows: (g) A person who provides midwifery services without a license giving written informed consent, stating they are not licensed to use prescription drugs and that their education and qualifications have not been reviewed by any board.

If these 2 points were to be changed I personally would no longer be in opposition against this bill 496.

It is my greatest concern that allowing this bill to pass as it is currently written and substituted would largely affect the families in the state of Ohio who use their services and that we have valuable midwives in this state that would then be charged a felony and bring more expenses to our state's revenue. This is terrible bad management and oversight on the part of regulations in our state.

I plead with you to make these changes to protect something that Rep Koehler already has said, "does not need to be fixed."

Thank you for hearing my concerns.

I'm open to any questions.

Sarah Weaver