

FROM THE DESK OF

## Dr. Theresa Hohl, CACCP

June 23, 2024

As a Chiropractic Physician, an advocate for women's health and birthing rights, and a mother who had my son at home, I fully support Ohio Bill HB 545. This bill addresses a critical issue facing mothers today: the right to choose the safest and most comfortable birthing environment. The ability to make this choice is not only a matter of personal preference but a fundamental human right.

I had my son in Georgia where there was no legal birth choice. At that time in 1999 the hospital c-section rates were well above what the WHO deemed as safe or necessary. So I decided to birth at home with a midwife. Being able to birth at home was the best decision for my family. However, since it was "illegal" my midwives did not follow up once I had birthed my son.

In our interconnected world, where laws govern our lives but nature dictates our needs, it is evident that the best birth outcomes occur in spaces where mothers feel safe. Unfortunately, the current divide between hospital and home birth options often forces mothers into difficult positions, where their choices are limited, and their needs inadequately met. This can have severe repercussions on the health and safety of both mothers and their children.

Ohio Bill HB 545 seeks to eliminate this disparity by recognizing and legitimizing the role of certified midwives in helping mothers craft personalized birth plans. This bill ensures that mothers can choose their preferred birthing environment and receive the appropriate support, whether they opt for a hospital, home, or alternative setting. By closing the gap in birthing choices and providing comprehensive support throughout the birthing process, HB 545 will contribute to better maternal and infant health outcomes.

The Buckeye Birth Coalition's efforts to work with all birth professionals, united by the goal of improving birth outcomes, is commendable and necessary. HB 545 is a crucial step towards ensuring that every mother in Ohio has the right and the opportunity to give birth in a setting that feels safe, supportive, and best for her and her baby. It is time we recognize and respect this right, ultimately fostering a healthier and more equitable birthing experience for all.

Sincerely,

Theresa L Hohl, DC, CACCP

