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**Committees**  
Rules and Reference  
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From the desk of:  
**Riordan McClain**  
State Representative

**Columbus Office**  
Vern Riffe Center  
77 S. High Street  
14th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
(614) 644-6265  
rep87@ohiohouse.gov  
www.ohiohouse.gov

Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Provider Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present H.B. 224.

Midwifery care has been a practice throughout human history and is a vital service for our communities. This bill has been worked on for the last three general assembly's and the version before you today is a testament to the work of numerous interested parties coming together towards a single goal. This bill creates additional paths to licensure while preserving the care of traditional (lay) midwives.

Infant mortality and maternity healthcare deserts are real issues that we face today in Ohio. This legislation is aimed at providing increased opportunities for care for women and families before, during, and after pregnancy.

In Ohio, we have a group of individuals who are trained and capable to care for women but are limited by the current regulatory environment. H.B. 224 seeks to recognize and provide a new licensure for midwives who wish to do so, while also making sure that traditional (lay) midwives can continue to operate without licensure as they always have if they receive informed consent from their clients and carry out their limited scope of work. Most notably, prohibiting the administration of drugs.

This bill has been crafted with the help of many midwife groups input and recommendations to accommodate the most practitioners. At the end of the day, we want to promote healthy environments for pregnant women to receive great prenatal care, safe birthing options, and knowledge about those choices.

The miracle of birth is an awe-inspiring event and isn't simply a procedure to be rushed as long as mom and baby are doing well. Midwives provide a time-tested approach to prenatal care and childbirth that guides the mother through the natural processes to bringing a healthy baby from their womb into their arms.

This bill is about setting up the licensure process, an advisory committee to oversee midwives moving forward, and protecting all midwives to allow them to do what they do best, bring life into our world.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I will turn it over to Representative Miller to go into more details on what the bill does.

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