

I am adamantly against HB496 for many reasons, but most importantly because it is an attack on our freedom and right to choose the best medical care that, we the people or individual, deem fit for her and her child(ren). Homebirthing has been happening since the beginning of time, and recently, it has hit another 30-year increase in those choosing to homebirth. This increase is a direct correlation of those wishing to follow homebirthing practices and step away from mainstream medicine. Criminalizing 80% of practicing midwives who currently fall in the category of unlicensed standards by the current medical board is criminal in itself. These competent women are the backbone of traditional homebirthing and have the knowledge to ensure safe home deliveries for both mother and child. It should be said clearly that the board of nursing has never been in favor or supportive of homebirth so categorizing homebirthing midwives under this licensure would be incongruent to most current practices. I firmly believe that passing HB496 would actually result in an increase of vulnerability to those choosing homebirth as they may choose to go unassisted which could result in more dangerous outcomes without guidance of knowledgeable midwives currently practicing unlicensed. I, for one, would rather choose to go unassisted than to submit my birthing experience to a hospital or nursing-directed experience. I have significant trauma from previous hospital births with both OBGYN and licensed nursing midwives. Harm was incurred physically and mentally on both me and my children in these experiences to which I still must manage on a daily basis. Please do your part in protecting the freedom of choice by voting no on HB496. Simply choosing to write in a religious exemption which then is communicated in spoken word is not necessarily ground for being supported in a court of law. A more robust statute of protection must be detailed in any bill, if passed, in order to follow the democracy that our country was founded on.