

MASSACHUSETTS MIDWIVES NEED YOUR HELP....

...to pass Senate Bill 2636, which will establish a Board of Midwifery in Massachusetts. This Board will regulate all midwives in the state independently.

Important reasons to support this bill:

- It will increase accessibility to midwifery care for women who want it
- It will provide more autonomy for midwives practicing in the hospital setting
- It will increase the safety of midwifery care in all settings (study upon study have shown midwifery care to be as safe as low-risk physician-attended births- See BMJ study:<http://bmj.bmjournals.com/cgi/reprint/330/7505/1416>)

You can find the entire bill at: <http://www.mass.gov/legis/bills/senate/185/st02/st02636.htm>

**** WE ONLY HAVE UNTIL THE END OF THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION (July 31st) TO PASS THIS BILL! ****

Please help us by calling your State Representative and/or Joining Midwives at the State House for a day of Lobbying

TO CALL: Go to http://www.mass.gov/legis/city_town.htm#B_bookmark to find out who your Representative is and how to reach them). You may not be able to talk to your Rep. but you will definitely get the chance to talk with one of their aides. It is their job to pass your message onto your Rep. Make sure to give them your address so that they know you are one of their constituents.

Here is a simple message to base your call on: **"Please support senate bill2636. It will help make midwifery safe and will regulate all midwives. Please help to remove the hold from Senate bill 2636 by writing to the Speaker of the House, DiMasi, and asking him to bring the bill back into circulation"**

If your representative has any questions you can let them know that they can call BJ McKinnon at 413-245-9358.

TO LOBBY: We will be at the State House 10 am on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays through the end of July. Call BJ McKinnon, CPM, CNM 413-245-9358 for more information and the exact meeting point and which midwife you will lobby with on that date.

Please feel free to circulate this widely!

Massachusetts Coalition for Midwifery

*Eastern and Western Massachusetts Chapters, American College of Nurse Midwives
Massachusetts Midwives Alliance
Massachusetts Friends of Midwives*

Fact Sheet: Senate 2636

An Act Relative to a Board of Registration in Midwifery (Lead Sponsor: Senator Moore)

Legislative History:

Senate 2636 was engrossed in Senate on April 10, 2008 and has been reported out of House Steering and Policy.

The Purpose of the Bill:

The purpose of this bill is to have the Commonwealth set standards for the practice of midwifery in Massachusetts. The bill creates a Board of Registration of Midwifery, which will regulate the practice of licensed nurse midwives, licensed midwives, and licensed professional midwives.

Current Law:

Currently, the Commonwealth only regulates the practice of certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), through the Board of Registration in Nursing. There is no state oversight of other midwives; however midwives who are not nurses provide midwifery services to women across the state.

Why This Bill is Needed:

This bill is needed to ensure that midwifery care is practiced safely in all settings in Massachusetts, with clear standards and state oversight by a Board of Registration in Midwifery. The bill articulates a definition of midwifery adopted by the World Health Organization, and promotes a midwifery model of care. Encouragement of midwifery practice will:

- Increase access to cost effective, high quality OB-GYN care - especially critical since there is a serious shortage of OB-GYN physicians in Mass.
- Lower soaring C-section rates in Massachusetts - now one third of all births and increasing.

What This Bill Does:

- Establishes state oversight of midwifery through a Board of Registration of Midwifery, which will regulate the practice of midwifery.
- Designates two levels of practice: 1) licensed professional midwives (CPMs) authorized to practice midwifery; 2) licensed midwives and licensed nurse-midwives (CMs and CNMs) who practice midwifery and provide additional health services such as gynecological services.
- Authorizes the Board and the Department of Public Health (DPH), in consultation with the Board of Midwifery, to promulgate regulations relative to prescriptive authority for licensed nurse-midwives and licensed midwives, and the privilege of obtaining and administering medications necessary for the scope of practice of all midwives.

Who Are the Midwives That Will be Affected by this Bill?

Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs):

Over 400 Certified Nurse Midwives are licensed in Massachusetts. CNMs:

- Are currently regulated by the Board of Registration in Nursing.
- May practice in any setting, including clinic, private office, hospital, birth center or home.
- Receive mandated third party reimbursement, except through HMOs.
- Have prescriptive authority, under the Boards of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and DPH, under physician supervision.
- Delivered 13.6 % of all babies born in Massachusetts in 1998 (11,064 births).
- Practice in 111 practices across the state in 1999, in 2/3 of all hospitals with maternity services, and run 3 birth centers.

Certified Midwives (CMs):

The American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) has decided that nursing is no longer a pre-requisite to practicing midwifery and will now certify non-nurse graduates of approved schools. There are currently no CMs practicing in Massachusetts because the credential is a new one. However, the CM Credential is approved in New York State and the program there is producing graduates who will eventually come to Massachusetts to practice. Under current law, these qualified midwives cannot be licensed to practice in Massachusetts.

CMs have:

- Skills equal to CNMs
- Same training plus pre-requisite courses to make up for “nursing” component
- Same level of skill, knowledge, and standards to practice as CNMs
- Same required examination that CNMs have to take

Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs):

CPMs are independent practitioners who have met the standards for certification set by the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) and are qualified to provide the Midwifery Model of Care. The NARM certification process recognizes multiple routes of entry into midwifery and includes verification of knowledge and skills and the successful completion of both a written examination and skills assessment. The CPM credential requires training in out-of-hospital settings. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts does not currently regulate CPM practice. There are over 30 CPMs practicing in Massachusetts and the number of CPMs is growing.

What is the Coalition for Midwifery?

Three organizations have joined together to improve the practice of midwifery in Massachusetts:

- Eastern and Western Massachusetts Chapters, American College of Nurse Midwives - professional organization of Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) and Certified Midwives (CMs)
- Massachusetts Midwives Alliance - professional organization of Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs)
- Massachusetts Friends of Midwives (MFOM) - Consumer organization in support of midwifery services for women and their families.

For more information, please call Mary Ann Hart, Hart Government Relations, at 617-864-1996 or mahcamb@aol.com.