

February 26, 2021

Senator Rhonda Fields
Senator Tammy Story
Senate Health and Human Services Committee Members

Dear Senators Fields and Story and members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

I am the Executive Director of the National Association of Certified Professional Midwives (NACPM). I am writing to you today to request that Colorado statutory language that refers to direct-entry midwives be updated from the current descriptor of 'registered' to 'licensed'.

We understand that the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) already uses both terms to refer to direct-entry midwives. We are also aware of DORA's 2000 Sunset Review statement that the Colorado direct-entry midwife registration program is in fact a licensing program and the recommendation of that report that legislative references for the midwives be changed from 'registered' to 'licensed'.

This language change would align Colorado with the other 33 states and the District of Columbia that currently license Certified Professional Midwives (<https://nacpm.org/about-cpms/who-are-cpms/legal-recognition-of-cpms/>). Most importantly, it would preclude confusion about the status of direct-entry midwives in the state and eliminate unintended barriers to childbearing people's access to quality midwifery care. CPMs provide unique and critical access in the U.S. to normal physiologic birth, profoundly benefitting birthing parents and their newborns, and they have an essential role to play in improving birth outcomes, especially for those from marginalized communities currently suffering the worst outcomes. Licensing is key to making midwifery widely accessible and enables CPMs to participate in an integrated system of perinatal care.

NACPM works with Congress and the federal agencies on the integration of and access to CPMs in the national perinatal health system. Licensure is required for the work we are doing to include CPMs in the federal Medicaid program and care delivery models and payment innovations to improve health outcomes and reduce costs being advanced by the federal government. A change from 'registered' to 'licensed' for midwives in Colorado would support this federal advocacy to improve birth outcomes in the U.S.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. Please let me know if I can provide you with any information or assistance in effecting this change.

Sincerely,



Mary Lawlor, CPM. LM, MA

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