



February 17, 2023

Members of the Kentucky General Assembly
Capitol Annex
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Members of the Kentucky General Assembly,

This letter is to express the support of the Kentucky State Chapter of the National Association of Certified Professional Midwives (NACPM) for HB129 and SB67 the Mary Carol Akers Birth Centers Act.

Kentucky NACPM represents community midwives in Kentucky. Since the passage of SB84 in 2019, Kentucky has issued licenses to 30 Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs). Community settings where CPMs are trained to practice include freestanding birth centers. Many of our members have extensive experience working in freestanding birth centers in other states, but Kentucky has none. This legislation would remove unnecessary barriers to the opening of birth centers while raising the licensing standards.

Our members have a strong desire to extend their offering of top-quality perinatal care to Kentucky families via freestanding birth centers in addition to working with families in their homes. In fact, the main difference in the care provided in the home setting versus a freestanding birth center is that the birth center location is static. Simply because this care is provided in a stationary location, it is subjected to the onerous Certificate of Need requirement. As small business owners, it is nearly impossible for our members to compete with the legal resources of the hospitals who oppose CON applications for freestanding birth centers.

Please contact me with any questions regarding the support of Kentucky NACPM.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Olliges".

Jennifer Olliges, CPM, LCPM
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