



Committee: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Bill Number: Senate Bill 684

Title: Maryland Licensure of Certified Midwives Act

Hearing Date: March 2, 2021

Position: Support

The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) supports *Senate Bill 684 – Maryland Licensure of Certified Midwives Act*. The bill would create a licensure category for certified midwives (CM). MNA supports this measure because it is part of a broader campaign to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity rates particularly among Black and brown women. There are not enough midwifery providers in Maryland in underserved communities.

CMs have almost identical professional credentials as certified nurse-midwives. CMs attend the same graduate level midwifery programs, take the same certification exam, and are certified by the same national certifying body. The only difference is that CNMs enter midwifery school with a nursing degree, while CMs enter with another type of undergraduate degree, usually in a health or science field.

Right now, it is very challenging for people outside of nursing to enter midwifery. They must first go back to get a nursing degree. By establishing CM licensure, Maryland will create a pathway for more individuals to enter into midwifery. Individuals with many types of degrees, from biology to pre-med, can enter midwifery school. Some people may need to take some prerequisite courses before beginning a midwifery program.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.