

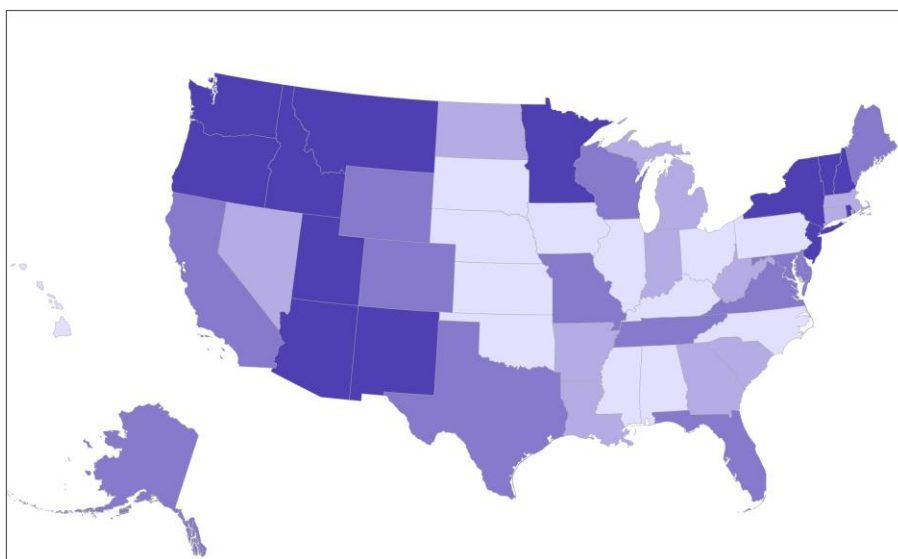
What is the goal of the legislation?

Senate Bill 684/House Bill 758 seeks to expand the number of qualified midwives in Maryland by establishing licensure for certified midwives (CMs), a nationally recognized form of midwifery. The bill is part of a broader strategy to address health disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes.

Midwifery supports improved clinical outcomes in diverse communities, as midwifery practice reflects the needs of individual women and their communities. Midwifery emphasizes women-centered care that “prioritizes the woman’s unique individual needs, as defined by the woman herself.”ⁱ

ACNM has joined Black Mamas Matter Alliance and the International Confederation of Midwives in a call to action to eliminate racial disparities.ⁱⁱ Expanding access to qualified midwives through legislation is one of ACNM’s priorities. Maryland has made progress in increasing access to midwifery; however our state still ranks only in the middle of the integration of midwifery into health care, as demonstrated in the map below. The legislation will support ongoing efforts to ensure midwifery services are available and accessible to all Maryland communities.

Mapping integration of midwives across the United States: Impact on access, equity, and outcomesⁱⁱⁱ



Levels of integration displayed by quartiles of MISS scores. Deeper shades of purple represent higher integration and lighter shades represent lower integration of midwives.

What does SB 684/HB 758 do?

The legislation creates a midwifery licensure category called “Certified Midwife” under the Board of Nursing. Maryland already recognizes licensure for Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) and Certified Professional Midwives (called Licensed Direct Entry Midwives in Maryland).

How are CNMs and CMs the same?

Certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CNM) are identical in:

- They are admitted to and graduate from the same graduate programs in midwifery
- They take the same certifying exam
- They are certified by the same entity
- They have the same scope of practice
- They practice in the same settings – birthing centers, hospitals, private practices, home-based practices

How are CMs are different than CNMs?

The only difference between CMs and CNMs is that they have a different college degree prior to entering a midwifery program. CNMs have a degree in nursing, while CMs have another college degree, usually in health or sciences. CM students take additional coursework as prerequisites or part of their midwifery graduate education.

What are the benefits of CM licensure?

- It expands the number of qualified midwives in Maryland. Right now, some people interested in midwifery cannot enter the profession because they do not have the time or resources to go back for a nursing degree to become a CNM. If they already have an undergraduate degree, usually in health or science, they can enter midwifery as a CM.
- It keeps nursing school spots for nurses. There are students in nursing school who do not intend to practice nursing in the long-term. They intend to use the nursing degree to get into midwifery school. If they could become a CM directly, they wouldn't have to take slots in nursing education programs.

What other states recognize CMs?

Maryland could become part of a region in attracting CMs to practice. Current, Delaware is among the six states that license CMs. The other five states are: Hawaii, Maine, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island. We know of four other states that are actively considering CM licensure legislation: Virginia (legislation has passed each chamber as of Feb. 7, 2021), District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota.

Conclusion

ACNM asks for a favorable report on **SB 684/HB 758**. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

ⁱ Fontein-Kuipers Y, de Groot R, van Staa A. Woman-centered care 2.0: Bringing the concept into focus. *European Journal of Midwifery*. 2018;2(May). doi:10.18332/ejm/91492.

ⁱⁱ <https://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/cclibraryfiles/filename/000000007740/Eliminating-the-Racial-Disparities-Contributing-to-the-Rise-in-U.S.-Maternal-Mortality-ACNM-BMMA-ICM.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Vedam, S., Stoll, K., MacDorman, M.F., Declercq, E., Cramer, R., Cheyney, M., Fisher, T., Butt, E., Yang, Y.T., and Kennedy, H.P. (2018). Mapping integration of midwives across the United States: Impact on access, equity, and outcomes. *PLOS One*, 13(2), p. e0192523.