

The Honorable Melony Griffith  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 28, 2023

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT: Senate Bill 376 – Health Occupations – Licensed Direct-Entry Midwives –  
Previous Cesarean Section

Dear Chair Griffith and Members of the Committee:

It has been my joy to serve as a doula in Maryland for many years. I have helped women birth in hospitals and at home. All kinds of women in all types of families. One of the common challenges I have heard through my 25 years as a doula is the fear of having a cesarean and the inability after a cesarean for families to choose a birth location and space that is appropriate for them.

Over the last 10 years, in particular, the women that I have worked with have felt like their hands were tied when thinking about birth after a previous cesarean. This is especially true when a family wants to work with a midwife and have a homebirth. Though they may have worked with the midwife in 2, 3, or 4 previous births to have successful births aligned with their values and desires, after a cesarean, it is an option that is barred for them. Midwives have the training and knowledge to evaluate birth and make decisions, in collaboration with the family about if a transfer is necessary. They open birth to families of color that would not be monitored as closely in the hospital environment and give them additional supports.

Maryland should adopt the same legislation as other States that allows midwives to provide care to families seeking VBACS.

Sincerely,

Christina Andrews