

Re: House Bill 838 Health Occupations – Licensed Direct–Entry Midwives – Revisions  
and Senate Bill 854 Health Occupations – Licensed Direct–Entry Midwives – Revisions

Position: Favorable

My name is Melanie St. Ours and as a mother and resident of Baltimore County I am writing to you to ask you to support and vote favorably on HB 838 and SB 854.

These bills help clean up the practice act for Licensed Direct Entry Midwives in the state of Maryland. LDEMs have been established, professional, and safe providers now for ten years and deserve to have more practice autonomy and less restriction, like other independent healthcare practitioners.

While the best ways to respect the dignity of human life and the reproductive autonomy of women are contentious issues, there is an easy way to do both: support women in having full choice to give birth the way that is best for themselves and their families. Being able to have three midwife supported births at home was pivotal for our family, aligned with our religious belief that birth is designed by God and does not ordinarily require medical intervention. And when complications did occur in two of my births, the midwives were able to handle them swiftly and competently, with perfect outcomes for mom and babies.

Maryland women deserve the choice to hire midwives for birth at home, just as those who wish for hospital care deserve the right to make that choice. The choice of how and where and with whom to give birth is important, and women are competent to make those choices freely without being impeded by legislative red tape. Please support midwives. By doing so, you support women and families.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Melanie St. Ours

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