

An Act promoting access to midwifery care and out-of-hospital birth options, H.2209/S.1457

sponsored by Representative Kay Khan, Representative Brandy Fluker Oakley, and Senator Becca Rausch

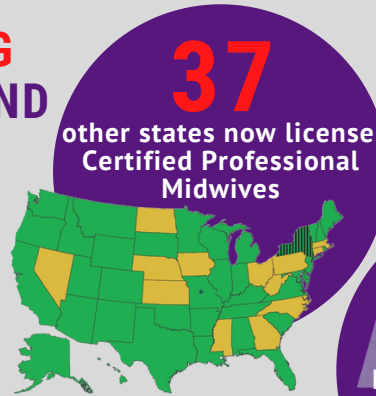
Previously filed as An Act relative to out-of-hospital birth access and safety

We are overdue for equitable access to certified professional midwifery care & birth options.

- ✓ Increase access to care and birthing choices
- ✓ Reverse the maternal health crisis
- ✓ Advance racial and economic justice
- ✓ Lower health care costs

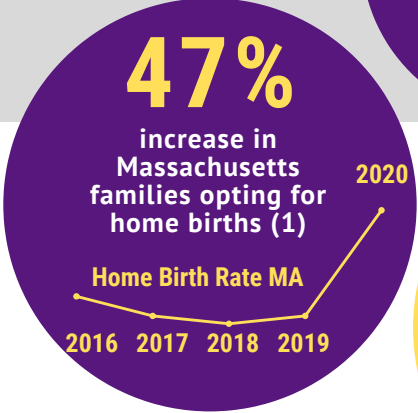
MASSACHUSETTS STILL LAGGING DESPITE UNPRECEDENTED DEMAND

- Bottom 1/3 of states for midwifery integration and access to out-of-hospital birth options (home, birth center)
- \$5,000 out-of-pocket cost for home birth out of reach for most families
- Closures of 2 birth centers since 2020 leaving only 1 birth center operating statewide, serving Northampton and surrounding communities; 1 more in development in Boston
- Skyrocketing demand for home birth care and public outcry over recent birth center closures



Massachusetts is **32nd** in the U.S. for midwifery integration (2)

1 birth center operating in Massachusetts out of **400** in the U.S.



Midwifery-Led Care

- Fewer maternal deaths
- Fewer infant deaths
- Fewer unnecessary C-sections
- Fewer postpartum complications
- Fewer premature births

2,3

This legislation will:

- License Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs), who provide health care for out-of-hospital births (home or birth center)
- Enable people with MassHealth to choose a CPM for their care and have an out-of-hospital birth
- Address provider shortages for obstetric care and birth centers

Recommended by the 2022 Report of the Mass. Commission on Racial Inequities in Maternal Health



For more information, contact Emily Anesta at Bay State Birth Coalition, emily@baystatebirth.org

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PUBLIC HEALTH

U.S. maternal mortality is the worst in the developed world

- Black mothers in Massachusetts are 2X more likely to die than their white counterparts
- Most maternal deaths are preventable (4)
- Integrating midwifery is proven to improve maternal and neonatal birth outcomes (2)
- Midwives can provide the vast majority of essential maternity and newborn care (5)

ACCESS

Every family deserves birth options and equitable access to high quality maternity care

- Increase access for low-income families; 40% of births in MA are paid for with Medicaid/MassHealth
- Eliminate maternity care deserts
 - Birth center closures in Beverly, Cambridge since 2020 leave only one operating statewide
 - Many communities have lost access to hospital-based care following recent maternity ward closures in Holyoke, Wareham, Ware, Falmouth, North Adams, Southbridge, Taunton, etc.

SAFETY + ACCOUNTABILITY

Promote patient safety & integration of care

- Meet national standards for midwifery education and practice
- Know who you are hiring
- Ensure access to life-saving medications
- Promote collaboration with hospital providers

SAVINGS + EFFICIENCY

Save money and healthcare resources

- Proven results using less costly interventions
- \$321M savings with each shift of 1% of births from hospitals to homes in the U.S. (6)
- Relieves health care capacity bottlenecks and frees up hospital resources for acute care

Massachusetts Midwifery Landscape

HOME BIRTH rates have risen steeply nationwide and in Massachusetts, especially for Black women. Families choose home birth for reasons such as culture, tradition, religion, health, and personal preference. In MA, this maternity care is currently:

- Provided by unlicensed midwives
- Disconnected from the healthcare system
- Ineligible for Medicaid and private insurance

BIRTH CENTER closures in the state have cited workforce shortages, which can be met by licensing and integrating certified professional midwives, a key workforce for the 400 birth centers across the U.S.

Certified professional midwives hold the only nationally-accredited midwifery credential specializing in out-of-hospital birth (home, birth center). They are eligible for licensure in 37 states and Medicaid coverage in 16 states.

Certified nurse-midwives are the only nationally-credentialed midwives who can be licensed in Massachusetts today. Most nurse-midwives attend in-hospital births.

What the Bill Will Do

- Create a Board of Midwifery under the Department of Public Health to oversee licensure
- Require midwives to become licensed and carry the nationally-accredited Certified Professional Midwife (CPM) credential, meeting the educational and practice requirements of the profession
- Permit licensed midwives to carry and administer life-saving medications
- Include licensed midwives as MassHealth providers

Legislative background

- Previously filed as "An Act relative to out-of-hospital birth access and safety"
- 192nd session: Favorable report from Public Health Committee.
- 191st session: Passed the Senate unanimously after a favorable report from Public Health Committee.
- Previous sessions: passed favorably by Committees on Public Health, Health Care Financing multiple times.

1 CDC, National Vital Statistics Report, "Changes in Home Births by Race and Hispanic Origin and State of Residence of Mother: US, 2018–2019 and 2019–2020" Dec 9, 2021
 2 Vedam S, et al, "Mapping midwifery integration across the United States: impact on access, equity, and outcomes." PLOS ONE. Feb 21, 2018
 3 Mary J. Renfrew et al., "Midwifery and Quality Care: Findings from a New Evidence-Informed Framework for Maternal and Newborn Care," Lancet (Sept. 20, 2014): 1129–45
 4 Petersen et al. CDC Vital Signs: Pregnancy-Related Deaths, US, 2011–2015, and Strategies for Prevention, 13 States, 2013–2017. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2019.
 5 UNFPA, ICM, WHO: "The state of the world's midwifery 2014: A universal pathway. A women's right to health". 2014
 6 Anderson DA, Gilkison GM. The Cost of Home Birth in the United States. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. 2021; 18(19):10361. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph181910361>