

## Let My People Vote Testimony | [Sunset Direct-entry Midwives](#)

My name is Victoria Dadet, and I'm the Let My People Vote Coordinator for Soul 2 Soul Sisters where we organize for Black Womxn's Healing and Liberation here in Denver. I'm testifying on behalf of Soul 2 Soul Sisters to urge you to support Senate Bill 101.

Midwives have been crucial for Black communities in providing a safe birthing option that, oftentimes, is better than the experience of going to a hospital where we are extremely vulnerable to institutional racism. Many womxn face complications during pregnancy, **and Black Womxn experience complications at higher rates, leading to increased infant and maternal mortality in our communities.** The CDC states that Black women are 243% more likely to die from pregnancy and childbirth-related causes compared to white women. **Due to the legacy of slavery and institutionalized anti-Black racism, the US is one of the most dangerous places to be pregnant for Black womxn.** As we face an unprecedented healthcare pandemic that is hitting Black communities hardest, we should be focusing on expanding access to healthcare services, not limiting services or putting up more barriers. We believe that the continuation of the Direct-entry Midwives program is necessary for protecting Black birthing people in our state.

Every birthing person should be able to make decisions about their birth plans based on the unique circumstances of their pregnancy and life together with their chosen provider, including midwives. With this in mind, it is important to me that the DEM Sunset include:

- Permitting GBS prophylaxis so that more families can make the choice to test for GBS if they would like to
- Allowing DEMs to practice in birth centers to allow continuation of care for families if their needs or desires change during pregnancy.

**To close, by ensuring our communities have access to midwives, we can protect our pregnant loved ones from racism and mistreatment at the hands of hospital systems, provide better support for families who decide to give birth at home or in a birth center, and take the necessary steps to address the epidemic of Black infant and maternal mortality.** For too long, Black communities have experienced the brunt of reproductive oppression in this country. We need birth justice now, and we urge you to support Senate Bill 101 as a way to get justice for Black communities. Thank you for your time.