

## Senate Health & Human Services

### Testimony - SB21-101 Sunset Direct-entry Midwives

First Name	Last Name	Position	Representing	Testifying
Jennifer	Barr	For	Colorado Midwives Association	In Person
Heather	Thompson	For	Elephant Circle	Remotely
Katherine	Riley	For	Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR)	Remotely
Althea	Hrdlichka	For	Colorado Midwives Association	Remotely
Melissa	Sexton	For	CMA	Remotely
Heather	Prestridge	For	Self	Remotely
Ronne	Hines	Questions Only	DORA	Remotely
Stephanie	Sibert	For	Self	Remotely
Briana	Simmons	For	Soul 2 Soul Sisters	Remotely
Linda	Rosa	Against	Self	Remotely
Autumn	Orser	Neutral	American Academy of Pediatrics, Colorado Chapter and Colorado Medical Society	Remotely
Brooke	Cates	For	Self	Remotely
Sam	Espinoza	For	Colorado Children's Campaign	Remotely
Indra	Lusero	For	Elephant Circle	Remotely
Melissa	Cheyney	For	Self	Remotely
Elisa	Patterson	For	Colorado Affiliate of American College of Nurse Midwives	Remotely

## Witness Signup List

Donna	Blythe	For	Self	Submitted text
Mary	Lawlor	For	National Association for Certified Professional Midwives (NACPM)	Uploaded file
Chanell	Reed	For	Families Forward Resource Center	Uploaded file
Jill	Alliman	For	American Association of Birth Centers	Uploaded file

## Witness Signup List

### Text of Testimony

## Witness Signup List

Dear Senator Fields,

I am writing to you as a Midwife and a member of the community about the Certified Professional Midwifery Sunset. This bill will allow Certified Professional Midwives to serve more of their community.

I serve the community of Denver/Aurora.

My community is rich in culture, vibrant diverse city with a long-standing history of embracing immigrant and refugee populations. Today more than 270 different languages are spoken in Aurora. many of the people in Aurora are looking for providers that look like them. As a midwife, many of my clients are fearful of hospital care as they don't have the opportunity to have a provider that look like them. Study's have shown that birthing outcomes improve when your provider looks like you.

I am writing to ask that you vote in support of DEM sunset.

As a black midwife, I see regularly People of Color, Low in income and LGBTQIA, that have not felt heard or acknowledged in the conventional birthing establishments. They are asking that a provider hear them and respect their needs and cultural differences.

It is important to me that the DEM Sunset include:

- Changing the language to "licensure" for midwives to ensure consistency and increase access.
- Permitting GBS prophylaxis so that more families can make the choice to test for GBS if they would like.
- Allowing Certified Professional Midwives to practice in birth centers to allow consistency of care for families of their needs or desires change during pregnancy.

I am happy to support this policy and plan to follow the progress of the bill as it moves through the legislation.

Donna Blythe  
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# AABC

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kate E. Bauer, MBA

March 9, 2021

Senator Rhonda Fields  
Senator Tammy Story  
Colorado General Assembly  
200 E Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203

RE: SB21-101 Sunset Direct-entry Midwives

Dear Senator Fields and Senator Story,

We are writing on behalf of the American Association of Birth Centers (AABC) to express support for SB21-101. This bill would increase access to high-value, high-quality maternal health care by permitting direct-entry midwives to practice in licensed birth centers.

AABC is a membership organization representing freestanding birth centers in Colorado and across the U.S. that sets the standards for safe and optimum practice in birth centers. Over thirty years of data demonstrate that care provided by midwives in birth centers following these standards results in excellent outcomes for mothers and babies. These data include licensed direct-entry midwives who practice in more than half of the freestanding birth centers in the United States.

AABC supports the inclusion of all licensed midwifery providers in birth center regulations and recommends the Colorado General Assembly pass SB21-101.

Respectfully,

Kate E Bauer  
Executive Director

Jill Alliman, DNP, CNM, FACNM  
Chair, AABC Government Affairs Committee



March 9, 2021

Colorado General Assembly  
200 E. Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203

RE: SB21-101

Dear Senators:

On behalf of Families Forward Resource Center, a community-based organization serving the Aurora/Denver metro area, I ask that you support SB21-101.

Direct Entry Midwives are important to our organization's work in eliminating infant and maternal health mortality in the African American/Black communities. Families Forward Resource Center is a grantee of the national Healthy Start Initiative, and we are the only Healthy Start Initiative in the state of Colorado. Through our work in supporting families, we have found that midwifery is major component in supporting mothers throughout the perinatal and birth process, and a trusted healthcare resource for communities of color.

It is important to our community that the DEM Sunset include changing the language to "licensure" for midwives to ensure consistency and increase access, and allowing DEMs to practice in birth centers to allow consistency of care for families if their needs or desires change during pregnancy.

I am excited to support this policy and plan to follow the progress of the bill as it moves through the Legislature.

Respectfully,

*Chanell R. Reed*

Chanell R. Reed  
Executive Director

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# FAMILIES FORWARD RESOURCE CENTER

*Strong Families, Strong Communities*

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Written testimony by Linda Rosa, RN:

The 2020 Direct-Entry Midwives Sunset Review has omitted key information about the practice of Direct-Entry Midwives (DEMs) which I provide below.

1.) **Perinatal Mortality Rate (PNMR)** is the number of deaths per 1,000 planned home births.

The data submitted by DEMs from 2015 to 2019 reveals the their PNMR is extremely high:

Considering these years under sunset review, the DEMs reported **38 deaths** while attending **3603 planned home births**, for an average PNMR of **10.5 deaths/1000**.

This is a death rate well **35 times higher** than that of **nurse-midwives** who also only attend uncomplicated pregnancies (0.3 deaths/1000) or **physicians** (0.4 deaths/1000) in hospitals serving the same population.

This translates to **37 needless deaths** of neonates since the last sunset bill and a lot of enduring heartache for many Colorado families.

Part of the problem may be the long distances in Colorado to emergency care. (Note: deaths after transfers are omitted from the aforementioned perinatal mortality rate). Another contributing factor is that from 2015-2019, an average of **62% of DEMS attended less than one home birth per month**. That is not enough experience to maintain skills.

2.) **Standards.**

The Senate Health & Human Services Committee should insist on receiving a report from DORA with the official perinatal mortality rate before proceeding with this bill.

The legislature needs a concrete, understandable, and consistent standards to define what is acceptable DEM care. Without data, such as PNMR, legislators' decision may be based on incomplete and perhaps even misleading information.

The DEMs' request to stop data collection is not the answer.

3.) **The sunset review is silent on the issue of injuries.**

With a high death rate, it is reasonable to suspect that there is also a higher rate of injuries to mothers and newborns. Birthing injuries can result in life-long disabilities and put an exorbitant burden on private and public health care resources. Such injuries would counter the argument that DEM services are more affordable.

4.) **Colorado DEMs are not required to carry liability insurance.**

This insurance is available through several companies. This is a necessary protection for families who unknowingly use the high risk services of DEMs.

This situation also sets up an **unfair competitive advantage** for DEMs who do not have to bear the cost of education, medical facilities, or insurance, as do all obstetricians and nurse-midwives.

I urge Senators to consider ending the registration of DEMs in Colorado in order to protect the public and end needless deaths.

Thank you for your time and attention.

February 26, 2021

Senator Rhonda Fields  
Senator Tammy Story  
Senate Health and Human Services Committee Members

Dear Senators Fields and Story and members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

I am the Executive Director of the National Association of Certified Professional Midwives (NACPM). I am writing to you today to request that Colorado statutory language that refers to direct-entry midwives be updated from the current descriptor of 'registered' to 'licensed'.

We understand that the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) already uses both terms to refer to direct-entry midwives. We are also aware of DORA's 2000 Sunset Review statement that the Colorado direct-entry midwife registration program is in fact a licensing program and the recommendation of that report that legislative references for the midwives be changed from 'registered' to 'licensed'.

This language change would align Colorado with the other 33 states and the District of Columbia that currently license Certified Professional Midwives (<https://nacpm.org/about-cpms/who-are-cpms/legal-recognition-of-cpms/>). Most importantly, it would preclude confusion about the status of direct-entry midwives in the state and eliminate unintended barriers to childbearing people's access to quality midwifery care. CPMs provide unique and critical access in the U.S. to normal physiologic birth, profoundly benefitting birthing parents and their newborns, and they have an essential role to play in improving birth outcomes, especially for those from marginalized communities currently suffering the worst outcomes. Licensing is key to making midwifery widely accessible and enables CPMs to participate in an integrated system of perinatal care.

NACPM works with Congress and the federal agencies on the integration of and access to CPMs in the national perinatal health system. Licensure is required for the work we are doing to include CPMs in the federal Medicaid program and care delivery models and payment innovations to improve health outcomes and reduce costs being advanced by the federal government. A change from 'registered' to 'licensed' for midwives in Colorado would support this federal advocacy to improve birth outcomes in the U.S.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. Please let me know if I can provide you with any information or assistance in effecting this change.

Sincerely,



Mary Lawlor, CPM. LM, MA

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