



RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT
ONE UNION STATION
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903
401/351-9400 • 401/351-1758 (FAX)

Testimony Re: Senate Bill 478- Scope of Certified Professional Midwives' Authority Relating to Prescribing Medication to Patients
Senate Health and Human Services Committee

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Michaela Carroll, Policy Associate

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. **Rhode Island KIDS COUNT would like to voice its strong support for Senate Bill 478.** We would like to thank Senators Mack, Vargas, Kallman, Murray, Lauria, Acosta, Urso, Valverde, Quezada, and DiMario for sponsoring this bill. This bill would establish the scope of a licensed Certified Professional Midwife's prescriptive authority. This limited list of medications would allow Certified Professional Midwives to practice to the fullest scope of their knowledge and training and support the highest-quality care for their patients.

Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) are knowledgeable and skilled independent practitioners of midwifery care and are trained and certified to provide comprehensive maternity care including prenatal, labor/birth, and postpartum care. They are experts in normal, physiologic/unmedicated childbirth, and care for low-risk pregnancies and births. CPMs practice independently and work within a network of relationships with other maternity care providers who can provide consultation and collaboration when needed, such as referring a pregnant patient to a physical therapist for back or hip pain during pregnancy. CPMs have been licensed in Rhode Island since 2014.

As part of their training, CPMs learn how and when to prescribe medications such as antiemetics for the treatment of nausea during pregnancy, prenatal vitamins and iron supplements, vaccinations recommended during pregnancy and for newborns, and devices including lactation pumps or compression stockings. Currently, if a CPM's patient requires a prescription for an IV iron infusion, the patient must seek out another provider for this care. For many patients, requiring additional appointments is another barrier to appropriate and adequate care. **Senate Bill 478 will align the law with CPMs' training, knowledge, and skills, allowing them to provide appropriate care for their patients without adding barriers to care.**

More accessible maternity care in Rhode Island will lead to healthier pregnancies and births. Senate Bill 478 will improve access to providers who are already trained and able to care for normal pregnancy and birth. This will reduce the already significant burden on pregnant individuals who have many

appointments during their pregnancy by allowing them to receive their care, including common prescriptions for routine situations in pregnancy, from their chosen provider. **The passage of Senate Bill 478 will establish the scope of CPMs' practice and authority related to prescribing medication and allow the potential of this growing workforce to be realized, improving the maternity care landscape in Rhode Island.**

Thank you for the leadership that the General Assembly has shown on improving maternity care in Rhode Island, including through the insurance coverage of doula services, and we urge passage of this bill to establish the scope of CPMs so they can provide high-quality, person-centered care to their patients.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.