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To: House Finance Committee; Rep. Boylan, Jennifer; Rep. Knight, Jason; Sen. Lauria, Pamela J.
Subject: H8174 H8175 support

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Writing in strong support of H8174 and H8175. As a LICSW social worker who is also a Certified Lactation Counselor I see the work done by CLCs in our community. They are a vital pathway for families who do not have access to IBCLCs or whose issues are not seen as important enough to be expedited by an IBCLC. Community based support increases our breastfeeding rates long term and we all know human milk improves immunity and development. These front line health care workers identify issues and make sure families seek medical care or more advanced lactation support before there is an emergency- actually saving resources and helping families feed their babies they way they want to. They know the resources available and help families to make those connections.

As a mother who had two home births myself, I cherish this option for other families who want to stay in the comfort of their own home and have the birth plan they want. The fact that families have to pay for this out of pocket in Rhode Island is absurd and places this option out of reach for too many families. My first birth was in Missouri and was facilitated by a DO who specialized in home birth as part of his family practice. It was fully paid for by my employer provided health insurance because he was a DO assisted by a midwife. This safe option (clearly only for families who do not have potentially dangerous risk factors), saves resources and gives families the experience they want. My second home birth was paid for out of pocket at a time when using my high deductible health insurance would have cost me more than the birth did out of pocket. i was low risk and fully registered with a local hospital and in hospital midwife incase I needed to be transported. This option is common in other states. It's time for Rhode Island to support this option too.

Thank you
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