

To: House Health and Human Services Committee

From: Dumecia Pickett

Date: March 11, 2025

Re: House Bill 5858 - Prescriptive Authority for Certified Professional Midwives

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony today. Thank you to Representatives Stewart, Alzate, Cruz, Shallcross Smith, Kislak,

Potter, McGaw, and Casimiro for sponsoring this bill.

My name is Dumecia Pickett and I'm writing in support of House Bill 5858. This bill establishes the scope of Certified Professional Midwives' practice and authority related to prescribing medication for their patients. This will allow CPMs to independently care for their patients and allow the potential of this growing workforce to be fully realized. As someone who chose an out-of-hospital birth, I can speak to the deep value of having a skilled, compassionate midwife by my side throughout my pregnancy and birth. My midwife wasn't just a healthcare provider; she was a trusted partner who understood my body, my concerns, and the nuances of my unique birth plan. But there was one area where I faced a significant challenge—accessing necessary medications through the right channels.

During my pregnancy, I struggled with anxiety, something that had been an issue long before I became pregnant. It wasn't severe enough to require constant intervention, but there were times when I needed support, especially as the pregnancy progressed, and the stress of preparing for birth began to build. If my midwife had been able to prescribe me medication for anxiety, it would have made a huge difference. Instead, I had to go to a primary care doctor who wasn't familiar with my birth plan and had limited insight into how my pregnancy was progressing. Scheduling that appointment took time, and once I finally got the prescription, I felt like I was wasting precious time running between appointments instead of focusing on the pregnancy itself.

Another example was pain management. I wanted a natural birth, but I knew that having the option to use something for pain relief if needed, whether it was for back pain or the intensity of labor, could help me feel more in control of my experience. If my midwife had been authorized to prescribe pain relief medications, I would have been able to discuss it with her in a way that was tailored to my personal birth plan and needs. Instead, I was left to navigate a fragmented system of care that didn't align with my values.

The ability for CPMs to prescribe medications in accordance with their training isn't just a convenience, it's a matter of ensuring families like mine have consistent, responsive care. It means not having to make extra appointments, take time off work, or juggle different providers for something that could be handled by the same midwife who already knows you and your pregnancy. It would have relieved a lot of the stress I experienced and allowed me to focus on the more important aspects of my pregnancy and birth.

If CPMs could prescribe medications, it would empower families to receive the full scope of care from someone they trust. It would mean access to timely treatment for things like anxiety, pain management, or any other medication that is needed throughout the pregnancy or birth process. For my family, it would have been life-changing to have a provider who could offer both the care and the prescriptions we needed without the barriers that sometimes come with working across multiple healthcare systems.

Supporting CPMs in their ability to prescribe would not only make out-of-hospital birth more accessible, but it would ensure that families like mine receive the safe, holistic, and continuous care that they deserve.

I urge you to pass House Bill 5858 to ensure that certified professional midwives can practice to

the fullest of their training and ability and prescribe medication for their patients.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.