

## **Rhode Island General Assembly**

**To:** House Health and Human Services Committee

**From:** Quatia Osorio BSBA BSHSM SPM CCHW CLC MCHS CPE

**Date:** March 13, 2025

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

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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 Quatia Osorio 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.

Accessibility to quality, timely care in community is a growing imperative for continuity of care for pregnant people, and well women/body households. As we face tumultuous times with over burden health care systems, rising costs, and lack of practitioners we know that Rhode Island has capacity, perseverance and compassionate kindness to think creatively to meet the needs of families. As perinatal healthcare systems evolve the data and voices of the people continue to move us back to the person-centered care. We want to be seen, heard, and communicated with in ways to make the best decisions for our families. Rhode Island has licensed Certified Professional Midwives since 2014, nonetheless we have had Midwives providing homebirth care since the dawn of time. Midwives have shaped the very essence and establishment of our gynecological and obstetrical system, yet its remained steadfast and strong hold. We have Midwives who have integrated in our hospital systems, build centers for communities, and continue to support those who seek to birth at home. As intentional investment has been made in advancing and expanding our workforce, we need to do our part to make sure families will have the ability to access the vital care they choose.

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) states that we should not dismiss the choices of pregnant women, respect their choice of place and birth attendant. The American Association of Pediatric states, as child advocates to support the efforts to minimize risk for those who choose homebirth. In other words, families who have qualified, licensed practitioners as their birth attendants regardless of setting collective support these efforts. This should mean our Licensed Midwives should have the tools necessary not just for emergencies but for the overall well being of those they serve including the ability to prescribe for their patients.

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 as a student professional Midwife, under the tutelage of two of our Rhode Island Licensed Certified

Professional Midwives, and leading the efforts of both state and federal investment in the Certified Professional Midwifery workforce expansion, I appreciate your time. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.