

**Template for Written Testimony-Individual
Rhode Island General Assembly**

To: House Health and Human Services Committee

From: Shaylene Costa

Date: March 13, 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 Shaylene Costa 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 a mother of two growing daughters I am invested in giving them a Rhode Island where they have multiple choices for their well woman/ well body care and access to community healthcare providers that can care for them in our home. I did not have these options as a growing adolescent or when becoming their mother and believe this would have made a positive impact on my personal journey through healthcare and birth. Many of my barriers to perinatal care and general healthcare that I experience can be solved by CMPs practicing more broadly in Rhode Island. I am a relatively healthy individual but sometimes I struggle to take time off work for appointments, having transportation to my care or just the struggle of the mental load and social anxiety of gathering myself and children to then enter a place where ill people are in congested waiting rooms just to have a routine check or well care visit that can subsequently make me sick. Within the calm and safety of my home I do tend to be able to speak more clearly about my symptoms and am more open about things such as pain and progress in recovery and that all leaves my mind as soon as I see that "white coat" enter the room. So no, having CPMs practice to then not be able to write my prescription which forces me or my daughters to then enter into a room with a "white coat" would not be a full scope of practice for the CPM nor the whole care we would need from them. I am aiming for no waiting room germs, no transportation struggles or time off work and no reason to elevate my blood pressure which has been proven for me that upon many occasions when entering a medical room my blood pressure elevates from baseline just by sitting on the table.

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 and I support CMP prescriptive authority for myself and my daughters to have the choice of receiving our well person care in the comfort and convenience of our homes seeing as the medical offices can at times make us sick when we are not. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.