



Memo To: House Health and Human Services Committee

From: Angela Lima, Policy and Advocacy Program Director, Women's Fund of Rhode Island

Date: Mar 13, 2025

Concerns: **SUPPORT FOR H-5858 and 5861 on Limited Prescriptive Authority for Certified Professional Midwives and Insurance Coverage of Licensed Certified Lactation Consultants**

**We at the Women's Fund of Rhode Island stand in support of H-5858 and H-5861 to authorize a Limited Prescriptive Authority for Certified Professional Midwives and mandate insurances to reimburse Licensed Certified Lactation Consultants**

All women and our non-gender conforming population deserve healthcare which is safe, effective, timely, efficient and equitable. Consistent and equitable access to maternity care helps women maintain optimal health as well as reduce the risk of experiencing complications during pregnancy and the postpartum period.

Rhode Island is facing a healthcare crisis marked by a shortage of primary care providers and difficulty accessing specialists. Hospitals and community health centers face financial challenges that result in the straining of our healthcare system. Despite these many challenges, certified professional midwives help the much needed continuum of care for pregnancy and postpartum care.

Since the Rhode Island Department of Health has approved home births and established [rules and regulations](#). More families are exploring and choosing the option to have home births. According to the [Pew Research Center](#), From 2019 to 2020, there was a widespread rise in births happening at home. Nationally, Home birth delivery saw a 14 percent increase while Rhode Island increased significantly, with a 48% rise in 2020 compared to 2019. Granting midwives prescriptive authority offers benefits like improved patient access to medications, enhanced role satisfaction for midwives, and the potential for more efficient and cost-effective healthcare delivery.

Having insurance cover lactation consultant services near you offers low-cost, accessible breastfeeding support, which can help mothers address common challenges and potentially lead to longer breastfeeding durations, benefiting both mother and baby's health.

**We urge you to support H-5858 and 5861.** Certified Professional Midwives and Licensed Certified Lactation consultants are valuable healthcare providers, especially in women's health, offering comprehensive care during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum, often emphasizing natural approaches and patient autonomy, and working collaboratively with other healthcare professionals.

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The mission of the Women's Fund of Rhode Island is to invest in women and girls through advocacy, research, and strategic partnership designed to achieve gender equity through systemic change. Our [Women's Well-Being Index](#) compares how well women fare against men on topics related to health, safety, economic security, education and civic participation in every RI city/town. Our [policy briefs](#) are written in response to the data found on the Index. You can find more about our work at [www.wfri.org](http://www.wfri.org).