



Memo To: Senate Health and Human Services Committee

From: Angela Lima, Chief of Government Relations, Women's Fund of Rhode Island

Date: May 4, 2026

Concerns: **SUPPORT FOR S-2381 Certified Midwife Professionals**

We at the Women's Fund of Rhode Island stand in support of S-2381 to mandate insurances to reimburse Certified Professional Midwives

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.

Expanding reimbursement would increase access to preventative and supportive services such as prenatal education, labor and birth support, breastfeeding assistance, and postpartum care—services that are proven to reduce costly medical interventions, improve birth outcomes, and support long-term maternal and infant health. Reimbursement would also help stabilize and grow a diverse perinatal workforce, ensuring that families can receive care from trusted providers who reflect and understand their communities.

From both a fiscal and public health perspective, reimbursing Certified Midwives and Certified Lactation Consultants is a sound investment. States that have expanded coverage for midwifery and lactation services have seen improved health outcomes, higher patient satisfaction, and reductions in healthcare costs associated with preventable complications.

We urge you to support S-2381. Certified Professional Midwives 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.

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.