



American Association of Birth Centers
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Physicians Speak Out About Birth Centers

"The evidence strongly supports midwifery assisted maternity care as well as out of hospital birth for low risk women. It is time that our nation starts valuing our women more and supporting birth centers as a cost-effective, safe and desired option for pregnant women and their families. Providing financial reimbursement from Medicaid for this option will go a long way in making this a more viable option for many women." John Bettler, MD - Zuni, New Mexico

"Birthing centers are an appropriate cost-effective option for some pregnant women, and should not be precluded from Medicaid coverage." James Nelson Gingerich, MD - Goshen, Indiana

"Women have a right to choose their caregiver, and how they would like to deliver, unless medically indicated otherwise. Natural childbirth should be the choice for women in this millennium." Patricia Nevils, MD - Lafayette, Louisiana

"Birth centers are a safe and cost effective place to give birth for the healthy majority. Families should have the opportunity to enjoy this experience regardless of payment source. I urge your wholehearted support of legislation directing CMS to compensate for birth center services." David S. Hoskins MD, MPH, FAAFP, ABFM - Minden Nevada

"America is about choice and freedom. Allowing women the choice of a safe birth is the duty of our representatives in government." Willard Hearin, MD - Lawrenceville, Georgia

"I support their (birth centers) continued existence as a counterpoise to excessive "medicalization" of uncomplicated childbirth. Prenatal care is the same as when a hospital birth is planned." Gordon Roget, MD - Lodi, California

"I am in support of Birth Centers as an option for low-risk women." Tami Michele, DO - Fremont, Michigan

"Birthing centers are a safe and cost effective alternative desired by many women across the country. They need to be part of our health care reform." Roger Hicks, MD - Marysville, California

"Supporting access to birth centers is obviously important for health care rights and liberty to be maintained. It is also may be a vital, unrecognized and key ingredient to health care reform. Not only is there a cost savings to birthing at a birth center but the benefits of the midwifery model of care and birthing in a birth center will help bring forth a generation of healthier citizens. There is much research showing that how babies are born, the conditions surrounding their birth and their womb environment prenatally has long term affects on our health and well being. Birth Center and Midwifery Model of Maternity Care is an overlooked aspect of health care reform and is a primary aspect of preventive medicine, health promotion and disease prevention." Lisa Lichtig, MD - Asheville, North Carolina

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"I support birthing centers for all women." Martha Salyers, MD, MPH - Asheville, North Carolina

"It is important to support birthing options for women." Nichelle Whitehead, MD, FACOG - Phoenix, Arizona

"It is important that we, as health care providers for a vulnerable sector of the public, support choice in maternity care and birthing options." Carol Coulson, MD - Asheville, North Carolina

"I believe women, particularly women struggling socioeconomically, deserve greater birth options. Birthing Centers make sense and deserve appropriate reimbursement." Leah Anderson, MD - Duluth, Minnesota

"I'm in full support! I loved my midwife delivery." Kimberly Fordham, MD - Kelseyville, California

"I am in full support of midwives and birthing centers, and had excellent care from midwives for both my pregnancies and deliveries." Kristen Solana Walkinshaw, MD - Anchorage, Alaska

"Pregnancy is not a disease in most women, and therefore the birth process should be allowed to occur anywhere, including birth centers" Shahab Abdessalam, MD - Omaha, Nebraska

"Free-standing birth centers make sense on many levels. I offer my full support...wish we had one!" Matthew Scott Doughty, MD - Marquette, Michigan

"Physiologic birth is more likely to occur in a birth center setting, and is the safest most economical style of childbirth. Pregnant women are not diseased and should not be considered such." Stacey Kerr, MD - Santa Rosa, California

"Please do not deny low-risk pregnant women the right to give birth in a safe alternative to hospitals. The data clearly supports the safe health outcomes for women and babies and the quality and satisfaction of the birth experience ." - Arti Chandra, MD, MPH - Seattle, Washington

"As a physician who supports midwifery assisted births, and whose primary practice is majority Medicaid, I endorse the value of positive outcomes of births at birth centers and the quality of care provided." Darrell C Robinson, MD - Lafayette, Louisiana

"Patient autonomy in birth choice is an important freedom to maintain. I encourage support of women with this cost effective option." Mahnee Dinsmore, MD - Trinity, Florida

"The Birth Center has my full support ." Libby Schaefer, MD - Santa Rosa, California

"I encourage you to allow for women to have the safe and cost effective option of birth centers by allowing these facilities to be reimbursed by CMS" David Hyler, MD - Orange Park, Florida

"Birthing centers are an appropriate cost-effective option for some pregnant women, and should not be precluded from Medicaid coverage." Melanie Hayden, MD, MAS - Santa Rosa, California

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"Providing safe and effective care is what Medicaid tries to do. Birth centers are both--and they have the added bonus of being cost-effective. This is a win-win for Medicaid and for childbearing women. Please support this legislation." Valerie King, MD - Portland, Oregon

"I support birth centers and believe that they are a crucial part of needed healthcare reform. Both of my children were born with midwives, and the health care received was exceptional in all respects – quality, cost, evidence based care." - Alan J. Reinach, MD - Meadowbrook , Pennsylvania

"I would urge the support of this legislation, birth centers provide safe, supportive and high quality care to low risk pregnant women. They certainly exemplify the President's call for preventative medicine, as our hospitals increasingly intervene unnecessarily in this natural process, creating more cost and more disease." Geeta Maker-Clark, MD - Ventura, California

"My midwife-assisted deliveries, and my daughter's, have formed the foundation of our families' strength, and our families' health. We would never want to be without that foundation. Midwife-assisted deliveries empower the woman and her family in a way that no other system is able to do. " Nancy Armetta, MD, FAAFP

"Women have a right to choose out-of-hospital birth; I support the expanded availability of this safe, supportive, family-centered and cost-effective option." Claire Wendland, MD, PhD, FACOG

"Women should have the right to choice where they have their baby. Especially, if it more natural and cost effective." Chris Sherman, DC, MPH

"I fully support the right of women to choose a physiologic approach to birth. The "medicalization" of a natural process has been to the detriment of the majority of women who have no risk factors or health problems. Giving birth in a hospital can be disempowering and dehumanizing, and exposes women to a higher risk of unnecessary procedures. Birth centers have been shown to have excellent outcomes at a fraction of the cost of maternity care provided at standard hospitals. I urge you to support this bill to continue to offer women a choice regarding their reproductive health." Sharon Benattabou, MD

"I would support and even love to work in one of these clinics. I had a very nice all natural delivery of my daughter, using only a midwife but had to drive an hour away while in labor to do so! It was worth it but this country can do better. When it is easier and safer to deliver a baby in most other countries I feel outraged." Jill House, DC

"Women wanting to have a natural, physiologic birth are faced with increasingly polarized choices - technological hospital birth or homebirth. Birth centers provide the midwifery model of care which promotes optimal health for mothers, babies and families. Women of all socio-economic strata need access to safe environments to give birth naturally. I support this bill as a vital step in ensuring healthy mothers and babies. " Heidi Rinehart, MD, FACOG

"ACOG (American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology) have stated on their website that accredited birth centers are appropriate sites for birth and, thus, excluding them, denies women and their families a reasonable place to birth babies." Elizabeth N Stiffel, MD