

The Honorable Shane Pendergrass
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, MD 21401

**In Support of House Bill 66
Health Occupations - Licensed Direct-Entry Midwives - Previous Cesarean Section**

January 24, 2022

Dear Honorable Shane Pendergrass,

I am writing in strong support of bill HB66 - giving licensed direct-entry midwives the ability to care for clients who have had a cesarean birth in the past.

I have had three births myself, one at home with a midwife. And while I have not had cesarean I almost just count myself lucky there, as I know that this is all too common. If I had been one of the many people I know who'd been pushed into interventions, told they needed an induction (when they probably didn't), or talked into an epidural rather than knowing I could do it without, I probably would have been one of them. And I KNOW that I would want the ability to choose the option to birth with a midwife if I had.

I did a lot of research before choosing to have my third baby at home. Through that I became entirely convinced of the safety and wisdom of home birth when possible. In that research I also came across the appalling stats of how many people end up with cesareans in this country - almost a third. And I understand that Maryland is no better - indeed, has worse stats than the national level. I remember that of the things that convinced me that home birth was the right choice for my family was understanding that interventions of all kinds - but especially cesarean - are much lower with homebirth. Given we know VBAC can be done safely at home, it seems a decision almost without question, to make this option available to families in Maryland.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I look forward to hearing that you and your colleagues have given this safe choice back to the families of Maryland.

Kind regards,



Brittany Coffman, LDEM, CPM