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Health and Government Operations  
Committee  
Subcommittees

Health Occupations and Long-Term Care

Public Health and  
Minority Health Disparities

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
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**HB717 State Board of Nursing –  
Peer Advisory Committees, Scopes of Practice, and Licensure Requirements**

Madame Chair, Madame Vice Chair, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about House Bill 717.

This committee has heard much about the importance of midwifery as a practice this session. Giving the women of Maryland more options in pregnancy care and delivery is incredibly important to me, and is why with your support in 2021, I introduced and the Legislature passed the Maryland Licensure of Certified Midwives Act. This bill was supported by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists and the Maryland Nurses Association, and established a regulatory and licensure system for practicing certified midwives in the State. With this bill, certified midwives were effectively given a platform to serve Marylanders with their work in a professional setting, bringing their practice in line with certified nurse midwives. I wish I could tell you that the work for this bill is finished; unfortunately, this is not the case. Several roadblocks have been identified preventing certified midwives from practicing in the same capacity as certified nurse midwives, reducing the pool of available midwives and preventing Marylanders from accessing midwifery services. House Bill 717 introduces technical changes to address those roadblocks.

To revisit some terminology in the bill: a certified nurse midwife (CNM) is a registered nurse who has gone through graduate-level training to become accredited by the Accreditation Commission of Midwifery Education. A Licensed Certified Midwife (CM) has the same graduate-level training and accreditation as a CNM, as well as a bachelor's degree, but has not previously worked as a nurse prior to their graduate level training. While these are distinct licensures, CNMs and CMs receive identical training leading to their licensure: they each take the same licensure exam, are certified by the same national agency, and with the passage of the 2021 Certified Midwives Act, should have the same scope of practice.

House Bill 717 is a technical clean-up bill that aligns CM practice in totality with CNMs, as was the intent of the 2021 bill. This includes changes to delegate appropriate tasks to medical technicians training to be CMs or CNMs, giving CMs the ability to participate in a midwifery peer advisory committee convened by the Board, and dispensing starter dosages parallel to nurse practitioners. To reiterate, these changes are technical in nature, and fulfill the 2021 bill's intent to bring certified midwife practice in line with certified nurse midwife practice.

Ultimately, this bill fulfills the will of the legislature in 2023, allowing a greater range of qualified individuals to practice midwifery across Maryland. I respectfully ask for a favorable report on House Bill 717.