



AABC

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF
BIRTH CENTERS

February 6, 2023

House Majority Leader Eric L. Householder
West Virginia House of Delegates
Charleston, WV 25305
eric.householder@wvhouse.gov

Re: WV HB 2789

Dear House Majority Leader Householder:

We are writing representing the American Association of Birth Centers (AABC), a professional organization representing freestanding birth centers and their stakeholders, concerning HB 2789.

Evidence-based birth center care has been shown to improve outcomes and experiences of care (NASEM, 2020) for lower risk childbearing people and their newborns, cutting costs at the same time (Dubay et al., 2020). Freestanding birth centers are usually independently owned, small healthcare facilities that are licensed by the state and accredited most often by the Commission for Accreditation of Birth Centers (CABC). West Virginia licenses birth centers and its one current birth center is accredited by the CABC.

AABC's experience shows that in states where a certificate of need (CON) is required before freestanding birth centers are granted licenses, there are fewer or no birth centers in operation. As you know, certificates of need do not improve health, safety, or access to healthcare services, but they do restrict innovative or independent entities and healthcare providers from offering services in states with these requirements.

Here is the link to the AABC Position Statement on CON [<https://tinyurl.com/aabc-con-ps>]. We hope that you will work to pass HB 2789 (committee substitute) to remove the certificate of need requirement in West Virginia and are happy to provide more information or support.

Sincerely,

Aubre Tompkins, MSN, CNM
President, American Association of Birth Centers

References

Dubay, L., et al. (2020). Improving birth outcomes and lowering costs for women on Medicaid: Impacts of 'Strong Start for Mothers And Newborns,' *Health Affairs (Project Hope)*, 39(6): 1042-1050. [doi: 10.1377/hlthaff.2019.01042](https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2019.01042)

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM). (2020). *Birth settings in America: Outcomes, quality, access, and choice*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25636>