

Members of the Committee On Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,  
I am Kit Maloney, a resident of North Yarmouth Maine.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and share my opposition to LD1205.

I am a person for whom it is more aligned to plan to birth at home than in the hospital system. As someone who has made this choice for myself and my babies, I know all too well the push-back that comes from such a decision. The rush of people to share their assumptions and judgment of me, and to challenge my choice is common and the lack of curiosity and interest in my choice is unsettling. I am a person who values both experience and education. I earned my Masters degree in Gender and Social Policy from the London School of Economics in 2006 and have over twenty years experience in women's health advocacy.

I understand that skepticism and concern around midwifery in our current society runs deep. So even though it's unpleasant to experience push back against my choices, especially on something to which I have so deeply considered and is so intrinsically personal, I also, to some degree, understand it. However, what continues to concern me, is how narrow and limited the knowledge and experience of midwifery tends to be for the people most opposed to it. I hope we can build upon re-writing that trend today.

I gave birth twenty months ago alongside the support of a highly trained and capable team of Certified Professional Midwives at my home. My birth encompassed the many twists and turns of delivery and it was my primary CPM's ability to follow her training's guidelines that allowed me to have the birth of my choice with the unique levels of intervention best suited for me, my body, and my baby. My husband and I are more grateful for that experience and the team who guided us through it than we will ever be able to properly express.

Today I am thirty four weeks pregnant. Because of the expertise and depth of care I received during my first birth, I am planning for a CPM supported home birth again. This is my informed and intentional choice as a birthing person.

I am aware that my choice is different from many others. For many residents of Maine, probably most or all of you and your loved ones, the choice to work with Nurse Midwives and OB-GYN's is the best one. I am in full support of that right and in your ability to work with your chosen practitioners and birth on your terms. I simply ask for the right and ability to do the same.

Enshrining these choices, rather than limiting or eradicating them, is what it means to stand with and for women and birthing people - our bodies and our healthcare decisions.

Finally, the amendments regarding data collection appear at first innocuous. In fact, when you consider the likelihood that Maine CPM's will have a reduced cesarean rate in comparison to Maine Med, better postpartum care resulting in less depression and better lactation results, and many more admirable aspects of Maine CPM's data, the idea of more collection seems down right celebratory. However, what I find when I dig further into LD1205 is concerning. If this were rooted in respect for midwifery, I believe it would read almost entirely differently. What is here, again appears an effort to target and surveil rather than to understand, coordinate, and collaborate.

In conclusion, these amendments represent a lack of appreciation and an undermining of midwifery. If enacted, they will strain and limit reproductive choice for hundreds of women, birthing people, and families across the great state of Maine.

I encourage the committee to suspend preconceived notions and listen to your constituents who are most informed on and affected by this legislation, and to avoid moving forward on LD1205.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Kit Maloney, Resident of North Yarmouth, Maine

Kit Maloney  
North Yarmouth  
LD 1205  
please see attached.