



Legislation Summary:

An Act relative to out-of-hospital birth access and safety

Initial bill number: [H1189/S1206](#) (Bill numbers will change as legislation proceeds.)

Sponsors: Rep. Kay Khan, Sen. Anne M. Gobi

This legislation would require all midwives in Massachusetts who are practicing in out-of-hospital settings to become Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) and would create a multidisciplinary Board of Midwifery to establish state licensing requirements for CPMs and to provide regulatory oversight of the profession.

At present, the Commonwealth regulates only Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs). There is no state oversight of the midwives who provide out-of-hospital care to approximately 650 women and their families across the state each calendar year, a number that is growing.

This bill would:

- Require all midwives practicing in out-of-hospital settings and not already licensed (as nurse-midwives are) to become licensed and carry the Certified Professional Midwife (CPM) credential
- Establish a Board of Midwifery under the Department of Public Health to oversee licensure
- Require the CPM credential be earned through an accredited educational program
- Give consumers choosing home birth in Massachusetts security in knowing that their care provider is regulated by the State, properly credentialed, and integrated into the broader health care system

The bill would also expand opportunities for third-party reimbursement, thus making this option available to low-income women now denied this choice because of their financial situation. For example, licensure is a prerequisite for Medicaid coverage: “medical care, or any other type of remedial care recognized under State law, furnished by licensed practitioners within the scope of their practice as defined by State law.” In addition, many women who use private-pay coverage cannot get reimbursement if their home birth provider is not licensed by the state.

League Position: An affordable health care system that provides equal access to quality health care for all. *Where We Stand*, p. 47