



Fact Sheet: An Act Relative to a Board of Registration in Midwifery

Legislative History: As S. 2636, this bill was engrossed in the Senate on April 10, 2008 and remained on the House calendar until the end of the session.

The Purpose of the Bill: is to have the Commonwealth set standards for the practice of midwifery in Massachusetts. The bill creates a Board of Registration of Midwifery, which will regulate the practice of Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs), Certified Midwives (CMs), and Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs).

Current Law: Currently, the Commonwealth only regulates the practice of CNMs, through the Board of Registration in Nursing. There is no state oversight of CMs and CPMs. Midwives who are not nurses provide midwifery services to women across the state.

Why This Bill is Needed: This bill is needed to ensure that midwifery care is practiced safely in all settings in Massachusetts, with clear standards set and state oversight by a Board of Registration in Midwifery. The bill articulates a definition of midwifery adopted by the World Health Organization and seeks to improve access to midwifery services.

What This Bill Does:

- Establishes state oversight of midwifery through a Board of Registration of Midwifery, which will regulate the practice of CNMs, CMs, and CPMs.
- Authorizes the Board and the Department of Public Health (DPH), in consultation with the Board of Midwifery, to promulgate regulations relative to prescriptive authority for CNMs and CMs, and the privilege of obtaining and administering medications necessary for the scope of practice of CNMs, CMs, and CPMs.

What This Bill Does NOT Do:

- Recognize lay midwives or give them prescriptive authority
- Expand the scope of practice of nurse-midwives
- Mandate insurance reimbursement for CPMs

Who Are the Midwives That Will be Affected by this Bill? There are three types of midwives Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs – 450 in MA), Certified Midwives (CM's – none in MA at this time), and Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs - over 30 in MA and growing) with varied levels of expertise and all professionally certified by nationally approved certifying agencies.

For more information, please call Peggy Garland, CNM, MPH, Coordinator of the Massachusetts Coalition for Midwifery 617 306-1511 or Mary Ann Hart, Hart Government Relations, at 617-797-8488 or mahcamb@aol.com