



GUIDELINES FOR LETTERS AND TALKING POINTS

in Support of

Certified Professional Midwives

THE BASICS FOR LETTERS:

- The length is your choice but one page is generally considered the norm.
- Be sure to include your name and mailing address. Representatives want to know that you are in their district.
- Please write **letters to the delegate(s) from your district**. You can find the name and address for your delegate(s) at: <http://www.mdelect.net>.

LAYING OUT WHAT TO SAY:

- In the **first paragraph**, state the bill number and name and clearly state your support:
“I am writing to support the licensing of Certified Professional Midwives in Maryland.”
- Use the **middle paragraphs** to more deeply describe the details of the issue at hand or to specifically state WHY it is so important to you, the community, your family, or your organization, your members, and/or the people you serve. **See Talking Points on page 2.**
- The **closing paragraph** often reiterates your support for the bill and ends with a call to action such as:
“I respectfully urge you to vote for licensing Certified Professional Midwives in Maryland.”
- **Please write your letters today!**

RESOURCES:

These links contain additional information that you may want to use in the body of your testimony:

MFSB Website: <http://www.msfb.me>

NARM is the North American Registry of Midwives: <http://narm.org/>

TALKING POINTS
in Support of
Certified Professional Midwives

Use these talking points in letters and in your visits to your delegates.

1. Homebirth is a legal option in Maryland but access to homebirth midwives is severely limited. Licensing Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) will make this legal option safer by allowing families that choose homebirth access to midwifery care. It will further increase safety by enabling CPMs to transfer care to other providers and the hospital when needed, without fear of prosecution.
2. Licensing will ensure that CPMs have access to lifesaving medications so that they can immediately respond to rare but serious complications.
3. Licensing CPMs ensures educational excellence of CPMs by following The North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) standards, a practice followed by most states where CPMs are licensed.
4. Licensing will allow CPMs to work with doctors and other maternal health providers, ensuring women are at all times getting the level of care they need.
5. Licensing CPMs will create overnight legal access to qualified providers who are ready to practice in Maryland. Families who plan a homebirth will be able to find a midwife with greater ease.
6. Licensing CPMs will align Maryland with the 26 other states that allow CPMs to practice legally.
7. Licensing CPMs will reduce health care costs for Maryland families. A homebirth with a CPM is approximately one-third that of a planned vaginal hospital birth. Homebirth mothers have higher breastfeeding rates, which reduces cost for both Medicaid and families.
8. A predicted shortage of healthcare providers is expected in 2015 and CPMs are one way to fill the gap between the need and the providers.
9. CPMs increase access to good healthcare for lower income, urban, and rural populations, who benefit from more prenatal care, resulting in better outcomes.

See Effective Talking for tips on how to talk with your delegate on the phone or in person. Make your voice heard!



EFFECTIVE TALKING

Tips for Phone Calls or Visits with Your State Representative in Support of Certified Professional Midwives

THE BASICS:

- Know the points you want to specifically address.
- Prepare what you want to say – rehearse it.
- Limit it to 1-3 minutes. It is amazing how much you can say in that amount of time.
- Before you call: have the name of the delegate in front of you and the telephone number.
- Go to www.mdelect.com and put in your address. This will give delegate information.

THE PHONE CALL:

- Give your name and state that you are a constituent in the delegate's district.
 - You will probably speak to a staff member who will take your comments and ask for your name and address.
 - You will probably not speak to the delegate himself. If you do meet personally, be prepared to answer questions.
- State the purpose of the call:
 - "I am calling in support of licensing Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) so that they can legally provide services to Maryland families who choose homebirth."
 - Give additional information from the Talking Points or from personal experience, or give your reason for supporting this bill.
 - Ask if the delegate is in favor of the licensing CPMs and is expected to support it, and if not, why not?
 - Thank the person who takes the call and ask that the information be passed to the delegate.

THE PERSONAL VISIT:

- Call the delegate's office and request an appointment for the day you are to be in Annapolis.
- If you are given an appointment with the delegate, *arrive on time*.
 - Be prepared to state the same points as for a phone statement, and be prepared to answer any questions the delegate may have. If the delegate is not in favor of the bill, respectfully ask why.
 - Be prepared to say why this bill will be good for the district as well as the state.
 - Know your Talking Points.
- You may be handed over to a legislative aide who is handling this task. That's OK. Be as passionate with the staffer as you would be with the delegate.

***BE RESPECTFUL, PASSIONATE, KNOWLEDGEABLE, AND COURAGEOUS.
Your delegate works for the people in your district. He/she works for YOU, and you VOTE!***