

Maryland Families   
for safe birth

# Mugs & Muffins



## For Midwives

*Photo credit: amorettiblog.com*

Dear Maryland Families for Safe Birth Supporter,

Hello! Thank you for your assistance in spreading the word about Maryland Families for Safe Birth (MFSB). Hosting a **Mugs & Muffins for Midwives** gathering is a great way to bring your community together to write letters to your delegates/senators. We created this tool kit to help you facilitate your own gathering every step of the way!

Letter writing is a tangible way to give a personal voice to our legislation. It is a pleasant reminder to our elected officials of the issues that are dear to their constituents' hearts. Creating an event around this important task can inspire others to support our mission. Invite your family, friends, co-workers, or neighbors over for some tea/coffee while sharing your story about the midwifery model of care, homebirth, and honoring birth options.

The goal of this tool kit is to provide you with everything you need to make your hosted event as easy for you as possible. Share this packet with your friends, and please post pictures of your event on our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/MarylandFamiliesForSafeBirth) at <https://www.facebook.com/MarylandFamiliesForSafeBirth>. We can't wait to hear more about your gatherings!

Many thanks,

The MFSB Leadership Team

### ADDRESS

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[www.marylandfamiliesforsafebirth.org](http://www.marylandfamiliesforsafebirth.org)  
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# FAQs

No one expects you to know everything! Below are questions we hear most often, along with some simple answers. More detailed information may also be available on the [MFSB website](#), or from a Leadership Team member.

Who is Maryland Families for Safe Birth, Inc. (MFSB)?

Maryland Families for Safe Birth, Inc. (MFSB) is a grassroots, consumer driven, 501(c)(4), nonprofit organization working to ensure the health and well being of Maryland families by increasing access to the evidence-based maternity care provided by Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs).

What's the mission of MFSB?

For the past four years, the MFSB Leadership Team has worked closely with the Association of Independent Midwives of Maryland (AIMM) and a supportive delegate to educate legislators on the Midwifery Model of Care and advocate for Maryland to become the 29<sup>th</sup> state to license CPMs.

How does MFSB fulfill its mission?

MFSB will fulfill its mission by:

- Collaboration with allied organizations and agencies in the introduction of legislation to license CPMs
- Monitoring and deterring legislation that would be detrimental to families and care providers who choose out of hospital births, and
- Supporting organizations who offer, through education and other means, information and advocacy regarding the midwifery model of care.

What are some basic facts on Maryland's maternal care system?

- Maryland's cesarean rate is 35% - 2 points higher than the national average.
- 47 US states have better maternal mortality outcomes than Maryland.
- Infant mortality in Maryland is higher than the national average.
- Homebirth rates have risen 35% in Maryland and 20% nationally in the last year.
- In Maryland, only Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs) can legally attend homebirth; CNMs routinely turn away clients due to full practices.

# It's A Mugs & Muffins Gathering!

In this section you will find:

- **Gathering checklist**
- **Invitee ideas**
- **Mugs & Muffins basics**
- **Sample invitations (email and paper templates)**
- **Letter Writing**
- **Sample letters to delegates/senators**
- **Thank you note templates/followup**

## GATHERING CHECKLIST

We want to help you have a successful and fun gathering!  
This checklist will help you organize the steps to bring it to fruition.

### To-Do List

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- Determine invite list (see ideas below if this is a challenge for you)
- Decide means of invitation (print, email, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Send invitations
- Get decorations (optional)
- Get stamps for letter mailing
- Plan refreshments (coffee, tea, cold drinks)
- Print out list of supportive delegates/senators by district
- Print out a copy of [Guidelines for Letters and Talking Points](#) for each attendee
- Provide paper/notecards, envelopes, and pens for your attendees
- Prepare to tell your story of why you support licensing CPMs in Maryland
- Have [www.mdelect.net](http://www.mdelect.net) available to locate delegate addresses
- Send a list of delegates/senators receiving letters to Kirra Brandon, Legislative Director at [kirra@marylandfamiliesforsafebirth.org](mailto:kirra@marylandfamiliesforsafebirth.org)
- Mail letters
- Send thank you notes to those who attended your gathering
- Consider a follow-up with individual attendees to answer further questions about MFSB and encourage them to continue to support our cause

# INVITEE IDEAS

There's no 'ideal' size for a successful gathering, but you might consider inviting more people than you expect to show, simply to ensure a large enough group for active conversations and a good energy. It is not hard to have a well attended event: send out your invites and follow up with a phone call! It can be as easy as that.

The first question, then, is who to invite? Here are some ideas that have helped other gathering hosts pull their invitation lists together:

**Family:** Consider inviting any family members who live in the area: parents, kids, aunts, uncles, cousins.....

**Friends:** Don't forget about friends of your spouse or significant other.

**Social acquaintances:** Friends from college/school; your former professors or teachers; friends from your old job or from a group where you used to volunteer.

**Neighbors:** Next door, upstairs, down the hall or the whole building; people on the block who you always run into when walking your dog; your childcare collective, or the parents of your children's friends.

**From work or community work:** Colleagues; other people in the office such as your clients, your supervisor; former clients, your former supervisor; colleagues from community work or other charity work.

**People you hang out with:** Members of your bowling league, volleyball team, or cooking group; the bridge club; your poker buddies; night classes; Lamaze class; the gym; people you sing in choir with or go caroling with; people you shop with or garden with.

**Pull out past lists:** The invitation list to your last party; your Christmas card list; your personal phone book.

**Community connections:** Think about the interesting people you've met who are active in your community. You may not know them well, but take a moment and invite them.

**Or what about this:** Ask a friend to co-host the gathering with you – they invite half the people, you invite half the people, and together you'll have a great invite list.

# MUGS & MUFFINS

We coined these gatherings Mugs & Muffins to make it an easy theme to host a letter writing gathering.

Simply put on a pot of coffee or a tea kettle and provide a little snack.

How about making some delicious coffee cake muffins for your gathering? Below is a recipe adapted from the website [Damn Delicious](#):

## Coffee Cake Muffins

Prep Time: 25 minutes Cook Time: 20 minutes Total Time: 35 minutes

Yield: 12 muffins

### Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/3 cup canola oil
- 2 large eggs

### For the crumb topping

- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

### Instructions

- Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a muffin tin with paper liners or coat with nonstick spray; set aside.
- To make the crumb topping, combine sugars, cinnamon, and salt in a medium bowl.
- Whisk in melted butter. Add flour and stir, using a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, just until incorporated.
- Spread out mixture on parchment paper or cookie sheet to dry until ready to use.
- In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt.
- In a large glass measuring cup or another bowl, whisk together milk, canola oil, and egg. Pour mixture over dry ingredients and stir using a rubber spatula just until moist.
- Scoop the batter evenly into the muffin tray. Sprinkle with crumb topping, using your fingertips to gently press the crumbs into the batter. Place into oven and bake for 15-17 minutes, or until a tester inserted in the center comes out clean.
- When the muffins are done, cool for 10 minutes.

# INVITATIONS

Here is some sample text for an invitation to your gathering. This copy could work equally well as a printed invite or email.

## **Sample invitation**

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### **You're Invited!**

Maryland's legislative session has begun and it's time to voice our compassion for midwives. I invite you to join me for a letter-writing gathering. Let's get together to advocate for midwifery in our maternal care system by writing letters to our representatives.

We'll sip warm beverages and share stories while conducting this important task, giving personal voice to our cause.

**Save the Date!** (insert date and time)

### **Join me at:**

Host address

City, State, Zip code

# LETTER WRITING

It's time to engage our personal legislators and ask them to support licensure. It is critically important that we project a positive message throughout this campaign. A negative or threatening attitude will work against our cause.

We are asking you to reach out to both types of delegates in Annapolis, those who support us and those who do not (yet!).

Letters to supportive delegates should express gratitude for their continued support. It is critical to ask supportive delegates specifically to urge the Health and Government Operations (HGO) committee members to support our bill and let them know this is an important issue for them.

Letters to opposed delegates must remain positive and nonthreatening as we encourage them to side with the safety of licensure. Our chief aim with opposed delegates is to advocate that CPM licensure will increase safety and promote a healthier environment for babies, mothers, and families.

Feel free to encourage your delegates to contact [Kirra Brandon](#), Legislative Director, or [Kathy Talbott](#), President, at [MFSB](#) if they have any questions about home birth in Maryland. If they need information about HB9 they can contact [Delegate Ariana Kelly](#). Please include appropriate family pictures, drawings from your children, and whatever else you can think of when sending this letter. Personalization is a very powerful way to get our message to the people who control the future of this bill.

Letters should be mailed over the next few weeks. Please send a letter to all of your personal delegates. Do not send letters to HGO members if they are not your delegates. Selective mailings show our delegates we respect their time and effort and result in the best chance of passing our bill. A sample letter is included below.

**Sample letter:** (This meant to be a template only – We greatly encourage you to personalize your letter to reflect why midwifery is important to you.)

Dear Delegate Mary Smith,

I live in your district at 9999 Freedom Circle, Liberty City, Maryland. I am writing to you to thank you for your continued support of HB \_\_\_\_\_. Licensing Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) in Maryland is very important to my family and my community. All four of my children were born at home. We moved here from Virginia where CPMs are legal and able to attend home births. It was surprising to me that here in Maryland we had to use an unlicensed CPM to deliver our last child. As our family grows we will continue to welcome them into the world at home, provided there are no complications. Having access to a midwife who is regulated and held to nationally recognized standards is the single greatest thing Maryland can do to increase safety surrounding out of hospital births.

Over the last four years Maryland Families for Safe Birth, Inc. has been working with the Association of Independent Maryland Midwives, Maryland Department of Health, Board of Nursing, Board of Physicians, and Delegate Ariana Kelly to create a collaborative solution to our midwife shortage. HB \_\_\_\_\_ is the sum of years of work to develop a bill that will meet as many of the needs of all the stakeholder groups as possible.

Please take a moment to contact the HGO committee and let them know HB \_\_\_\_ needs to be passed. I appreciate your hard work in serving our community. Please help us in getting our midwives regulated so that my daughters and all women in Maryland will have access to regulated, out of hospital midwifery care.

Sincerely,

John Brown  
Suzie Brown



# THANK YOU NOTES

The day after your gathering, send a simple group email message to your gathering attendees. This message keeps MFSB on your guests' minds a bit longer and reminds them of your enthusiasm for it's mission. If you prefer to use Facebook, we recommend that you send this as a group message rather than post it on a Facebook event page. Your guest will be more likely to see it in a message than on an event page.

## **Sample email message:**

Thank you all so much for joining me for my Mugs & Muffins for Midwives gathering! I enjoyed a chance to spend time with you all and share some good conversation. I also appreciate the chance to explain to you why I'm so enthusiastic about midwives in Maryland. Let me know if I can answer any more of you MFSB or legislative questions. And just in case some of you are wanting to contribute to their cause, here is a link to their crowdfunding page: [www.rally.org/unbreakingbirth](http://www.rally.org/unbreakingbirth).

## **Sample Handwritten Thank You:**

- A handwritten thank you note stands out because they are rare these days!
- An email thank you is okay if the invitation was sent via email. If you send an email thank you note, please be sure to include a link to the website ([www.mfsb.me](http://www.mfsb.me)).
- Thank you notes should be short and sweet; they don't have to be paragraphs long. A message 3-5 sentences long is perfect.

Thank you for attending my Mugs & Muffins for Midwives gathering! I appreciate the chance to have good discussion about an organization I believe in. If you would like to talk more about MFSB and its legislation, please let me know; I'd be happy to sit down for more conversation. I can also connect you with a MFBS leadership team member to answer questions if you'd like. I believe we can make this happen, and I hope you'll consider continuing your support of midwives in Maryland.

Many thanks,

(your name here)



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](http://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!***

# SUPPORTIVE DELEGATES BY DISTRICT

We are in a great position moving forward into the Legislative session. Of the 141 seats in the house, 44 of the delegates have already told us that they are supportive of CPM licensure. Of the 47 senate seats, 8 of the senators have told us that they are supportive.

Please consider calling your elected officials, congratulating them, and telling them how important this legislation is for your family. We are also asking you to email us at [kirra@marylandfamiliesforsafebirth.org](mailto:kirra@marylandfamiliesforsafebirth.org) if you begin a dialogue with your representative, so that the legislative team can follow up with them.

Below is a list of the supportive delegates and senators. You can look up your district and representatives by going to [www.mdelect.net](http://www.mdelect.net).

## Supportive Delegates

1C Mike McKay  
2A Neil Parrott, Andrew Serafini  
2B Brett Wilson  
3A Karen Lewis Young  
4 Kathy Afzali, Kelly Schulz  
5 Justin Ready, Susan Krebs  
6 Robin Grammer  
7 Rick Impalleria, Pat McDonough  
11 Dan Morhaim, Dana Stein  
13 Frank Turner  
14 Eric Luedtke, Craig Zucker  
16 Ariana Kelly  
18 Al Carr  
19 Bonnie Cullison  
20 Will Smith, David Moon  
21 Joseline Pena-Melnyk  
26 Kris Valderrama  
29B Deb Rey  
29C Tony O'Donnell  
30A Herb McMillan  
31B Nicholas Kipke  
32 Pamela Beidle, Mark Chang (likely supportive)

33 Cathy Vitale  
34A Glen Glass  
37B Christopher Adams, Johnny Mautz (likely supportive)  
38C Mary Beth Carrozza  
39 Kirill Reznik, Shane Robinson  
40 Barbara Robinson  
41 Nathaniel Oaks  
42A Stephen Lafferty  
43 Curt Anderson, Mary Washington  
46 Brooke Liermann  
47A Dianna Fenell

## Supportive Senators

5 Joseph Getty  
13 Guy Guzzone  
14 Karen Montgomery  
20 Jamie Raskin  
28 Thomas Mac Middleton  
31 Bryan Simonaire  
34 Bob Cassilly  
46 Bill Ferguson