

What Does The Midwifery Modernization Act Mean for You?

What New York's Midwifery Modernization Act **WILL** do:

Remove the requirement of a written practice agreement (WPA) from the NY State midwifery licensing law. (Really, that is all)

What the Midwifery Modernization Act will **NOT** do:

Prevent NY State licensed midwives from consulting or collaborating with physicians or other care providers or from referring clients to them as needed.

Check out the bills and their sponsors:

Senate Bill S5007 is at

<http://open.nysenate.gov/openleg/api/html/bill/S5007>

Sponsored by **Senator Thomas Duane**

<http://www.nysenate.gov/senator/thomas-duane/bio>

Assembly Bill A8117 is at

<http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=A08117&sh=t>

Sponsored by **Assemblyman Richard Gottfried**

<http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/?ad=075&sh>

The **Midwifery Modernization Act** (MMA) is **supported by** the **New York State Association of Licensed Midwives** (NYSALM) as well as: New York Friends of Midwives (NYFOM), Choices in Childbirth (CIC), BirthNet, Rochester Area Birth Network (RABN), Buffalo Birth, various physicians including many OB/GYN physicians, and the hundreds of New Yorkers who signed the petition supporting the MMA.

The **American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM)** is **opposed to written practice agreements** for the following reasons:

It is the ACNM position that safe, quality health care can best be provided to women and their infants when policy makers develop laws and regulations that permit CNMs and CMs to provide independent midwifery care within their scope of practice while fostering consultation, collaborative management, or seamless referral and transfer of care when indicated.

(ACNM Position Statement, 2006 "Requirements for Signed Collaborative Agreements between Physicians and Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) or Certified Midwives (CMs)")

Removing the WPA is not a new idea or untried idea: Currently, 15 states have no WPA requirement for midwives: AK, AZ, CT, DC, ID, IA, ME, MN, MT, NH, NM, OR, RI, WA, and WY. Currently, NJ is in the process of removing the requirement for signed practice guidelines.

The WPA requirement is often an obstacle to practicing and accessing care:

- In some communities, physicians *are unwilling to sign* a WPA, even though they are willing to consult and accept transfers of care.
- In others, there *are no physicians* available to sign a WPA.
- Because a WPA *is a requirement for licensure*, a midwife who cannot find a physician to sign an agreement, who loses a job and can't find another, or whose signing physician becomes ill, retires, leaves the state or dies, *must turn in her (his) midwifery license and stop practicing altogether*.
- Some NYS midwives *have had to make career and life altering choices* when their WPA signing physicians have become unavailable. Women in their communities can find themselves *suddenly without a care provider* as well.

We Need YOUR HELP to Pass the Midwifery Modernization Act

To find out more about the MMA and learn what you can do to help:

Go to <http://www.nysalm.org/mma.htm> or contact NYSALM at (518) 852 -7965