

## Writing to your legislator

To have the best chance at passing legislation to license midwives, EVERY legislator must hear from their own constituents. There are not usually enough home birth parents, or midwives, in every district to have enough impact, so every home birth supporter should reach out to 2-3 (or more) of their friends and relatives and ask them to write in support of midwifery legislation. You don't have to be a midwife or a home birth parent to support this legislation; you just have to agree with this statement: Families who are going to have home births should have access to trained and qualified midwives to assist them.

Letters to legislators should preferably be hand written, though typed and signed is suitable if it is addressed personally to the legislator. Letters should be short and sweet, and no longer than one page. An appropriate format is as follows:

- Paragraph One: State who you are and 2-3 sentences about yourself and your ties to the community. Include the name of your city, and some personal information such as how long you or your family has lived in Indiana, or what kind of business your family is in, or how many children you have, or where you go to church. If you know anything you have in common with the legislator, mention it here. Also, mention if you voted for them.
- Paragraph Two: 2-3 sentences about why you support this bill, such as your desire to have a home birth with a licensed midwife, or that families have the right to a home birth with a midwife, or Indiana families should not have to go to a neighboring state to have a midwife-attended birth, or that midwives attending home births should be licensed, or that the state should regulate midwives like it does many other professions. Use your own words, but indicate support for licensing home-birth midwives.
- Paragraph Three: 2-3 sentences restating the main point and thanking them for their support. Ask them to support the bill to license midwives. Ask them to VOTE FOR this bill. Thank them again for their service to the families of the state of Indiana.

Letters sent before the session begins should be sent to their hometown address. Letters sent after the session starts should be sent to their capitol address. Keep a list of the addresses of your own legislators. Send letters often, such as on the occasion of your children's birthdays, or on Thanksgiving, Christmas, or other holidays. If you have a chance to visit your legislators, please go see them and talk about the bill to license midwives. When the bill is coming up for a vote, please make phone calls or send e-mails asking them to vote YES. Send letters to members of the committees that are considering the bill, whether or not they are your own legislators. It is helpful to write several times, but even more important than multiple letters from the same person are letters from MORE people, so ask your friends and relatives to write also.

## Sample Letters:

Date

The Honorable John Jones  
Address

Dear Senator Jones (or Representative Jones),

My name is Anna Smith and I am a mother of three children, all born in Indiana. My family has lived in or near Anderson for three generations. I am writing to ask you, as my senator, to vote in favor of the bill to license midwives. The passage of this bill is very important to me, to my family, and to our community.

As a mother who has given birth at home with midwives, I am strongly in support of a mother's right to choose where and with whom she will give birth. I had excellent midwives who provided prenatal care, stayed with me during 18 hours of labor and birth, and visited my home three times after the birth. I could not get this kind of care in a hospital.

**OR**

My family has lived in Carmel for 5 years and we are members of the Oak Grove Baptist Church. My family is strong in our faith, and we support family commitment and family-centered childbirth. I had three babies in a hospital and was satisfied with my experience, but I have met many mothers who delivered at home with a midwife. I believe they received excellent care from very professional midwives. It is a shame that the state does not recognize these caregivers through licensure. It would be a benefit to our community to have licensed midwives.

**OR**

I have lived in Indiana all my life, and now reside in Crown Point where my family owns the Hot Wheels Tire and Supply. I voted for you in the last election, and hope to vote for you again. My daughter plans to give birth at home with a midwife. At first, I did not support this decision but now I do. At the very least, I think these midwives should be licensed so that there are standards to follow and some kind of accountability.

**OR**

Personal comments of 2-3 sentences one cares to make....

Close with a reminder that you want them to vote for the bill to license midwives, such as:  
Please vote to support the proposed bill to license midwives. This bill would greatly improve the availability of health care for families in out state. Thank you for your many years of service to Hoosiers.

Sincerely,

Your signature