

# MedChi

*The Maryland State Medical Society*

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TO: The Honorable Peter A. Hammen, Chairman  
Members, House Health & Government Affairs Committee  
The Honorable Ariana Kelly

FROM: Joseph A. Schwartz, III  
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise

DATE: March 15, 2012

RE: **OPPOSE** – House Bill 1056 – *Health Occupations – Licensed Midwives*

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The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents over 7,600 Maryland physicians and their patients, opposes House Bill 1056.

House Bill 1056 proposes to establish a licensing structure and professional board for “certified professional midwives.” Certified professional midwives (CPM), as defined in the legislation have neither the training nor the education of certified nurse midwives which have been licensed to practice in the State for a significant period of time and are regulated under the Board of Nursing. In fact, the midwives that would be covered by this legislation could be licensed without even holding a high school diploma if they passed an exam recognized by an organization – the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) – whose standards for certification are not based upon recognized medical practice or public safety for patients.

The curriculum, clinical skills, training and experience of certified professional midwives have not been approved by any authority recognized in certifying knowledge and skills associated with the practice of obstetrics, including the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the American Midwifery Certification Board, and the American Board of Family Medicine. CPM’s, by their lack of education and training, are not qualified to provide the home birth services for which they seek to be licensed. Further, under the bill they would also be authorized to provide care to newborns for the first six weeks of life. Their training and certification is completely lacking in any pediatric training necessary for the critical services often required by newborns.

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This Committee has spent considerable time over the last few years working to enhance and facilitate the collaborative practice environment between physicians, certified nurse midwives and nurse practitioners. This legislation actually prohibits requirements for collaborative practice and therefore would authorize individuals without proper education, training or experience to provide services to pregnant women and their newborns without any requirement to collaborate or interface with other licensed providers, hospitals or other services to ensure appropriate transfer of care should a change of setting or provider be required. Licensure of these professionals will create an extremely dangerous environment for the provision of obstetric and newborn services that place women and children when they are medically most vulnerable.

The Maryland Chapter of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology has provided additional information regarding the basis for defeat of this legislation which MedChi endorses and urges you to carefully review. The arguments presented here and by ACOG provide sufficient basis for defeat of this legislation. MedChi urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 1056.

**For more information call:**

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