



March 31, 2025

**Letter of Support**  
**Minnesota HF 1793 (Clardy) / SF 2109 (Pappas)**

To Whom It May Concern:

[Every Mother Counts \(EMC\)](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to making the pregnancy and childbirth journey safe, respectful, and equitable for every mother, everywhere, writes to express our **support of HF 1793 (Clardy) / SF 2109 (Pappas)** in Minnesota's 94<sup>th</sup> Legislature (2025-2026). This critical piece of legislation will increase access to the cost-effective, high-quality, and person-centered care freestanding birth centers offer for families across the state.

Giving birth in community settings, including midwifery-led birth centers, is a safe, evidence-based option for many births in the low-risk category. [Evidence consistently shows](#) that community birth leads to positive health outcomes and lower rates of intervention, improves care experience and satisfaction, results in health care cost savings, and addresses racial disparities in maternal health outcomes.

Despite the large body of evidence in support of this model, [just 0.5% of U.S. births](#) in 2019 took place in a freestanding birth center. [Inequitable maternity care payment models](#)—including those that reimburse birth centers at a lower rate than hospitals for the same services or do not provide reimbursement to birth centers at all—are a key barrier to the sustainability and growth of freestanding birth centers in Minnesota and across the country.

In 2022, more than a third of births in Minnesota ([34%](#)) were financed by Medicaid. Additionally, [19.5%](#) of Minnesota counties are considered “maternity care deserts”—defined as lacking access to a single obstetric care facility or provider—and approximately [14%](#) of women across the state live more than 30 minutes away from the nearest birthing facility. By reducing barriers to birth center operations and increasing reimbursement under Minnesota's state Medicaid program (Medical Assistance), HF 1793/SF 2109 will make birth center care more accessible and address key gaps in maternity care service delivery across the state.

Midwifery-led birth centers offer high-quality, evidence-based, cost-effective care that every family should have access to. Every Mother Counts is proud to stand alongside our colleagues at the Minnesota Chapter of the American Association of Birth Centers and [Roots Community Birth Center](#) in expressing our **support for HF 1793/SF 2109** as a critical step to ensuring all Minnesotans can give birth safely and with dignity.

For further information and support, please contact Divya Sooryakumar, Vice President of Programs & Impact, at [dsooryakumar@everymothercounts.org](mailto:dsooryakumar@everymothercounts.org).

Sincerely,

Divya Sooryakumar  
Vice President, Programs & Impact