



Dr. Marla Salmon
Dean, School of Nursing
Box 357260
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195

Dear Dean Salmon:

I am writing to you today to convey the significant concerns of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) regarding your faculty's recent decision to eliminate the maternal and child health nursing education programs at your school, especially the nurse-midwifery program. We respectfully ask that you reconsider this decision and provide continued support to this important program.

The University of Washington's Nurse-Midwifery Education Program has a solid 19-year history. Graduates of the program have recorded a remarkable 100% pass rate for the national exam for the certification of nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs). These UW grads are serving the region and the country in providing much needed health care services to women. The safety, effectiveness and stellar outcomes of midwifery care in the United States have been well documented over the past several decades and all signs indicate that the demand for these services is on the rise.

The need for women's health care providers is projected to increase substantially in the next several years as more women obtain health insurance and enter the health care delivery system. In fact, in its recent publication *The Obstetrician-Gynecologist Workforce in the United States, Facts Figures and Implications, 2011*, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists projects a nationwide shortage of ob-gyn physicians of 18% by 2030, and expects no real change in the current lack of such providers in rural areas, especially in the Midwest and the Mountain West. Among their "Strategies to Reduce Shortage Projections," they recommend the promotion of efforts to improve training and use of nonphysician clinicians and to prepare the workforce regarding collaboration with other health care professionals. All available evidence suggests that we need more midwifery education programs—not fewer.

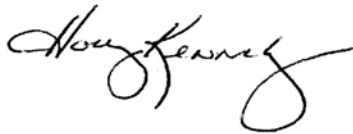
ACNM is responding to this need through a multi-level campaign to significantly increase the number of CNMs and CMs. We advocate for increased federal funding for midwifery education programs and for greater availability of student loan repayment programs and we promote innovative models of midwifery education to increase program

capacity. We are working with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists to foster successful collaborative practice models between ob/gyns and midwives and to develop interdisciplinary models of education for our two professions.

We understand that economic shortages require program cutbacks in many arenas. However, it is our understanding that the nurse-midwifery program at UW is financially self-sustaining. Further, there is evidence that documents the benefits to academic centers for maintaining a nurse-midwifery education program. In “The Costs and Benefits of Nurse-Midwifery Education: Model and Application,” published in the *Journal of Midwifery & Women’s Health*, September-October 2009, it was shown that an academic institution received an average benefit of \$79,560 per nurse-midwifery student over the length of the program. ACNM would be happy to assist the midwifery education program director at UW to apply this economic model to ascertain the exact financial benefits of UW’s midwifery education program.

In summary, we respectfully urge you to reconsider this decision and allow UW’s nurse-midwifery education program to continue to help us meet the nation’s need for women’s health care providers. We would be happy to discuss these issues further with you. Please contact ACNM Executive Director Lorrie Kline Kaplan at 240-485-1810 to arrange next steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Holly Kennedy".

Holly Kennedy, President
American College of Nurse-Midwives

Cc: Dr. Patti Brandt
Chairperson, Department of Family and Child Nursing
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