

American College of Nurse-Midwives

55th Annual Meeting & Exposition
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Midwives Support Maternal Health Reforms in the U.S.

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), representing certified nurse-midwives (CNM) and certified midwives (CM), commends Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) for authoring the **“Maximizing Optimal Maternity Services for the 21st Century” (MOMS for the 21st Century ACT), expected to be introduced this month.** ACNM supports the goal of this legislation to improve maternity care outcomes for mothers and babies and bend the cost curve of our maternity care expenditures in the U.S.

The U.S. spends more than double per capita on childbirth than other industrialized countries, but ranks far behind almost all developed countries in perinatal outcomes. Despite maternity expenditures that account for a major component of the escalating health care costs in this country, childbirth continues to carry significant risks for mothers and babies, with considerable disparities in communities of color.

Many factors contribute to these poor outcomes and high costs. Despite a vast body of knowledge regarding best evidence-based practices in maternity care, current practice has not followed the research. There is widespread overuse of maternity practices that have been shown to have benefit only in limited situations, and the procedure-intensity of these maternity hospital stays has helped to make “mother’s pregnancy and delivery” our most costly Medicaid expenditure.

The MOMS for the 21st Century Act will create a national focus on maternity services, expand federal research on best maternity practices, and support the education of a more culturally diverse interdisciplinary maternity care workforce. Provisions of the bill include:

- Establishment of an Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of Optimal Maternity Care
- Authorization of a national media campaign to educate consumers on evidence-based maternity practices and models of care for best maternity outcomes
- Data collection on maternity care shortage areas
- Expansion of federal research efforts to include innovative maternity care practices and models of care
- Development of core curricula across maternity professional disciplines
- Establishment of loan repayment programs for providers in maternity care shortage areas

- Establishment of reimbursement for midwives who supervise residents, medical students and student midwives in academic health centers
- Authorization of grant programs for professional organizations to recruit and retain minority maternity care professionals

ACNM asks for your support of the MOMS for the 21st Century Act. If you would like more information, or to sign on as an original cosponsor, please contact Debbie Jessup (debbie.jessup@mail.house.gov) in Rep. Roybal-Allard's office.

With roots dating to 1929, the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the oldest women's health care organization in the U.S. ACNM is the professional association that represents Certified Nurse-Midwives and Certified Midwives in the United States. The mission of ACNM is to promote the health and well-being of women and infants within their families and communities through the development and support of the profession of midwifery as practiced by certified nurse-midwives, and certified midwives. The philosophy inherent in the profession states that nurse-midwives believe every individual has the right to safe, satisfying health care with respect for human dignity and cultural variations.