



April 27, 2009

Senator Kent Conrad
530 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-3403

Dear Senator Conrad:

The National Perinatal Association is an organization committed to the health and well being of mother and infants. Our membership includes obstetricians, neonatologists, pediatricians, nurse-midwives, social workers, nurses and parents.

NPA recognizes that healthy infants require appropriate prenatal care and a safe mode of delivery. NPA also recognizes that there are important forces in our society comprising these important components of maternal and child health.

The Association feels strongly that nurse-midwives play an important role in contributing to perinatal health care and should be viewed as a vital link to improving health care. Because of their education, training and skills, many women prefer to obtain care from a nurse-midwife. Because of the regionalization of health care coupled with the medical liability forces currently at work, a nurse-midwife may be the only available obstetrical health care provider. We are aware of instances where declining fiscal revenues being generated by nurse-midwife programs are resulting in hospitals discontinuing essential obstetrical services, both in the hospital and community outreach settings. This, of course, leads to the inappropriate use of a health care facility for such care and follow up, as in a local emergency room, which is certainly more expensive, sub optimal and potentially dangerous to mother and baby.

With all of the above concerns in mind, the NPA stands in strong support of S. 662, the "*Midwifery Care Access & Reimbursement Equity Act of 2009*." Clarifying the fiscal responsibility for midwifery services to a hospital or health care employer through this important legislation will improve access to maternal and infant care for women across the country.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Mitchell Goldstein,
President, NPA

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