



August 30, 2007

Senator Kent Conrad
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Fax: 202.224.7776

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. 507** – the “*Midwifery Care Access & Reimbursement Equity Act of 2007*.” Clarifying the fiscal responsibility for midwifery services to a hospital or health care employer through S. 507 will improve access to maternal and infant care for women across the country. Our membership urges you to support this legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Sharon Chesna,
President, NPA

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