



For Immediate Release  
June 7, 2013

Contact: Clare Lynam  
(240) 485-1826  
[clynam@acnm.org](mailto:clynam@acnm.org)

## Leading US Midwifery Organization Applauds Legislation to Improve Birth Outcomes Utilizing Best Evidence

*American College of Nurse-Midwives President Says Evidence Leads to Lower Costs, Better Maternity Care*

**Silver Spring, MD**—The American College of Nurse-Midwives, the leading professional organization of midwives in the United States, applauds Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) for introducing the “Maximizing Optimal Maternity Services for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act of 2013” also known as the MOMS 21 bill. The legislation, introduced Thursday, would improve maternal health outcomes in the United States by harnessing the best evidence in maternity care delivery.

According to ACNM, the US spends more than double per capita on health care than other industrialized countries, but ranks far behind almost all developed countries in important perinatal outcomes. While maternity care is a major component of the escalating US health care costs, more attention is needed to improve outcomes for mothers and babies in the US.

“There is a vast body of knowledge regarding best evidence-based practices in maternity care, but current practice is not following the research,” said ACNM President Ginger Breedlove, CNM, PhD, APRN, FACNM. “If we follow the evidence, we have an opportunity to lower overall costs and improve maternal health outcomes for the women we serve.”

“In addition, there is a growing shortage of maternity health care professionals and childbirth facilities, which creates a serious obstacle to timely and quality maternity health care for women, particularly in rural areas and inner cities,” Breedlove said. “The significant racial and ethnic disparities across the maternity care workforce create even more access barriers to maternity services. In growing numbers, midwives are helping to fill these workforce shortages in our large cities and small communities, using evidence-based practices at lower costs, which increases women’s access to high-quality, midwife-led care.”

“We thank Rep. Roybal-Allard for her efforts to improve health care services for mothers and their newborns in the United States,” Breedlove added.

(MORE)

Rep. Roybal-Allard (D-CA) said, “I want to thank ACNM for their support of my legislation, the Maximizing Optimal Maternity Services for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act. The bill makes a federal commitment to promoting evidence-based, women-centered maternity care in our country. We can do better for our moms and babies, and passing the MOMS 21 Act will help to ensure sensible, high-quality care for all women while bending down the cost curve of our childbirth expenditures.”

The MOMS 21 bill creates a national focus on maternity services by establishing an interagency coordinating committee that can promote optimal maternity care by all federal agencies that are involved with the delivery of health care services. It also expands federal research on best maternity practices by establishing the Center for Excellence on Optimal Maternity Outcomes and directing the Center for Innovation within the US Department of Health and Human Services to focus additional research on cost effective maternal care models.

The bill also creates a comprehensive online database for consumers and health care providers containing up-to-date systematic reviews of maternal and newborn care practices and authorizes a national consumer education campaign to inform women about evidence-based maternity care practices.

###

#### **About the American College of Nurse-Midwives**

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the professional association that represents certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) in the United States. With roots dating to 1929, ACNM sets the standard for excellence in midwifery education and practice in the United States and strengthens the capacity of midwives in developing countries. Our members are primary care providers for women throughout the lifespan, with a special emphasis on pregnancy, childbirth, and gynecologic and reproductive health. ACNM reviews research, administers and promotes continuing education programs, and works with organizations, state and federal agencies, and members of Congress to advance the well-being of women and infants through the practice of midwifery.