

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 2031

C 7 L 00

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Including midwives in women's health care services.

Sponsors: Representatives Ruderman, Dunn, Dickerson, Fortunato, Conway, Boldt, Kessler, Murray, O'Brien, Romero, Cairnes, Ogden, Rockefeller, Linville, Kenney, Edmonds, Schual-Berke, Kagi, Tokuda, McIntire, Keiser, Cooper, Lantz, Santos and Miloscia.

House Committee on Health Care
Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care

Background:

The practice of midwifery is regulated by the Department of Health as a health care profession, and a midwife must pass an examination and hold a license to practice or advertise as a midwife. However, the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission regulates the practice of nurse midwives.

The practice of midwifery includes the rendering of medical aid for a fee or compensation to a woman during the prenatal, intrapartum, and postpartum stages of child birth. It includes the acquisition and administration of prophylactic ophthalmic medication, postpartum oxytocic, vitamin K, Rho immune globulin (human), and local anesthetic, including other drugs or medications prescribed by a physician. Midwives must consult physicians whenever there are significant deviations from normal in either the mother or infant, and have a written plan for consultation and emergency transfer and transport of the infant to neonatal intensive care or the woman to obstetrical care.

Health carriers are required by law to ensure that enrolled female patients have direct access to timely and appropriate covered women's health care services from the health practitioner of their choice, without the necessity of prior approval. Carriers are not prevented, however, from restricting women patients to seeing only those health practitioners with whom they have participating agreements.

Health practitioners include, but need not be limited to, physicians and osteopathic physicians, physicians' and osteopathic physicians' assistants, and advanced registered nurse practitioner specialists.

Summary of Bill:

Licensed midwives are included among the health practitioners to whom health carriers must provide direct access to maternity services for their enrollees.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 0

Senate 45 0

Effective: June 8, 2000