

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1773

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Health Care & Wellness

**Title:** An act relating to the practice of midwifery.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the practice of midwifery.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Morrell, Rodne, Cody, Green, Ryu, Lias, Farrell and Santos.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Health Care & Wellness: 2/21/13, 2/22/13 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Allows a midwife to provide medical aid to an infant up to two weeks of age.
- Requires the Secretary of Health to write rules to bridge the gap between national and state requirements for midwives.
- Imposes requirements for license renewal for midwives.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Jinkins, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Hope, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Clibborn, Green, Manweller, Moeller, Morrell, Riccelli, Rodne, Ross, Short, Tharinger and Van De Wege.

**Staff:** Jim Morishima (786-7191).

**Background:**

A licensed midwife renders medical care for compensation to a woman during prenatal, intrapartum, and post-partum stages. In order to be licensed, a midwife must:

- have a high school degree;
- be at least 21 years of age;
- possess a certificate or diploma from a midwifery program;

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

- obtain a minimum of three years of midwifery training;
  - undertake the care of at least 50 women in each of the prenatal, intrapartum, and early postpartum period;
  - observe an additional 50 women in the intrapartum period; and
  - pass an examination.
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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The practice of midwifery includes rendering medical aid to an infant up to two weeks of age. The Secretary of Health (Secretary) must write rules to bridge the gap between requirements of national certification of certified professional midwives and state requirements for licensure for licensed midwives.

A licensed midwife must complete a minimum of 30 hours of continuing education every three years.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill:

- removes the requirement that licensed midwives participate in a Washington coordinated quality improvement program; and
  - removes the requirement that licensed midwives submit data on perinatal outcomes to a national or state research organization.
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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Licensed midwives currently provide care for newborns and should be paid for doing so. Midwives provide savings to the state by cutting down on the number of unnecessary caesarian sections. This bill will help alleviate provider shortages and add diversity to the profession by breaking the log jam for licensing midwives who are nationally certified. Women should be able to choose a midwife and choose to become a midwife. High fees are a barrier to entry to this profession.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Morrell, prime sponsor; Audrey Levine and Jodilyn Owen, Midwives' Association of Washington State; Tinneca Krogh; and Michael Wilson, Libertarian Party of Washington.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.