

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 1773

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Health Care, March 28, 2013

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

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

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Morrell, Rodne, Cody, Green, Ryu, Liias, Farrell and Santos).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/11/13, 93-4.

**Committee Activity:** Health Care: 3/27/13, 3/28/13 [DP, w/oRec].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Becker, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; Keiser, Ranking Member; Bailey, Cleveland, Ericksen, Frockt and Parlette.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Schlicher.

**Staff:** Mich'l Needham (786-7442)

**Background:** A licensed midwife renders medical care for compensation to a woman during prenatal, intrapartum, and postpartum 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;
- 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.

**Summary of Bill:** The Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH) must write rules to bridge the gap between requirements of national certification of certified professional midwives and state requirements for licensure for licensed midwives.

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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.*

Licensed midwives must renew their license according to the following requirements:

- completion of a minimum of 30 hours of continuing education every three years;
- proof of participation in a Washington State coordinated quality improvement program; and
- proof of participation in data submission on perinatal outcomes to a national or state research organization.

The Secretary must write rules regarding the renewal process and DOH's process for verification of the third-party data submission.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: The midwives asked for continuing education requirements and the reporting requirements and we hope it will increase the number of providers. This is probably the most significant legislation on midwives in the last 30 years. It builds a clear pathway for those with the national certification to licensure in Washington. This is critical to improve access to providers and get people working. Many midwives complete training and national certification but they are not licensed and are caught in-between. This bill also requires the quality and peer review with participation in quality reporting. Participation in the data reporting will improve the data collection and the clinical integrity and quality. This bill addresses the data collection and some may object to the participation but we do not want providers that will not provide data and ensure the quality of practice. There is a shortage of midwives and the effort to bridge the gap with license standards and the national certification will increase access. Twenty states already use the national certification as the path to licensure. There is only one route to licensure in Washington today but there are other schools that offer the training.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Morrell, prime sponsor; Valerie Sasson, Audrey Levine, Kat Barron, Midwives Assn. of WA State; Tinneca Krogh, midwife.