



NEWS RELEASE

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ACNM Endorses Health Care Reform Legislation in the House of Representatives - America's Affordable Health Choices Act (H.R.3200)

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is pleased to announce its endorsement of America's Affordable Health Choices Act (H.R.3200). H.R. 3200 takes positive steps toward ACNM's seven principles of health reform http://www.midwife.org/ACNMHealthReformPrinciples_000.pdf, particularly universal coverage, the reduction of health disparities, and the improvement of maternal and infant health.

"This landmark legislation will take significant and meaningful steps to improve the health and well-being of women and their families," said ACNM President Melissa Avery, CNM, PhD, FACNM, FAAN. "As providers of primary, gynecological, and maternity care services, our major focus in health reform is working to increase access to these services for all women, regardless of age, income or circumstances. We applaud the House Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, and Education and Labor committees in addressing many key issues affecting women and their families."

Specifically, H.R.3200 will improve the health of women and newborns by accomplishing several things:

- **Reform the Private Insurance System**
 - Require that all health plans provide preventive, maternity, and well-baby benefits
 - Prohibit insurers from engaging in "gender rating"—charging women more than men for individual insurance
 - Establish a public health insurance option to guarantee the availability of quality, affordable coverage for individuals and families
- **Improve Coverage for Prevention and Wellness Services**
 - Expand coverage for preventive and wellness services
 - Improve access to preventative women's health services such as pap smears and pelvic exams, screening mammography, bone mass measurement and vaccines
- **Improve Access to Primary Care—especially in underserved communities**
 - Providing incentives to CNMs and other primary care providers under Medicaid to provide care to the underserved
 - Expand the National Health Service Corps and loan repayment programs for providers providing primary care services and/or working in underserved areas

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▪ **Enhance Access to High-Quality Maternity Care**

- Expand access to midwifery care by addressing inequities in how Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) are reimbursed under Medicare
- Provide funding for home visitation by nurses for Medicaid families during or after pregnancy
- Improve Medicaid coverage of freestanding birth centers—a high-quality, high-value option for women and their families
- Establish quality measures for maternity care

Executive Director Lorrie Kaplan said, “All Americans deserve access to safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient and equitable care. We look forward to working with members of the House and the Senate to make health care reform a reality.”

ACNM Executive Director Lorrie Kaplan is available to discuss the ramifications of HR 3200 for women and babies in the United States.

For additional information on the health care reform debate, please see

http://www.acnm.org/health_care_reform.cfm.

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With roots dating to 1929, the American College of Nurse-Midwives is the oldest women's health care association in the U.S. ACNM's mission is to promote the health and well-being of women and newborns within their families and communities through the development and support of the profession of midwifery as practiced by certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives. Midwives believe every individual has the right to safe, satisfying health care with respect for human dignity and cultural variations.

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