



# NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **SUPPORT INCREASES FOR MIDWIFERY CARE LEGISLATION BEFORE CONGRESS**

SILVER SPRING, MD – The **American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM)** applauds the support of the American Nurses Association (ANA) and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) for the “Midwifery Care Access and Reimbursement Equity Act of 2007,” (S.507/H.R.864). This legislation, introduced by Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND), Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), Rep. Ed Towns (D-NY) and Rep. Fred Upton (R-MI), will improve access for Medicare beneficiaries to the vital women’s health services offered by certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs).

“It’s important that we work together to strengthen and support collaborative ob-gyn/certified nurse-midwife practice arrangements, which benefit our patients in many ways,” said Doug Laube, MD, ACOG President, in ACOG’s letter of support.

“ANA strongly supports your efforts to address the Medicare reimbursement disparity for midwifery services. The Midwifery Care Access and Reimbursement Equity Act will benefit disabled and senior women in need of reproductive health services and maternity care,” said Rose Gonzalez, MPS, RN, ANA Director of Government Affairs, in ANA’s letter of support.

“Providing equitable reimbursement for the high quality primary care services of certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives will aid in ensuring that midwifery services are available to women in need,” said Katherine Camacho Carr, CNM, PhD, president of the ACNM. “ACNM thanks ANA and ACOG for their support of these bills and for their leadership and longstanding support of midwifery care.”

Certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives are highly educated health care professionals; midwives complete a post-baccalaureate education program, pass a national certification examination and obtain state licensure to practice in the United States. In 2004, certified nurse-midwives attended more than 300,000 deliveries; 98% of midwife-attended deliveries occur in a hospital setting.

Since 1988, the Medicare program has authorized midwifery care to address the maternity needs of disabled women of childbearing age who qualify for coverage. In 1993, Congress authorized midwives to also provide additional services outside the maternity cycle for all women under

Medicare.

In a June 2002 report to Congress, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) unanimously recommended that the percentage of part B reimbursement for certified nurse-midwife services be increased by Congress. MedPAC also highlighted the high quality of care provided by certified nurse-midwives.

While most states reimburse midwives at the same rate as other obstetrical and gynecological providers under Medicaid, a 35% disparity in reimbursement exists within the Medicare program. This payment inequity is a barrier to women's access and choice of provider within the program.

Health disparities in the U.S. continue to be a critical problem. Midwives have historically cared for those populations most at risk for health disparities in areas of high infant mortality, preterm birth, low birth weight, sudden infant death syndrome, maternal mortality, breast and cervical cancer, and HIV/AIDS infection among women. Medicare reimbursement equity for midwives would help assure access to primary care services for disabled and vulnerable women.

For information on the legislation, visit [www.midwife.org](http://www.midwife.org).

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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 infants 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. More information about ACNM can be found at [www.midwife.org](http://www.midwife.org).

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