



# Midwives for Service Members Act – Fact Sheet

## Overview

The **Maternal and Infant Delivery Wellness and Integration with Vital Expertise Support for Service Members Act of 2024 (Midwives for Service Members Act)**, was introduced in the House of Representatives on August 9, 2024, by Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-WA). The bill aims to enhance maternity care access for military families by expanding TRICARE coverage to include services provided by Certified Midwives (CMs)\* and Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) in states where they are currently licensed and regulated to practice through a five-year pilot program.

*\*Certified Midwives (CMs) are recognized in Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Several other states are currently pursuing licensure of CMs.*

## Key Provisions

- **Pilot Program Initiation:** Mandates the Secretary of Defense to commence a five-year pilot program within one year of the bill's enactment, providing TRICARE beneficiaries access to services from CPMs and CMs.
- **Potential for Permanency:** Grants the Secretary authority to establish a permanent program based on the pilot's success.
- **Comprehensive Reporting:** Requires annual reports to Congress detailing:
  - Program costs and beneficiary demographics
  - Maternal and fetal health outcomes
  - Patient satisfaction levels
  - Access metrics, including wait times and travel distances
  - Recommendations for program adjustments or expansion

## Rationale

- **Access Challenges:** An increasing number of military hospitals have ceased maternity services, compelling service members and their families to seek care elsewhere, often requiring long-distance travel.

- **Underutilized Resources:** While birth centers offer high-quality, midwifery-led care, TRICARE currently only covers services by Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs). Over half of U.S. birth centers are staffed by CPMs and CMs, who are not yet recognized under TRICARE, limiting access for military families.
- **Proven Outcomes:** Studies, including the CMS-funded Strong Start initiative, have demonstrated that midwifery care in birth centers leads to:
  - Reduced rates of preterm births and low birthweight infants
  - Lower cesarean section rates
  - Decreased NICU admissions
  - Cost savings exceeding \$2,000 per mother-baby pair in the first year

### **Support and Advocacy**

- **Sponsorship:** The bill has yet to be reintroduced in the 119<sup>th</sup> Session of Congress; however, it was sponsored by Rep. Derek Kilmer and co-sponsored by Reps. Juan Ciscomani (R-AZ), Gwen Moore (D-WI), and Marilyn Strickland (D-WA) last Congress.
- **Organizational Endorsements:** The American College of Nurse-Midwives, the Association of Birth Centers, and the National Association of Certified Professional Midwives support the legislation, emphasizing its potential to improve care access and outcomes for military families.

### **Current Status**

As of April 30, 2025, the Midwives for Servicemembers Act has not been reintroduced in the 119<sup>th</sup> Session of Congress. Please contact Amy Kohl at the American College of Nurse-Midwives for additional information on this legislation at [akohl@acnm.org](mailto:akohl@acnm.org).