

American College of Nurse Midwives
Virginia Chapter
12 Bentley Dr.
Potomac Falls, VA 20165

February 10, 2008

To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing to express dismay at the actions of 5 CNMs in your chapter. At an Advisory Board on Midwifery meeting two letters were made public outlining CNM dissatisfaction with certified professional midwifery in our state. It is our position as a non-profit consumer organization promoting evidence-based care that certified professional midwifery is one of the vital and necessary components of maternity care in our state (which includes access to homebirth, certified nurse midwives in a hospital environment, accredited birth centers, surgical obstetrical care, and the right to a trial of labor and VBAC).

It is our wish to see CPMs and CNMs in the state working together, not against one another. Certified nurse-midwives play an important role in providing exceptional care for women in Virginia and we are grateful for the dedication of nurse-midwives. It is deeply disturbing to Virginia consumers to learn of the actions of these five midwives, which so clearly create a negative divide among midwives.

It is the position of Birth Matters Virginia that we support homebirth VBACs and the National Association of Certified Professional Midwives (NACPM) standards which Virginia midwives adhere to. We highly recommend bridge building between all maternity care providers in each community. It only hurts mothers and babies to have one trade attacking another.

Virginia consumers will continue to demand access to VBACs. In many communities the only avenue is homebirth. To ask the state to restrict the practice of highly trained and skilled homebirth midwives is to ask that women be denied the right of vaginal delivery. Repeat cesarean sections are dangerous to the mother and baby. To ask that Medicaid payment be denied CPMs is discriminatory against women of lower socio-economical status. If the midwives in question are in need of research and statistics we would be happy to share the evidence.

We appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Melissa Schuppe
Executive Director
Birth Matters Virginia