An act relating to midwifery

Section 4 ~ THE LEGISLATURE FINDS AND DECLARES THAT:

(a) Childbirth is a normal process of the human body and not a disease.

(b) Every woman has a right to choose her birth setting from the full range of safe options available in her community.

(c) The midwifery model of care emphasizes a commitment to:

   informed choice, continuity of individualized care, sensitivity to the emotional and spiritual aspects of childbearing, and includes monitoring the physical, psychological, and social well-being of the mother throughout the childbearing cycle;

   providing the mother with individualized education, counseling, prenatal care, continuous hands-on assistance during labor and delivery, and postpartum support;

   minimizing technological interventions and identifying and referring women who require obstetrical attention

(d) Numerous studies have associated professional midwifery care with safety, good outcomes, and cost-effectiveness in the United States and in other countries. California studies suggest that low-risk women who choose a natural childbirth approach in an out-of-hospital setting will experience as low a perinatal mortality as low-risk women who choose a hospital birth under management of an obstetrician, including unfavorable results for transfer from the home to the hospital.

(e) The midwifery model of care is an important option within comprehensive health care for women and their families and should be a choice made available to all women who are appropriate for and interested in home birth.