

PushNews from The Big Push for Midwives Campaign

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Physician Group Uses Junk Science to Justify Its Opposition to Home Birth and the Midwives Trained to Provide It

Discredited "Wax Paper" Cited In Call to Deny Women Access to Certified Professional Midwives

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 21, 2011)—The latest [Committee Opinion](#) from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists cites a [widely discredited](#) study published in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology to justify its longstanding opposition to home birth. The group also continues to oppose licensing and regulating Certified Professional Midwives, the only maternity care providers in the U.S. required to undergo the specialized clinical training necessary to provide safe care in out-of-hospital settings.

“While we are happy that ACOG has finally recognized the legal right of women to give birth at home, instead of repeating its usual paternalistic [statements](#) about the selfish motivations of home birth mothers,” said Susan M. Jenkins, Legal Counsel for The Big Push for Midwives, “I question their reasons for citing junk science to support their continued—and baseless—opposition to home birth and to legal practice for the midwives who have the education and expertise to provide it.”

In recent years ACOG has joined forces with state medical societies across the nation to lobby against legislation that would strictly regulate the provision of out-of-hospital maternity care and license Certified Professional Midwives to practice. In just under half the states, the practice remains unregulated, and women who deliver outside of the hospital have no assurances that their midwife has met the necessary educational and credentialing standards.

In the majority of states where midwifery is fully regulated, two types of midwives are authorized to practice: Certified Nurse-Midwives, who are trained to practice in hospital settings and who also provide primary and well-woman care, and Certified Professional Midwives, who undergo specialized clinical training as experts in the provision of out-of-hospital maternity care.

“ACOG’s continued opposition to Certified Professional Midwives carries serious repercussions for mothers and babies,” said Michelle Breen, MHS, of the Coalition for Illinois Midwifery. “Thanks to the highly financed lobbying campaign to keep the practice illegal here, we have a severe shortage of trained home birth providers and an underground market in out-of-hospital maternity care. That is not the type of public health policy ACOG should be promoting.”

The Big Push for Midwives Campaign represents tens of thousands of grassroots advocates in the United States who support expanding access to Certified Professional Midwives and out-of-hospital maternity care. The mission of The Big Push for Midwives includes educating state and national policymakers about the reduced costs and improved outcomes associated with births managed by CPMs in private homes and freestanding birth centers. Media inquiries: Katherine Prown (414) 550-8025, katie@thebigpushformidwives.org

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