



New York Farm Bureau

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MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Senate Bill 7078 (Senator Salazar) Assembly Bill 7898 (Assemblyman Gottfried)

**AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION LAW AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH LAW, IN
RELATION TO THE PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY MIDWIFERY**

Date: 1/26/2022

New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest agricultural advocacy organization, would like to express its support for this legislation. If enacted, this bill would provide relief to many rural communities and their families that have a significant need for maternal healthcare.

Historically, our New York Farm Bureau families live in very rural areas and may travel upwards of a half hour to reach the nearest hospital. Specifically, the pandemic has changed the atmosphere of maternal healthcare. The pandemic has caused severe staffing shortages in hospitals, but also an influx in pregnancies. More women are turning to midwives for a variety of reasons, but mainly to reduce their chances of COVID-19 exposure. Under current law, using midwives may be a risky option for families. This is because New York has a shortage of midwives due to the strict licensing requirements, as certified professional midwives are not recognized. Issues such as a greater travel time to reach women or overbooked midwives pose a great threat to women's health. This legislation would allow for certified professional midwives to be recognized as healthcare providers, provided they undergo proper education and licensing requirements. Allowing more opportunities for midwives to license and practice in New York would allow greater resources and access to maternal care, and therefore, greater protection of women and their health.

Providing this service will not only help NYFB families, but will promote maternal healthcare. For these reasons, New York Farm Bureau requests your support of this legislation.