



# Georgia General Assembly

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House Resolution 1341 (RULES COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Benfield of the 85<sup>th</sup>, Thomas of the 55<sup>th</sup>, Smith of the 168<sup>th</sup>,  
Sims of the 169<sup>th</sup>, Holmes of the 61<sup>st</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

Creating the House Study Committee on Direct Entry Midwifery; and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, pregnancy and childbirth are normal life events; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Georgia need access to midwives who provide maternity care and attend births in homes and freestanding birth centers and who offer the best chance for a natural birth; and

WHEREAS, there exists a shortage of maternity care in certain areas of the state and a shortage of consumer choices for maternity care throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, ninety-nine percent of births in the United States currently take place in hospitals, and many involve unnecessary interventions; and

WHEREAS, nearly one-third of births, the highest rate ever reported, now occur by means of Cesarean section, a rate exceeding recommended rates including the national health goals; and

WHEREAS, the very large prospective study of out-of-hospital births with Certified Professional Midwives recently published in the *British Medical Journal* showed that the outcomes (intrapartum and neonatal mortality) of planned home birth for low risk women in North America using Certified Professional Midwives are equivalent to outcomes for similar women giving birth in hospitals, with much lower rates of medical interventions; and

WHEREAS, "granny" midwives were Direct Entry Midwives and have played an important role in the history of this state and their many contributions are deserving of respect and recognition; and

WHEREAS, the state of Georgia has no mechanism to provide licensure for Direct Entry Midwives; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Board of Nursing authorizes certified nurse midwives (CNMs) to attend women in childbirth, but those so certified must be registered professional nurses who have graduated from an American College of Nurse-Midwives accredited program, and almost none practice in out-of-hospital settings; and

WHEREAS, the Certified Professional Midwife, a national certification recognized in a number of states, is now available to midwives who meet the standardized requirements for knowledge, skills, and experience for entry level practice; and

WHEREAS, 24 states currently provide licensure for Direct Entry Midwives who practice in out-of-hospital settings; and

WHEREAS, the large majority of out-of-hospital births that occur in the United States are attended by Direct Entry Midwives; and

WHEREAS, out-of-hospital births attended by Direct Entry Midwives cost much less than hospital births, potentially saving the government of Georgia millions of dollars, and result in healthier babies with fewer complications; and

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association supports efforts to increase access to out-of-hospital maternity care services and increase the range of quality maternity care choices available to consumers, through recognition that legally-regulated and nationally certified professional midwives can serve clients desiring safe, planned, out-of-hospital maternity care services; and

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association encourages the development and implementation of guidelines for the licensing, certification, and practice for professional midwives for use by state and local health agencies, health planners, maternity care providers, and professional organizations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that there be created the House Study Committee on Direct Entry Midwifery to be composed of four members of the House of Representatives, one obstetrician, one certified professional midwife, and one lay person to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Speaker shall designate a member of the House who shall serve as the chairperson of the committee. The committee shall meet at the call of the chairperson.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs, issues, and challenges mentioned above or related thereto to assist in the issue of infant mortality in rural and urban areas of Georgia and recommend any actions or legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate. The committee may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. The members of the committee shall receive the allowances authorized for legislative members of interim legislative committees but shall receive the same for not more than five days unless additional days are authorized; and the nonlegislative members shall serve without compensation. The funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from the funds appropriated to the House of Representatives. In the event the committee makes a report of its findings and recommendations, with suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, such report shall be made on or before December 1, 2006. The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2006.