

SENATE No. 1335

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joanne M. Comerford

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act updating the regulations governing licensed birth centers in Massachusetts.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/30/2023</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2023</i>
<i>Lydia Edwards</i>	<i>Third Suffolk</i>	<i>2/6/2023</i>
<i>Rebecca L. Rausch</i>	<i>Norfolk, Worcester and Middlesex</i>	<i>2/7/2023</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/15/2023</i>
<i>Anne M. Gobi</i>	<i>Worcester and Hampshire</i>	<i>2/15/2023</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>2/20/2023</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	<i>3/3/2023</i>

SENATE No. 1335

By Ms. Comerford, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1335) of Joanne M. Comerford, Jack Patrick Lewis, Jason M. Lewis, Lydia Edwards and other members of the General Court for legislation to update the regulations governing licensed birth centers in Massachusetts. Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act updating the regulations governing licensed birth centers in Massachusetts.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 51 of chapter 111 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding after the word “Gynecologists,” in line 106, the
3 following words:- , American College of Nurse Midwives, American Association of Birth
4 Centers.

5 SECTION 2. (a) The department of public health shall promulgate revised regulations
6 under the Code of Massachusetts Regulations 105 CMR 140.000 and 142.000 governing the
7 facility and operation of licensed birth centers in consultation with Seven Sisters Birth Center,
8 Neighborhood Birth Center, American College of Nurse Midwives Massachusetts Affiliate, and
9 other entities operating or planning to open birth centers in Massachusetts to bring the
10 regulations in accordance with chapter 111 of the General Laws and the standards of the
11 American Association of Birth Centers or any successor organization, and to ensure safe,
12 equitable and accessible birth options for birth center clients.

13 (b) The regulations shall include, but not be limited to, the following provisions:

14 (i) a licensed free-standing birth center shall have a detailed and written plan on the
15 premises for transfer of a client to a nearby hospital providing obstetrical and newborn services
16 as needed for emergency treatment beyond that provided by the birth center;

17 (ii) a licensed free-standing birth center shall develop policies and procedures to ensure
18 coordination of ongoing care and transfer when complications occur which render the patient
19 ineligible for birth center care during the antepartum, intrapartum or postpartum period;

20 (iii) the department shall not require a licensed free-standing birth center or the directors
21 and providers on staff to practice under the supervision of a hospital or another health care
22 provider or to enter into an agreement, written or otherwise, with another hospital or health care
23 provider, or maintain privileges at a hospital;

24 (iv) a licensed free-standing birth center shall have an administrative director responsible
25 for implementing and overseeing the operational policies of the birth center;

26 (v) a licensed free-standing birth center shall have a director of clinical affairs on staff
27 who shall be a nurse midwife or physician licensed and in good standing in Massachusetts whose
28 professional scope of practice includes preconception, prenatal, labor, birth, and postpartum care
29 and early care of the newborn and who may be the primary attendants during the perinatal period
30 in accordance with chapter 112 of the General Laws; and

31 (vi) birth attendants at licensed free-standing birth centers shall be midwives, physicians,
32 or other providers licensed and in good standing in Massachusetts whose professional scope of
33 practice includes preconception, prenatal, labor, birth, and postpartum care and early care of the

34 newborn and who may be the primary attendants in accordance with chapter 112 of the General
35 Laws.

36 SECTION 3. The department shall issue the revised regulations under section 2 of this
37 act no later than 180 days after the effective date of this act.