

## NACPM: Commitment to Justice for Pregnant People and Their Families

NACPM is committed to justice for all childbearing people, their babies and their families, and to ensuring their health and wellbeing. In this issue we focus on two issues of concern to pregnant people and families in the U.S.: the unconscionable practice of shackling incarcerated laboring prison inmates and the assault on the rights of American citizens by the denial or revocation of passports for people born at home in the U.S. with midwives.

## Newly-Licensed CPMs Likely to Change the Economics of Giving Birth in Alabama

On celebratory note, NACPM applauds the September 13th report by Julia Simon of National Public Radio on the program "Morning Edition," highlighting the health and economic benefits coming soon to the people and state of Alabama as a result of the successful efforts by the Alabama Birth Coalition to pass the Childbirth Freedom Act in May 2017. This legislation establishes a board of midwifery and licensing for Certified Professional Midwives. The implementation of this law is about to begin, allowing CPMs to serve families choosing home birth. If you missed the live broadcast on September 13th, [download the audio](#) and enjoy this momentous National Public Radio account of the benefits of CPM care!

## NACPM Joins the Call to End Shackling of Pregnant Inmates

On September 13th, an article in the *Washington Post* announced bipartisan legislation, spearheaded by Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA) and Rep. Mia Love (R-UT), to outlaw the shackling of pregnant women in federal prisons. Currently, only 22 states and the District of Columbia have established anti-shackling laws- and even these states lack strict reporting requirements, making enforcement difficult to assess. This House legislation, along with the Senate's [Dignity for Incarcerated Women Act](#) (S. 1524), introduced July 11, 2017 by Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), would ban the shackling of pregnant inmates at the federal level. "Shackling women can endanger their pregnancy," Bass said. "The idea that a pregnant woman is going to escape anywhere when she can barely walk is ludicrous.

Shackling women on the wrists, waist and legs is a dangerous practice and a cruel practice."

In January 2018, the NACPM Board voted to endorse ACOG's Committee Opinion Statement: [Health Care for Pregnant and Postpartum Incarcerated Women and Adolescent Females](#). With this endorsement, NACPM joins ACOG, the American Medical Association, the American Public Health Association, the American College of Nurse-Midwives and others in calling for an end to the shackling of all pregnant people during labor, and the provision of respectful and safe care to all pregnant inmates. NACPM will support the emerging federal legislation to end shackling and calls on all 28 states and territories with no currently established laws to pass similar legislation.

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## NACPM Responds to Denial of Passports of People Born at Home

NACPM deploras the most recent instance of the current administration's assault on the rights of American citizens: [denying passport applications](#) for those born at home with midwives, especially along our southern border with Mexico. This denial of the rights, predominantly of people of color, is part of a pattern of racial bias that has grown and become codified in policies of the Trump administration, including separating children from their families at the border, detention of those seeking asylum, migrants funneled into the most dangerous parts of the desert, citizens threatened with deportation, barriers imposed by stricter federal voter identification rules, and now a denial of citizenship.

**NACPM endorses the [Health Policy Statement on Passport Denials](#) issued by the Midwives Alliance of North America (MANA).** NACPM joins MANA in condemning any involvement of healthcare professionals in the provision of fraudulent vital records. Most importantly, however, NACPM shares the deep concern about the egregious and persistent violation of rights based on race or ethnicity. We join MANA in calling for respect for the integrity of midwives and their life-saving care for families choosing and needing homebirth services. We join their call to the Trump administration to abide by the principles of justice and the government settlement in the [2009 case](#) litigated by the American Civil liberties Union to end discrimination against those from border states who were born at home.

**NACPM**

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the way we are born*

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