

DEREK KILMER

6TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE

INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT,
AND RELATED AGENCIES SUBCOMMITTEE

ENERGY AND WATER
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February 20, 2024

Ashley Jones
Executive Director
True North Birth Center
20696 Bond Road NE, Building C
Poulsbo, WA 98370-9015

Dear Ashley,

Thank you for contacting me to share your support for birth centers and some of the challenges related to TRICARE. I appreciate you taking the time to share your views with me.

Let me start by saying how grateful I am for healthcare professionals like you who work to provide maternal care in our region. I appreciate you taking the time to write, and I share your concerns with the impact of HealthNet Federal Service's decision to terminate your TRICARE contract on servicemember access to labor and delivery services.

In my view, if you serve this country, we should have your back. That means making sure that servicemembers get the care and benefits that they deserve – and have earned. Recently, I sat down with a group of service members and beneficiaries and heard heartbreaking stories regarding how the downsizing at Naval Hospital Bremerton – including the closure of their Labor & Delivery unit - has impacted care. The challenges at Naval Hospital Bremerton are causing real issues for folks in our neck of the woods. Ensuring that everyone has access to the medical care they need is a top priority for me.

To that end, I appreciate you raising the important role of birth centers and midwifery in addressing the maternity care crisis in Kitsap County. I am a strong supporter of expanding access to midwifery services and am proud to cosponsor the bipartisan Midwives for MOMS Act ([H.R.3768](#)), which provides federal resources for expanding midwifery programs at institutes of higher education and nursing schools. Expanding TRICARE coverage to accredited Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) and Certified Midwives (CMs) makes sense to me. I understand that my team is working with you and other midwifery advocates on this issue, and I appreciate your continued advocacy and partnership. We will keep at it!

Please know that I will continue closely monitoring this situation – and as a member of the House Appropriations Committee, will continue pushing for additional resources for pregnant servicemembers and their families.

I encourage you to continue to share your views with me on this topic or any other issue. Thank you for reaching out. It is an honor to serve as your representative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek Kilmer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Derek" being more prominent and the last name "Kilmer" following in a similar style.

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress