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As White House Launches Women's Health Task Force, New Research Finds Three in Four Americans Back Expanding Access to Midwives

Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies America urges new Task Force to make midwifery care central to improving women's healthcare and expanding the maternity care workforce

WASHINGTON — As President Trump signed an Executive Order establishing a White House Women's Health Task Force to improve outcomes "from infancy, childhood, and adolescence through pregnancy, midlife, menopause, and aging," Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies America (HMHBA) released new research showing broad public support for making midwives a standard part of maternity care in the United States.

The research, conducted for HMHBA by Aaru, finds that **75% of Americans support state funding to train more midwives, with a focus on rural areas**, and **73% support changing state law to make midwife care easier to access**. Support holds steady across all ten states studied, from Oklahoma to Minnesota.

"Today's Executive Order recognizes something families already know: American women need better access to quality maternity care. Midwives are not simply a solution to physician shortages—they are an essential part of **America's women's health workforce** -across their lifespans- and one of the most proven, ready-now ways to expand access," said **Olivia Walton, Founder of Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies America**. "Our research shows strong support for expanding midwifery care, and that support grows when people understand that midwives are highly trained, licensed providers who work alongside OB-GYNs. Investing in midwives is investing in the future of women's health in America."

A natural fit for the Executive Order's priorities

The Order directs the Task Force to accelerate "proven, measurable, and evidence-based strategies," to advance coordinated, woman-centered care, and to ensure "a robust supply chain of providers" to deliver high-quality clinical care. It also calls for consultation with states and community-based organizations on translating research into practice. Expanding the midwifery workforce speaks directly to each of these goals, particularly in rural communities facing birth unit closures and OB-GYN shortages.

Key findings

- **Strong support for policy change.** Large majorities support state funding to train more midwives, especially in rural areas (75% support, 11% oppose); easier access to midwife

care under state law (73%); allowing midwives to care for healthy pregnancies without doctor supervision (73%); and equal pay rates for midwives from Medicaid and private insurance (68%).

- **Facts build confidence.** Comfort with a midwife as a primary birth provider rises from 51% to 64% once people learn that midwives are licensed, board-certified and work alongside OB-GYNs.
- **Better outcomes are the most compelling reason.** Fewer C-sections and preterm births was the top-ranked reason to make midwives a standard part of care (42%), followed by addressing OB-GYN shortages and birth unit closures (36%).
- **Doctors are the most trusted voices.** 75% would trust OB-GYNs and other doctors to advise whether a midwife is a good choice, far ahead of public figures or elected officials.
- **Families with children are strongly supportive.** Over 90% of parents view midwives favorably or neutrally, with 65% expressing a positive opinion.
- **Consistent across the country.** Favorability of midwives ranges from 60% in Oklahoma to 65% in Minnesota, and support for easier access ranges from 71% to 75% across the states studied.

How midwifery care advances the Order's goals

- **Workforce.** Midwives can help build the "robust supply chain of providers" the Order calls for, expanding capacity where OB-GYNs and birth units are in short supply.
- **Evidence-based care.** Midwifery care is an evidence-based maternity care model ready to be translated into everyday clinical practice.
- **Fair reimbursement.** Equal pay rates for midwifery care from Medicaid and private insurance, an approach backed by 68% in the research, would expand access for families.
- **Rural access.** States and community-based organizations, which the Order directs the Task Force to engage, are well positioned to expand midwifery training and access in rural areas.

"An OB-GYN shortage shouldn't leave families stranded without quality support," said **Dr. Neel Shah, President of Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies America**. "In my own practice as a physician, I regularly collaborate with and rely on midwives. Strengthening this vital workforce offers a proven, rapid path to restore maternal healthcare in underserved communities."

See more about the survey here.

About the research

The research was conducted by Aaru for Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies America on October 15, 2026, using an AI-powered behavioral simulation of 25,000 respondents: a national audience of 5,000 U.S. adults and 2,000 residents each of Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma and Tennessee. Aaru builds synthetic respondents designed to mirror the demographic and behavioral makeup of each audience, drawing on sources such as U.S. Census Bureau microdata and licensed behavioral

data. National figures reflect the 5,000-respondent national audience; figures for all audiences combined lean toward the profile of the ten states. Aaru reports that in its latest validation study, covering nearly 3,000 questions across 186 published studies, its results correlated at 0.97 with published results.

About Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies America

HMHBA is a national, bipartisan and independent nonprofit created by Olivia Walton and Cara Osborne in May 2026 with one ambitious goal: cut the U.S. maternal death rate in half in five years. HMHBA brings together leaders across government, business, health care, philanthropy, and communities to accelerate proven solutions, align action, and make maternal health a national priority. HMHBA believes healthy moms lead to healthy families, healthy families lead to healthy communities, and healthy communities lead to a healthy economy. Learn more here.