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CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE MIDWIFE

SEATTLE – May 5, 2014. May 5 marks the 24th annual International Day of the Midwife, a day in which the world unites to celebrate the wonders of motherhood, and the importance of midwives in serving local and global communities and in the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 to reduce child mortality and improve maternal health.

Midwives have served women for thousands of years all over the world. In midwife-led care, women experience less preterm births, less medical interventions, and greater satisfaction with care. U.S. demand for licensed midwives has increased between 2004 and 2012 as birth center and home births jumped 70 percent. In 2012, midwives attended over 8 percent of births in Washington State, significantly higher than the national average of just over 1 percent.

The Midwives' Association of Washington State (MAWS) is dedicated to ensuring the highest standard of care for mothers and babies. On March 9, 2014, The Washington State Senate unanimously passed HB 1773 on March 7, 2014, ensuring midwifery care for newborns up to two weeks after birth. The bill also marks an important milestone for the midwifery profession in Washington State, effectively bridging the gap between national certification and state licensure requirements for professional midwives, and delineating explicit and high standards for midwife licensure in Washington.

Today serves as a call to action for midwives globally to champion their work and increase access to midwifery services. It is also a call to action for global and local organizations to increase education of midwives and paths to the profession. The key message of the International Confederation of Midwifery, that midwives change the world one family at a time, signifies the importance of the profession's continued growth and the need to ensure fair and equitable access to midwifery and maternal health care services.

Celebrate midwives locally in Washington State by donating to MAWS. Your contribution directly impacts the continued efforts of Washington midwives to provide the utmost standard of care to Washington women and infants.

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