

The Honourable Rodney MacDonald
Premier of Nova Scotia
One Government Place
7th Floor, 1645 Granville St
PO Box 726 Halifax, NS B3J 2T3

April 4, 2006

Dear Premier MacDonald:

Last year, Premier Hamm read a proclamation in the Legislature declaring May 5 to be International Day of the Midwife, joining with the 78 countries around the world that have been recognizing the work of midwives on this day since 1992 and whose national midwifery associations, like Canada's, are members of the International Confederation of Midwives.

We are writing to request that this year, the Government of Nova Scotia again officially proclaim May 5 as the International Day of the Midwife. On this day midwifery is celebrated and its importance recognized around the world.

In most countries midwives are an integral part of the birthing process. In Canada, midwifery is growing and the profession is now regulated and integrated into the health care systems in most provinces. There is overwhelming evidence to demonstrate the value of midwifery for women and their babies. The outcomes of midwife-attended births are excellent, their services are cost-effective, and they are an important component of primary maternity care.

Your government, in acting on the recommendations of the Working Group on Primary Maternity Care, has established a Legislative Committee that is in the process of drafting an act to legalize midwifery in Nova Scotia. This is a progressive first step toward the integration of midwives as regulated, publicly funding primary maternity care providers and toward making midwifery care available to families across the province. It also positions your government as leading a policy agenda in Atlantic Canada that is evidence-based and represents excellence in women's health care.

We request that you reaffirm this commitment by proclaiming May 5th as the International Day of the Midwife.

We would be pleased to provide any more information you require. You can contact Octavia James at xxx-xxxx. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Octavia James
Chair, Midwifery Coalition of Nova Scotia

Maren Dietze
President, Association of Nova Scotia
Midwives

Christine Saulnier, PhD
Senior Research Officer, Atlantic Centre of
Excellence for Women's Health

cc. Hon. Chris d'Entremont, Minister of Health