

To Whom It May Concern:

Until now, SELCA and many breastfeeding advocates across Georgia have withheld comment on the half-truths, innuendo and misinformed opinions swirling around the Georgia Lactation Consultant Practice Act and our multi-year collaborative process. We have preferred instead to counteract such commentary with factual information to educate the public and our profession. [See SELCA's FAQs here.](#)

Despite our efforts, assertions that purport to be factual without having (or attempting to ascertain) all the facts and the drawing of legal conclusions that are contrary to the plain language of the law have been made. We desire to correct those assertions in this same respectful spirit.

- 1) Georgia advocates working on licensure did collaborate with representatives of the African American community in Georgia, and the legislation was amended multiple times based on that collaboration. The bill that became law, HB 649, was in fact, reviewed and approved, in writing, during the 2015-2016 legislative biannual session, by a representative of ROSE.
- 2) Nothing has prevented CLCs or other lactation support providers from seeking their own license in the state of Georgia. In fact, the Act was amended at the request of ROSE representatives to specifically recognize and acknowledge their right and opportunity to do so. [See O.C.G.A. 43-22A-13\(8\).](#)
- 3) It has been erroneously suggested that under the Georgia law CLCs, Community Transformers, CLEs, CBCs and others who are not IBCLCs can no longer provide “community-based care” for payment. That is not accurate. Under the Georgia statute, [O.C.G.A. 43-22A-13](#), perinatal educators are exempted from needing a license and can continue to “perform education functions consistent with the accepted standards of their respective occupations.” “Perinatal educator” is a broad term that covers anyone performing education functions in the “maternal and infant” field. [See SELCA FAQ 5.](#) See also the May 1, 2018 Secretary of State Advisory Group Meeting [Minutes](#) approving a proposed rule defining “perinatal educator” to include CLCs, Community Transformers, CLEs, and many others.
- 4) Perhaps the most egregious and fear-inducing misstatement is that those who violate this law are guilty of a misdemeanor under code section “43-22A-15.” There is no “43-22A-15,” nor any other such misdemeanor penalty within the Georgia Lactation Consultant Practice Act. The entire Act is posted [here](#) by the Georgia Secretary of State.
- 5) It has been said that the Georgia Lactation Consultant licensure application is “more onerous in its requirements than any other healthcare provider license application in the state.” This statement is patently false. The Secretary of State’s office was using the **same form** they use for those applying to become a licensed nurse. SELCA and others voiced objection to the criteria/form because it called for disclosure of “arrests” rather than “felony convictions.” The Secretary of State subsequently amended the Lactation Consultant licensure application so that

it now only requests disclosure of felony convictions. [The Georgia application for a Lactation Consultant license can be viewed online.](#)

Publication of erroneous information serves no productive purpose.

We are excited to share that passage of this law in Georgia has already improved access to clinical lactation care. Due to licensure and the promise of new jobs it offers, Georgia has a brand new community college program with students already enrolled! Steps are being taken to qualify Licensed Lactation Consultants as in-network providers—including within Georgia's Medicaid system of care, which will ultimately place clinical lactation care within the reach of tens of thousands of Medicaid mothers for the VERY FIRST TIME. The promise of licensure – increased access to clinical breastfeeding care—is being realized in Georgia for breastfeeding mothers and babies while all levels of breastfeeding support are valued and are appropriately protected.

SELCA remains committed to providing accurate information for the public and the profession. To learn more about Georgia's Lactation Consultant Practice Act, we encourage people to visit [SELCA's website](#) and the [website of the Georgia Secretary of State](#).