

Testimony submitted via email.

Good Morning!

I'm a labor and postpartum DONA trained doula living and working in Multnomah County. I am writing to express how important it is that HB 2015 is passed as a first step toward valuing the important work a doula does.

Please read this study, which concludes that "*Conclusions*. State Medicaid programs should consider offering coverage for birth doulas to realize potential cost savings associated with reduced cesarean rates."

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3617571/#!po=5.30303>

Please read this study, which found "statistical analysis of more than 67,000 Medicaid-funded births estimated that, on average, a Medicaid reimbursement rate of \$986 for doula support would be cost neutral to the program." <http://www.health.umn.edu/news-releases/study-doula-care-cost-effective-associated-reduction-preterm-and-cesarean-births>

\$986 dollars is what a doula, on average, saves the health system at every birth she attends. Right now the Oregon Health Plan reimburses \$75. HB 2015 will raise that to \$350.

Now this is only talking about preterm and cesarean birth. These studies didn't take into account the value of breastfeeding support both in hospital and once the family is back at home that a doula provides. It doesn't tally up the number of return visits to the hospital avoided because the baby didn't get jaundice. There's no mention of how much antibiotics would have cost for all the mothers who avoided mastitis because of info provided by their doula. These studies don't even touch on the medication and therapy and heartache avoided when doulas recognized the early stages of postpartum depression or anxiety. These studies are just about the cost associated with preterm labor and cesareans that having a doula drastically reduces the incidence of.

Frankly this bill is shooting too low, but it's a step in the right direction. Please do the right thing for women, babies, and all Oregon families and pass this bill. Thank you!

-Jenna Chidester