

February 12, 2025

TO: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
FROM: Ali King, Our Children Oregon
SUBJECT: Support for SB 692

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ali King and I am the Policy and Advocacy Director for Our Children Oregon (OCO), a statewide organization that advances equitable policies, data and research, and whole-child advocacy. The Children's Agenda, convened by OCO, brings together a coalition of more than 135 organizations statewide dedicated to improving child wellbeing in Oregon. **SB 692 is a top priority of the 2025 Children's Agenda and has strong and broad support from our partner organizations across Oregon.**

I was fortunate enough to have a doula present during the births of both of my children as well as access to lactation consultants postpartum. I can attest to the impact they made on my birthing and postpartum experience, particularly after my first child's birth, which was quite challenging. The emotional, physical, and informational support I received was invaluable.

The U.S. has the highest maternal mortality rate among high-income countries. In Oregon, women of color are more likely to lose their babies or to experience complications in pregnancy. Maternal mortality rates are rooted in racial & geographic disparities driven by systemic racism and unequal access to quality healthcare.

SB 692 would help babies and families from the beginning, connecting birthing parents with doulas to advocate for moms before, during, and after pregnancy, and with lactation counselors to help moms nurse successfully.

Evidence shows that access to culturally specific doulas, lactation consultants, and other perinatal supports increases positive birth outcomes, such as shorter labor, fewer complications, lower rates of cesarean sections, and reduced need for pain medication.

I appreciate the work you do to support Oregon's children and families and I urge you to **vote YES on SB 692.**

Thank you,

Ali King

Ali King, *Policy and Advocacy Director, Our Children Oregon*
View the [2025 Children's Agenda](https://www.ourchildrenoregon.org/2025-childrens-agenda)