

## Testimony in Support of the SB 692 Bill

Chair, Vice-Chairs, and esteemed members of the Committee:

My name is Dr. Jessica Beeghly, and I am an Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and a licensed psychologist at OHSU. I am here today in full support of the SB 692 Bill, which would provide critical funding for doula services during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period.

As a psychologist working within the Reproductive Psychiatry Division, I have seen firsthand the devastating impact birth trauma can have on birthing people. For many, birth is an experience of fear, loss of control, and emotional distress. Even when medical interventions like cesarean sections are necessary and life-saving, many women struggle with feelings of failure and shame. This emotional pain can be overwhelming, and it can persist long after the birth.

That's where birth doulas come in. Doulas offer a unique and nonjudgmental form of emotional support during birth—helping families navigate unexpected changes in their birth plan, providing reassurance, and creating space for processing the experience. For those who have experienced trauma, doulas offer a safe, empathetic presence that supports healing.

The critical role doulas play doesn't end with birth. One in five birthing people suffer from postpartum depression—a condition often caused by lack of sleep, isolation, and inadequate support. In my own clinical practice, I regularly recommend sleep as a primary intervention for my patients suffering from postpartum depression. Overnight doula care is one of the most effective ways to provide this support, offering parents the opportunity to sleep while knowing that a trained professional is tending to their babies.

Additionally, doulas help to address the broader needs of the family unit. Our clinic at OHSU works primarily with birthing individuals, but postpartum doulas can focus on the entire family—helping partners share in the responsibilities of infant care and ensuring that no one falls through the cracks. This holistic approach is essential to long-term well-being.

On a personal note, I want to share my own experience with postpartum challenges. Like many new mothers, I struggled with lactation, and I was fortunate enough to have the resources to hire a lactation consultant. This support was invaluable to me, but not every mother has access to this care. All families, regardless of income or background, deserve the kind of support that helps them succeed in their postpartum journey.

The SB 692 Bill is a forward-thinking piece of legislation that recognizes the essential role of doulas and lactation specialists in maternal and family health. **By extending postpartum doula services for up to one year, Oregon can lead the nation in advancing holistic, compassionate care for birthing people and their families.** This bill will not only improve outcomes for families, but it will also attract top-tier medical professionals who are eager to work within collaborative, patient-centered care models.

I urge you to pass this bill and help to continue to make Oregon a leader in maternal care.  
Thank you.

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