

Submitter: Leah Gordon
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB692

Dear Senate Early Childhood and Behavioral Health Committee,

My name is Leah Gordon and I am a public health researcher and a mom of a hilarious 12m old. When my baby was born, she was not breathing, she was blue, and floppy, but her little heart was still beating. I didn't get to hold my baby or have any skin to skin contact as she was rushed out of the room where she was given life supporting measures to help her breath. For 20 long minutes, I didn't know what was happening with my baby - was she alive and breathing, was she being transferred to the NICU. She eventually began breathing and was brought back to me, but I didn't have a birth doula, and I suffered from depression and PTSD during the postpartum period.

Birth can be a traumatic, traumatizing, and near-death experience and recovering can be difficult in the postpartum period while you are getting used to caring for a new life. For parents to navigate all that one their own is very, very hard. I believe that every birth in Oregon should be supported by a doula and other invaluable perinatal supports. This is why I urge you to support SB 692, which will establish a community-based perinatal provider access program to increase access to culturally specific perinatal services and culturally competent perinatal services providers. Your consideration of my testimony is much appreciated, and thank you for your work to make a healthier Oregon.