

**TRAVIS NELSON**  
**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
HOUSE DISTRICT 44  
NORTH/NORTHEAST PORTLAND



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**Testimony in Support for Senate Bill 692 and Senate Bill 693**

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health,

My name is Travis Nelson, and I am the State Representative for House District 44 - North and Northeast Portland, and I am here today in strong support of SB 692 and SB 693. These bills represent a critical step toward ensuring that every Oregonian—regardless of race, background, income, or geographic location—has access to a safe, healthy, and an affirming birth experience.

Birth is one of the most transformative moments in a person's life and it is a profound threshold that connects all of us. But birth is not just a medical event that can be treated, it is a deeply sacred and human experience.

In my 20 plus years as a nurse, I have learned many things, but perhaps one of the most important lessons is that the support that a soon-to-be mother receives during and after this moment can make all the difference. Having someone by your side who understands your fears, who advocates for you, who helps you feel seen and heard. ALL of this can change everything, and that is the role of a doula.

Doulas improve birth outcomes, reducing preterm births, low birth weights, and cesarean sections, while also addressing racial and socioeconomic disparities in maternal healthcare. Yet, access remains limited. Medicaid covers only minimal visits, and most private insurance offers no coverage at all—leaving many without this vital support of a doula.

SB 692 expands Medicaid reimbursement to include postpartum doulas, mandates insurance coverage, and funds doula workforce development. SB 693 establishes a task force to assess and strengthen Oregon's perinatal workforce, ensuring more equitable, culturally responsive care. These bills are a critical step toward making doula support accessible to all families who need it.

This is not just about healthcare, these bills are about all of us. They are about the future. They are about ensuring that every family in Oregon has access to dignity, equity, and the support they need to thrive. By investing in our perinatal workforce and expanding access to doula care, we have the opportunity to create meaningful, lasting change while also improving maternal and infant health, addressing disparities, and strengthening the foundation of our communities for generations to come.

I urge your support for SB 692 and SB 693.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Travis Nelson".

State Representative Travis Nelson  
House District 44, North/NE Portland