

Submitter: Aaron Caughey
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1039

Chair Reynolds and members of the Committee,
I want to thank this committee and everyone who has testified today. My name is Aaron Caughey, I am a maternal-fetal medicine physician and obstetrician and serve as the Department Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology at OHSU. I am also the Medical Director and a co-Founder of the Oregon Perinatal Collaborative. When we founded the OPC back in 2012, not every state had a PQC and we were purely a volunteer organization. We had clinical leaders from Legacy, Providence, and Kaiser and soon after from Adventist, Tuality, Samaritan Health, and Salem Health. There were also folks from the Hospital Association of Oregon, Oregon Health Authority, Healthshare of Oregon, and March of Dimes. Each of these people gave of their expertise and experience to create our early quality improvement initiatives and models of care including the early plans for Project Nurture, an interdisciplinary care model for pregnant people with substance use disorders. Our vision was to make Oregon the best place to have a baby in the U.S. As we developed, we received some funding from the CDC and this led to additional partnerships including other PQCs from other states, Comagine Health, and community organizations like the Healthy Birth Initiative. More recently, as we have become an established organization with full time staff, we have been able to leverage relationships with the people you've heard from today in medical, nursing, midwifery, doula, and community organizations. We are also truly partnering with all 47 hospitals in Oregon who provide obstetric care as well as the community midwives in our state who facilitate out of hospital births. It is critical that we continue this work and expand our impact. As you know, there is a national maternal health crisis with one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the developed world. There is a great need to support our rural care providers and hospitals with education and training. We can do this efficiently and impact these practice settings by bringing local providers and experts together for exchanges. And we will continue to develop and roll out quality improvement bundles to improve outcomes for moms and babies in our state. I urge this committee to vote yes on Senate Bill 1039 with a do-pass recommendation to renew OPC funding and establish our existence within Oregon statute. Thank you