REVENUE: No revenue impact
FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass with Amendments to the A-Engrossed Measure. (Printed B-Engrossed)
Vote:	4 - 0 - 1
Yeas:	Kruse, Morse, Shields, Monnes Anderson
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Bates
Prepared By:	Brian Nieubuurt, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/9, 5/18, 5/23

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Directs Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to explore options for providing or utilizing doulas in the state medical assistance program to improve birth outcomes for women who face disproportionately greater risk of poor birth outcomes. Requires OHA to report to the House Committee on Health Care in February 2012. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:
- Prevalence of disproportionate birth outcomes
- Importance of doulas and community health workers
- "Community health worker" definition
- Relation to health care transformation work

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Removes provisions relating to community health workers.

BACKGROUND: According to the Urban League of Portland report, *The State of Black Oregon*, black Oregonians remain at or near the bottom of every social and economic measure. African Americans in Oregon have significantly higher infant mortality rates (50 percent higher for the children of black mothers than for those of white mothers). Additionally, African American infants are roughly twice as likely as white infants to be born with a low birth weight. In 2010, the March of Dimes gave Oregon a "C" grade for having an immature birth rate nearly 50 percent higher than the national average.

Doulas are birth coaches who provide support to mothers during pregnancy, childbirth and during the post-partum experience. Several studies have found that doulas improve the birth experience for mothers, including reducing the utilization of pain medication, epidurals and Caesarean delivery.