



Chair Greenlick, Vice Chairs Nosse and Hayden and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA) has been representing the interests and concerns of communities of color, immigrants and refugees, whose population has grown to over 750,000 in Oregon. Since our inception OHEA has worked on legislation with our partners to ensure a culturally and linguistically competent workforce. We believe that doulas are a vital workforce in our state that meet the triple aim by lowering costs and ensuring support to women and families throughout the childbirth and post-partum period.

Our communities are stronger when all babies get the best possible start in life. Doulas are a proven and tested workforce.. HB 2015 -2 is a step to ensure that we are able to reach mothers and their families with vital support- as they prepare to welcome a new family member into their lives. The legislature has a long-standing commitment to doula integration as a vehicle for reducing maternal and infant disparities. This has included HB 3311 which commissioned a study on how doulas should be integrated into the Medicaid system. The outcome of this study suggested Oregon apply for a medicaid waiver to allow for reimbursement of doula services.. Then in 2013 we passed HB 3407 which established the Traditional Health Worker (THW) Commission which strengthened the voice of THWs, including Doulas, by ensuring a standard for training and certification.

Now is the time to continue our commitment to our communities and ensure that women are able to access resources to manage maternal stress. It's time to invest in truly ensuring healthier births for women and children. We can do this by setting a reimbursement floor and beginning the steps to bolster a culturally specific work force.

Thank You,

Alberto Moreno