



Hello dear members of the Joint Subcommittee on Human Services,

I am Sandra H. Hernandez, Ph.D., executive director of Doulas Latinas International, president of Oregon Community Doulas Association, ORCDA, and Alliance for Childbearing & Collective Health Equity (ACHE) for Maternal Child Health of Latino, Indigenous and Black partners.

I am writing this letter in support of the Senate Bill 5525 which seeks for additional 2023-2025 biennial budget for OHA Public Health Modernization. Doulas Latinas International created, in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic the Alliance for Childbearing and Collective Health Equity to support Maternal Child Health Equity of Latino, Indigenous and Black partners to face the needs of our pregnant mothers, babies and families, for public health and food sustainability resources and prevention of more trauma by giving birth at hospitals settings without support of a Community Doula. The Oregon Health Authority previous funds for 2020, and 2021-2023 have been of essence to our collective with the recognition that, we the CBOs, are health agents. We could bring trust and dialogue within our communities while facing the hardness of this pandemic. Together with other 80 CBOs we are committed and working with the Community Health Equity Coalition, CHEC.

I would like to share three stories: a Latino-Indigenous Guatemalan pregnant mother of Umatilla County expressed her happiness for have had a Latin Doula professional service and resources that she did not know could exist and that “I never thought that you all will be there elsewhere in Oregon concerned about us here in rural areas of Oregon; a group of 41 Latin and Black doulas were trained with our culturally and linguistically specific programs, are now preparing to get certified with the Traditional Health Workers commission; ACHE's partners educated and served 3,000 families/10,000 individuals of Latino, Indigenous, Black of pregnant mothers, babies, children, youth of farmworkers, immigrants families, low income, LGBTQ, disabled.

In order to continue and increase this collective work, we request investment of \$286M dollars above the current service level for OHA Public Health Modernization Budget, which includes \$100M for we as CBOs who are lifeline to Oregon's most diverse and vulnerable populations. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Yours Sincerely,

Sandra Helena Hernandez, Ph.D., M.Ed., Doula, CDC Lifestyle Coach, MT SMRC
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