



Oregon Perinatal Collaborative
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Chair Reynolds and Members of the Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

My name is Silke Akerson and I am the executive director of the Oregon Perinatal Collaborative which is Oregon's Perinatal Quality Collaborative or PQC. Each state has a PQC that works to improve care and outcomes around birth for moms and babies in that state. We work closely with hospitals, nurses, providers, doulas, the Oregon health Authority, the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee, and other partners to create and coordinate perinatal quality improvement across the state.

I am writing to ask you to support SB 695 to bolster OHA and CCO efforts to improve access to, and coordination of, essential health and behavioral health care for pregnant and postpartum Oregonians and their babies. This focus on maternal and infant health in Oregon is urgently needed to improve outcomes and support the future population health of our state.

In 2024 we visited all of the 47 birthing hospitals in Oregon and those visits made clear how universal and urgent the need for investment in access to prenatal care, behavioral health during pregnancy and postpartum, and supportive care from doulas, lactation professionals, and peer support specialists is. All across our state, from rural and frontier counties to urban areas, pregnant and postpartum women are struggling to access the care they need, especially behavioral health care with wait times of 3 to 6 months as the norm in many areas of the state. OHA and CCO focus on these areas will be essential to make progress. We are especially invested in seeing future work on network adequacy for perinatal behavioral health, midwifery care, and doula care in Oregon.

Please support SB 695 for a healthy Oregon!

Please see our full [2024 Report on Oregon Birthing Hospitals](#) on our website for more information.

Thank you for your consideration,

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