

Connie Adler
Chesterville
LD 1523

April 17th, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Honorable Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Connie Adler, MD, I am a resident of Chesterville and I write today in support of LD 1523 An Act to Improve Perinatal Care Through Expanded Access to Doula Services. I am a physician and delivered babies in Farmington for almost 30 years and in Augusta during my residency.

I support LD 1523 for many reasons, but specifically:

1. Doula care can help overcome the appalling increase in maternal deaths and disparities in mortality rates for rural women and women of color by decreasing isolation and improving postpartum outreach. I have seen so many women dangerously lost to care postpartum once they were out of the hospital which can hide postpartum PIH, depression/psychosis, drug use, and suicidality. One third of deaths happen in this period and doula connections and home visits can be life saving.

2. Outreach and connection are unique strengths of doula care and especially important for low income women who represent almost half of the deliveries in Maine. Doula care decreases C-section rates, saving healthcare dollars and morbidity. Twenty-one other states recognize the importance of assuring doula accessibility with Medicaid coverage. And like other workers who provide our patients with care and improve outcomes, doulas deserve payment for their work and coverage will allow expansion of doula availability.

3. The Advisory Committee outlined in the bill will aid in implementation of the integration of doula services and evaluation of the program. This will strengthen the support by my medical colleagues and the understanding of the role of doulas by the public as well as diversification of the doula population. My hope, stemming from my experience, is that enactment of this bill will allow more birthing people to benefit from the very significant value of doula participation in their prenatal/labor/and postnatal care.

I hope you will vote "Ought to Pass on LD 1523. Thank you for your concern for those giving birth in Maine.

Thank you for your time.

Connie Adler, MD
Chesterville, ME