

April 17th, 2025

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

My name is Hannah DeAngelis, I am a resident of Portland and I am writing today in support of **LD 1523 *An Act to Improve Perinatal Care Through Expanded Access to Doula Services***. I am a parent of two children who received perinatal doula care for both of my trying to conceive, pregnancy and birth journeys.

I support **LD 1523** because:

I know from firsthand experience that having a doula changed our TTC, pregnancy, and birth stories. As a queer family, getting support with our journey felt critical. Our first doula was a part our queer family building since we were just dreaming our baby into reality and her guidance, ferocious advocacy, and calming presence in the journey to parenthood altered our story.

In the stage of "beginning to begin" she was there for all of it-- teaching about tracking cycles, trying to find the humor in picking a sperm donor, connecting us to other queer providers, hearing and validating the anger and frustration that can come in queer family making. Through all parts of the journey our doula saw both of us fully as individuals and queer folks and she was always up for the weird and creative. Her check ins in hard weeks of waiting kept us grounded and her celebration of the best moments magnified our joy.

Early on when we were discussing navigating all of our providers I remember asking our doula, who is the captain of the care team when there's multiple midwives, a doula. She got on her most serious voice and said "you're the captain of your care team. It's you." In every action, phone call, text, sentence our doula always kept this ethos of pregnant person & partner led care. The reminder to myself that I am the captain of my care has altered the way I see my own agency in all of my medical care. Doula's change your perspective on what care can look like!

In our second journey we didn't need as much hands on care, but beginning again with a toddler in the picture required a new kind of support! Our second doula met us exactly where we were at— brought bubbles for the toddler to the backyard, was there when he projectile vomited all over my wife in a meeting, was an intricate part of our childcare plan for going into labor.

Both of our doulas were there for the births of our children as advocates, coaches, and cheerleaders. They were present for me and for my wife in ways that other providers couldn't be because of their depth of knowledge of us and our family. The level of care provided to pregnant and birthing people by doulas is incomparable, and all families should have access to this kind of care.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I hope you will vote “Ought to Pass” on LD 1523.

Thank you,

Hannah DeAngelis, parent of Ari, 3 and Noa, 1