

Testimony of Coralie Giles, RN
President, Maine State Nurses Association
Vice-President, National Nurses United

**OPPOSING LD 1523, “An Act to Improve Perinatal Care Through Expanded Access
to Doula Services”**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Hearing: April 17, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

Dear Chair Ingwersen, Chair Meyer, and distinguished members of the Committee on
Health and Human Services,

The Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses Organizing Committee/National
Nurses United (MSNA), representing more than 4,000 registered nurses and health care
professionals providing patient care in our state, **urges the Committee to oppose LD
1523**. While MSNA supports providing additional services to MaineCare participants, **it
is premature to set specific requirements for MaineCare reimbursement for doula
services without specifying what qualifications are necessary for a doula to be
eligible for reimbursement or what services are appropriate for a doula to provide**.

While doulas can provide valuable emotional support, physical comfort, and
connection to resources, **it is essential to ensure that health-related advice and patient
education are provided by licensed health care professionals as the perinatal period
involves many complex health issues**. Health teaching and health counseling are
important parts of a registered nurse’s scope of practice under Maine’s Nurse Practice
Act.¹ The patient education provided by registered nurses is informed by nursing
education and experience and tailored to the health issues of each patient. Doulas can
help their clients learn about and access health care services, including health
education, from licensed professionals, but they cannot safely replace those
professionals. For example, MaineCare currently offers a MaineMOM program that

¹ 32 M.R.S.A. §2102(2)(A).

appropriately allows certified doulas to work as patient navigators, who coordinate care.²

We urge the Committee to oppose LD 1523. MSNA would appreciate the opportunity to work with the Committee to determine the services that a doula could provide safely.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Coralie Giles RN".

Coralie (Cokie) Giles, RN

President, Maine State Nurses Association

Vice-President, National Nurses United

² MaineCare Benefits Manual Ch.II, Section 89, MaineMOM Services and Reimbursement.