

HB1464
House Human Services Committee
69th Legislative Session

Chair Ruby and honorable members of the House Human Services Committee, my name is Dr. Erica Hofland. I am a practicing Obstetrician Gynecologist in Dickinson and I am writing asking for your support for House Bill 1464.

Care for moms in the postpartum time frame is paramount not only to a mom's health and safety, but is also a key for a thriving newborn. This is an especially vulnerable time for a mother. The physical recovery of delivery, whether vaginal or cesarean section, can be challenging and painful. The pronounced sleep deprivation that accompanies newborn cares can be emotionally and mentally exhausting. Concerns about breast-feeding adequacy and doubts about parenting ability are commonplace as well. All of the above can lead to anxiety, feelings of inadequacy, and at times baby blues and depression. The postpartum time frame is viewed by the outside world as joyous. This mismatch in expectations of how a woman feels postpartum and her actual experiences can further amplify her feelings of isolation. Women can be aided in the above physical, emotional, and mental recovery by a network of support individuals. For some, support comes in the form of parents, siblings, or close friends that are able to visit and offer advice and care not only to the postpartum mother but also her infant. For some, however, these support networks may be inaccessible or lacking. Being able to hire a trained, certified postpartum doula would be a way to help women thrive postpartum. A postpartum doula would be a team member helping provide information and resources in regards to care. They would also be able to help direct a patient back to her primary delivering provider and pediatric care provider when needed.

I ask this committee to support the passage of House Bill 1464. I would be happy to provide any other information this Committee requires.

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