

HB 1464  
House Human Services Committee  
February 3, 2025

Chair Ruby and members of the House Human Services Committee,

My name is Dr Ana Tobiasz. I am an obstetrician/gynecologist and maternal fetal medicine physician who has practiced in the state since 2017. My training and expertise is in providing care to individuals experiencing pregnancy complications and high risk pregnancies. I urge a DO PASS on HB 1464.

The postpartum period can be an extremely challenging time. Having just gone through pregnancy, childbirth, and in the first weeks and months caring for a newborn while recovering from pregnancy can be stressful, in particular if you lack a support network. There is evidence that doula support in the postpartum period can improve both maternal and neonatal outcomes. Doulas do not provide medical expertise or give medical advice, but rather should be a source of emotional, physical, and education support only (based on the Doulas of North America or DONA code of ethics). As a medical professional, I hear frequently from patients that they often times felt alone after delivery and are in need of additional support. Currently the only individuals who have access to this support are those who can pay for this cost, leaving a large group of individuals without access to this resource.

This bill also requires that doulas receiving payment from Medicaid for their services are required to be certified, which holds them to certain standards such as those set out by DONA international. As stated above, doulas should not be providing medical advice, but rather providing assistance with non-medical support and companionship, assisting with newborn care and sibling adjustment, meal preparation and household organization as examples. Tasks such as examining the baby and giving medical advice are not allowed for doulas who are certified and following their code of ethics.

I do have one area of concern if this legislation passes. Payment for doula services should not reduce the rate of reimbursement for other components of prenatal and postnatal care delivery, such as physician reimbursement for services provided or facility fees. Prenatal and postnatal care delivery is a team based effort and each component should continue to be compensated fairly for their portion of care.

Respectfully,

Dr Ana Tobiasz, MD  
Maternal Fetal Medicine Physician