



May 9, 2025

The Honorable Paul Feeney, Chair
Joint Committee on Financial Services
State House, Room 112
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable James Murphy, Chair
Joint Committee on Financial Services
State House, Room 254
Boston, MA 02133

Submitted by email to: jointcmte-financialservices@malegislature.gov

Re: Testimony in support of *An Act relative to Insurance Coverage for Doula Services* (H.1312/S.789)

Dear Chair Feeney, Chair Murphy, and Members of the Joint Committee on Financial Services,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of An Act relative to Insurance Coverage for Doula Services (H.1312/S.789), filed by Representative Lindsay Sabadosa and Senator Liz Miranda. This legislation builds upon Massachusetts' recent progress in expanding doula access through MassHealth coverage by requiring private insurance plans to cover doula services, establishing a Doula Advisory Committee to guide successful implementation, and securing patients' rights to have their doula present during labor and delivery.

We are members of the Massachusetts Mind the Gap Coalition, a group of health care organizations, nonprofits, community-based organizations, survivors of Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs) and/or pregnancy and infant loss, and other advocates working to improve state policies around perinatal mental health, supported by Postpartum Support International's national [Mind the Gap](#) initiative.

As you know, our state and nation face a [maternal health crisis](#), with skyrocketing rates of maternal mortality and [morbidity](#), [preterm birth](#), birth disparities, and unnecessary, dangerous, and traumatic [interventions](#). Doula support has been [proven to improve outcomes](#) in all of these areas, so expanding and protecting doula services through this legislation is critical.

As perinatal mental health advocates, we also urge you to support H.1312/S.789 because of its mental health benefits. Traumatic birth, birth complications, pre-term birth, and a lack of social support are all [primary risk factors for PMADs](#), making doula care protective for mental health as well. Moreover, a positive, supported birth that is as uncomplicated as necessary has far-reaching implications for starting family life on a strong, healthy footing.

Additionally, postpartum support from doulas fills in a concerning lack of care during a vulnerable time period. Most birthing people only attend one 6-week postpartum visit, despite the fact that [two-thirds](#)

[of pregnancy-related deaths occur postpartum](#). Doulas can provide resources, screen for mental health concerns, and flag medical issues before they become dangerous.

We hope you can support this important legislation with a favorable report. Please contact the Mind the Gap Coalition coordinator, Jessie Colbert, at jcolbert@massppdfund.org with any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Accompany Doula Care
AllPaths Family Building
Bay State Birth Coalition
Belle Joie Doula Services
The Brazelton Touchpoints Center
Chamber of Mothers
Empty Arms Bereavement Support
Fathers' UpLift, Inc.
Flourish Community Care
GPS Group Peer Support
It Takes a Village
Lifeline for Families Center and the Lifeline for Moms Program at UMass Chan Medical School
Mass. PPD Fund
Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association
Massachusetts Medical Society
Massachusetts Section of the Association of Women's Health, Obstetrics, and Neonatal Nurses
North Shore Postpartum Help
Postpartum Support International of Massachusetts
ProPa City Community Outreach