

Doulas and the Perinatal Workforce



The **perinatal workforce** describes health care providers who work with moms and birthing parents, from pregnancy through the first year after birth. Two critical perinatal jobs include lactation consultants and counselors, who instruct moms in nursing techniques; and doulas, who advocate and support moms and birthing parents before, during, and after pregnancy.

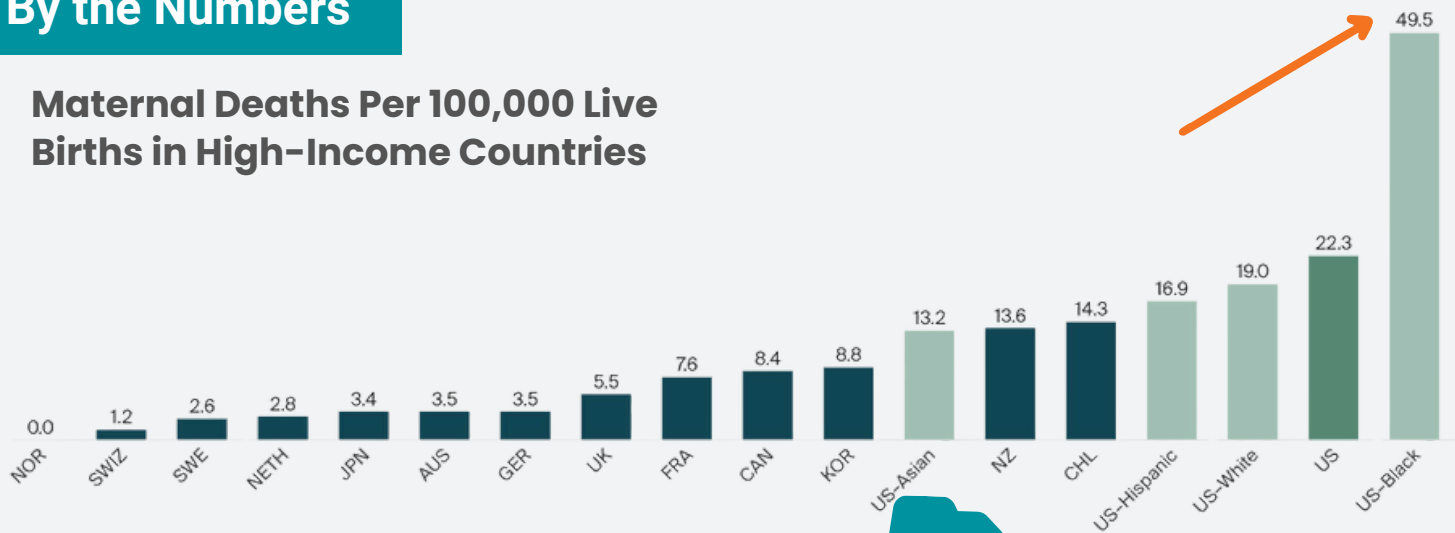
Perinatal support keeps moms and babies safe

- ☀️ The U.S. has the **highest maternal mortality rate among high-income countries**. In Oregon, women of color are more likely to lose their babies or to experience complications in pregnancy.
- ☀️ **Maternal mortality rates are rooted in racial & geographic disparities** driven by systemic racism and unequal access to quality healthcare.
- ☀️ **Evidence** shows that **access to culturally specific doulas**, lactation consultants, and other perinatal supports **increases positive birth outcomes**.



By the Numbers

Maternal Deaths Per 100,000 Live Births in High-Income Countries



49.5

of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births for women in the U.S. who identify as Black.

22

of maternal deaths per 1,000 live births for women in the U.S.

In Oregon

Between 4 and 12 maternal deaths happen each year, a number that is underreported by up to 1/3. For every 1 maternal death, around 50 additional women experience severe complications during pregnancy, labor, and delivery that nearly result in death.

How Do Doulas Help?

Community-based birth and postpartum doulas:

- ☀️ **Decrease negative birth outcomes** (low birthweight, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit admissions, etc.)
- ☀️ **Increase access to services** (birthing classes, maternal postpartum and well-child visits)
- ☀️ **Support nurturing and responsive** child-parent relationships, including supporting access to postpartum depression care



Take Action! Support SB 692 and SB 693

Oregon needs a multi-faceted approach to expand the perinatal workforce that is culturally specific and will create opportunities and eliminate barriers to giving and receiving care, especially for Black women and people in rural communities.

Expand the Perinatal Workforce (SB 692)



- **SB 692** specifically addresses expanding access to doulas and perinatal service providers, **regardless of birth outcome**. This ensures that parents who experience infant loss still receive doula support.
- Mandate public and private **health insurance coverage** for birth and postpartum doula services and lactation consultants and counselors.
- Expand **doula coverage** during the **postpartum period**, including up to **12 reimbursable postpartum visits**.
- Increase **doula pay** and number of **visits** that are covered.
- Create **alignment** between private & public insurance coverage.
- Establish the **Community-Based Perinatal Provider Access Fund** to support training & education, outreach, recruitment, expansion of doula organizations, and technical assistance to support racially, ethnically, linguistically, and geographically diverse perinatal service providers.

Establish a Perinatal Workforce Taskforce (SB 693)

This bill directs the Oregon Health Authority to establish the **Perinatal Workforce Taskforce** to evaluate the existing perinatal workforce and make recommendations for improvement.



- This approach is supported by Oregon's Early Childhood Coalition, comprised of more than 70 organizations advocating for a stronger statewide early childhood system. **Learn more at bit.ly/OregonECC** or scan the QR code.

