
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 2798

Brief Description: Creating a new health profession for doulas.

Sponsors: Representatives Robinson, Shewmake, Goodman and Pollet.

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a new registered health profession for doulas.
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Hearing Date: 2/4/20

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

A doula is a person who provides support to a woman before, during, and after childbirth. Services a doula may perform include support during childbirth, parental education, and breastfeeding assistance. Doulas are not a licensed health profession and are therefore not subject to professional discipline under the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

Jails and prisons must make reasonable accommodations for the provision of available midwifery or doula services to pregnant inmate and inmates who have given birth with the previous six weeks. Midwives and doulas must be given appropriate facility access, must be allowed to attend and provide assistance during labor when feasible, and must have access to the inmate's health care information.

In the 2019-2021 Operating Budget, the Health Care Authority was directed to provide medical assistance reimbursement for maternity support services provided by doulas.

Summary of Bill:

A new registered health profession is created for doulas. A doula is defined as a person trained to provide physical, emotional, or informational support to a pregnant woman before, during, and

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after delivery of a child, including support and assistance during labor and childbirth, prenatal and postpartum education, breastfeeding assistance, parenting education, and support in the event a woman has been or will become separated from her child.

The Department of Health (DOH) is designated as the disciplining authority for registered doulas under the Uniform Disciplinary Act. The DOH must issue a registration to any applicant who has completed an application form and paid a registration fee.

Registering as a doula is not mandatory; a person may practice as a doula without becoming registered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 21, 2020.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for sections 1 through 5, relating to the creation of a registration program for doulas, which take effect on January 1, 2021.