



Members of the House Public & Behavioral Health & Human Services Committee,

My name is Jillian Fabricius, and I am Deputy Director with Illuminate Colorado, a statewide nonprofit working to strengthen families, organizations, and communities to prevent child maltreatment. I am submitting written testimony **to ask you for a yes vote on SB23-288 Coverage For Doula Services.**

When new parents have access to doula services that promote wellbeing, we strengthen the foundation for families and communities to thrive.

Illuminate supports SB23-288 for two main reasons:

1. **SB23-288 would maintain sustainable funding for doula services that promote protective factors to prevent child maltreatment.** Research has shown that building parental resilience is a protective factor that prevents child maltreatment.¹ When parents experience chronic stress, it can become toxic stress, impacting their ability to respond to their child's needs. Parents receiving doula services experience lower rates of stress, anxiety, and depression. Doula services have also been shown to promote positive parent-child interactions during the postpartum period.² This bill would maintain a sustainable funding source for doula services, promoting parental resilience and preventing child maltreatment.
2. **SB23-288 would maintain funding for doula services, which have been shown to promote health equity.** People of color experience reduced access to prenatal care, and Black and indigenous people experience disproportionately high rates of pregnancy-related death.³ Doula services have been shown to act as a buffer and promote more equitable outcomes for pregnant people and infants at greater risk of health disparities resulting from discrimination and oppression.⁴ This bill would increase health equity by ensuring low-income families have access to vital doula services..

In closing, when families have access to sustainably funded doula services, we strengthen the foundations of families and communities to thrive. **We urge you to support Medicaid coverage of doula services by voting 'yes' on SB23-288.**

Sincerely,

Jillian Adams Fabricius, Deputy Director

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¹ Center for the Study of Social Policy. (n.d.) About Strengthening Families and the protective factors framework. Retrieved From:

<https://cssp.org/our-work/projects/protective-factors-framework/>

² Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center. (2023). Prenatal-to-3 policy clearinghouse evidence review: Community-based doulas. (ER 23A.0423).

Peabody College of Education and Human Development, Vanderbilt University. Retrieved From:

<https://pn3policy.org/policy-clearinghouse/community-based-doulas>

³ KFF. (2022). Racial disparities in maternal and infant health: Current status and efforts to address them. Retrieved From:

[https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/issue-brief/racial-disparities-in-maternal-and-infant-health-current-status-and-efforts-to-address-them/#:~:text=Black%20and%20AIAN%20women%20have,births\)%20\(Figure%201\)](https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/issue-brief/racial-disparities-in-maternal-and-infant-health-current-status-and-efforts-to-address-them/#:~:text=Black%20and%20AIAN%20women%20have,births)%20(Figure%201))

⁴ Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center (above).