HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 3541 FILED ON: 1/20/2023

HOUSE . . . . . No. 1154

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Chynah Tyler and Marjorie C. Decker

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to expand the doula workforce.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Chynah Tyler	*7th Suffolk*	*1/20/2023*
Marjorie C. Decker	*25th Middlesex*	*1/20/2023*
Mindy Domb	*3rd Hampshire*	*2/14/2023*

HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 3541 FILED ON: 1/20/2023

HOUSE . . . . . No. 1154

By Representatives Tyler of Boston and Decker of Cambridge, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1154) of Chynah Tyler, Marjorie C. Decker and Mindy Domb relative to the doula workforce. Financial Services.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)

An Act to expand the doula workforce.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 112 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

Section 290. (a) As used in this section, the following word shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meaning:-

A “perinatal doula” or referred to hereafter as "doula”, is a trained professional who provides physical, emotional, and informational support, but not medical care, for pregnant individuals, surrogates, foster care parents and adoptive parents during and after pregnancy, labor, childbirth, miscarriage, stillbirth or loss.

(b) There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate fund to be known as the Maternal Health Justice Fund, hereafter called “the fund,” for the purpose of expanding and managing the doula workforce. The fund shall be administered by the department of public health, referred to hereafter as “the department.” The fund shall be credited

with: (i) revenue from appropriations or other money authorized by the general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund; and (ii) funds from non-state entities, including, but not limited to gifts, grants and donations from private entities and local and federal government agencies. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation and any money remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

(c) The department shall utilize the fund monies to do the following:

1. Provide, subject to available funding, compensation for support staff at the department to oversee the doula workforce support efforts.

2. Provide, subject to available funding, scholarship monies to individuals seeking doula certification from an approved certification program, as determined by the department in accordance with competencies outlined in (d)(1) and (d)(2). Scholarship awards should prioritize applicants from historically marginalized backgrounds, those demonstrating low income as determined by the department, and those located in geographic areas that lack doula availability.

3. Provide, subject to available funding, support to agencies dedicated to maternal health care-related workforce development, doula mentorship and supervision, and fiscal management.

4. Provide, subject to available funding, support to existing community-based doula programs that meet the competencies outlined in (d)(1) and (d)(2).

(d) The department shall establish and maintain a list of doula certification programs which are eligible for scholarship monies from the fund.

1. The department shall establish and maintain a list of competencies which doula certification programs must meet in order to be eligible for scholarship monies from the fund. Such competencies should include, but not be limited to:

A. understanding of basic anatomy and physiology as related to pregnancy, the childbearing process, the postpartum period, breast-milk feeding, breastfeeding and chestfeeding;

B. capacity to employ different strategies for providing emotional support, education and resources during the perinatal period;

C. knowledge of and ability to assist families with a wide variety of non-clinical labor coping strategies;

D. strategies to foster effective communication between clients, their families, support services and health care providers;

E. awareness of and ability to provide information on integrative health care systems and various specialties of care to address client needs beyond the scope of practice of the doula;

F. knowledge of community-based, state- and federally-funded, and clinical resources available to address client needs beyond the scope of practice of the doula; and

G. knowledge of HIPAA compliance and client confidentiality;

(2) In addition to the above competencies, doula certification programs eligible for fund monies should also offer education in the areas of:

A. Health equity;

B. Implicit bias;

C. racism, including structural, interpersonal, and institutionalized racism;

D. reproductive and birth justice;

E. cultural sensitivity and humility;

F. trauma-informed care, including for survivors of sexual assault or birth trauma;

G. parental mental health needs;

H. needs of persons with disabilities or disabled persons;

I. sexual and gender identities;

J. social determinants of health.

(3) the department shall publish the list of eligible doula certification programs and instructions for how to apply for scholarship monies publicly on its website. The list shall be updated promptly in response to any changes to the list of certification programs or eligibility requirements.