

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 272

BY REPRESENTATIVES WILLARD, AMEDEE, BEAULLIEU, BOYD, BRYANT, CARPENTER, WILFORD CARTER, COX, DUBUISSON, FISHER, HUGHES, JENKINS, JORDAN, KNOX, LANDRY, LARVADAIN, LYONS, MARCELLE, MOORE, NEWELL, PIERRE, SELDERS, AND THOMPSON AND SENATORS BARROW, BOUIE, CARTER, DUPLESSIS, FIELDS, MIZELL, AND PRICE

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 22:1059.2 and to enact R.S. 22:1059.3, relative to maternity
3 support services provided by doulas; to require health insurance coverage for such
4 maternity support services; to provide for legislative findings; to provide for
5 definitions; to provide for the redesignation of certain statutes; to provide for
6 effectiveness; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 22:1059.2 is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 22:1059.3 is
9 hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §1059.2. Required coverage for maternity support services provided by doulas;
11 legislative findings; definitions

12 A. The legislature hereby finds and affirms all of the following:

13 (1) A doula is an individual who has been trained to provide physical,
14 emotional, and educational support, but not medical or midwifery care, to pregnant
15 and birthing women and their families before, during, and after childbirth.

16 (2) Leading professional societies such as the American College of
17 Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, and
18 federal agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Health
19 Resources and Services Administration, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid
20 Services have recognized the well-established benefits of maternity support services
21 provided by doulas.

22 (3) Research has demonstrated that support from a doula is associated with
23 lower cesarean section rates, fewer obstetric interventions, fewer complications

1 during and after childbirth, decreased use of pain medication, shorter labor hours,
2 and higher scores on the Apgar test, which indicates how well a baby is doing
3 outside the womb.

4 (4) As Louisiana currently ranks as a state with one of the highest maternal
5 and infant mortality rates in the United States, this state has a compelling interest in
6 and obligation to promote practices that improve maternal and infant health
7 outcomes.

8 B.(1) A health coverage plan delivered or issued for delivery in this state that
9 provides benefits for maternity services shall include coverage for maternity support
10 services provided by a doula to pregnant and birthing women before, during, and
11 after childbirth.

12 (2) The coverage required pursuant to this Section may be subject to annual
13 deductibles, coinsurance, and copayment provisions as are consistent with those
14 established under the health coverage plan. The coverage may also be subject to a
15 limit per pregnancy not to exceed one thousand five hundred dollars.

16 (3)(a) The requirements established by a health coverage plan to insure the
17 maternity support services provided by a doula before, during, and after childbirth
18 shall not preclude a doula from practice in this state.

19 (b) A doula may opt to practice in this state and forego any eligible
20 reimbursement via a health coverage plan; however, a doula opting for
21 reimbursement via a health coverage plan shall apply to the Louisiana Doula
22 Registry Board for registration and receive an approved registration status.

23 (c) In addition to the registration prescribed in Subparagraph (b) of this
24 Paragraph, a health insurance issuer or health coverage plan may establish additional
25 credentialing standards for contracting with doulas.

26 (4) Terminology in any health coverage plan policy or contract deemed
27 discriminatory against doulas or maternity support services provided by doulas is
28 void and unenforceable.

29 C. For purposes of this Section, the following definitions apply:

30 (1) "Doula" means the same as the term is defined in R.S. 22:1059.1.

1 (2) "Health coverage plan" means the same as the term is defined in R.S.
2 22:1059.

3 (3) "Maternity support services" means the physical, emotional, and
4 educational support services provided by a doula to pregnant and birthing women
5 before, during, and after childbirth. "Maternity support services" includes
6 postpartum bereavement support.

7 §1059.3. Required coverage for prescribed donor human milk

8 A health coverage plan issued for delivery, delivered, renewed, or otherwise
9 contracted for in this state shall provide inpatient and outpatient coverage benefits
10 for up to two months for medically necessary pasteurized donor human milk upon
11 prescription of an infant's pediatrician or licensed pediatric provider stating that the
12 infant is medically or physically unable to receive maternal human milk or
13 participate in breastfeeding, or the infant's mother is medically or physically unable
14 to produce maternal human milk in sufficient quantities. A health coverage plan may
15 limit coverage under this Section to inpatient and outpatient donor human milk
16 obtained from a member bank of the Human Milk Banking Association of North
17 America.

18 Section 2. The provisions of this Act apply to any new policy, contract, program, or
19 health coverage plan issued on and after January 1, 2024. Any policy, contract, or health
20 coverage plan in effect prior to January 1, 2024, shall convert to conform to the provisions
21 of this Act on or before the renewal date, but no later than January 1, 2025.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____