

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 514

BY REPRESENTATIVE WILLARD

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

INSURANCE/HEALTH: Modifies the Louisiana Doula Registry Board within the Louisiana Department of Health and provides for respective regulatory authority

## 1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 22:1059.1, relative to the Louisiana Doula Registry Board; to  
3 provide for board composition; to provide with respect to the regulatory authority of  
4 the Louisiana Doula Registry Board and the Louisiana Department of Health; to  
5 provide relative to administrative staff and further rulemaking requirements of the  
6 Louisiana Department of Health; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 22:1059.1 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

9 §1059.1. ~~Legislative findings;~~ Louisiana Doula Registry Board; purpose;  
10 composition; duties of the board; administrative staff; rulemaking authority

11 A.(1) ~~The legislature hereby finds and declares that research indicates~~  
12 ~~maternal mortality, severe maternal morbidity, infant mortality, preterm birth, and~~  
13 ~~unexpected outcomes of pregnancy and birth resulting in significant health~~  
14 ~~consequences are rising in the United States, and that these outcomes occur more~~  
15 ~~frequently in Louisiana than in other states. Louisiana has the highest maternal death~~  
16 ~~rate in the nation and the second highest infant death rate in the nation.~~

17 (2) ~~The benefits of doula care have been documented in numerous studies~~  
18 ~~including the 2017 Cochrane Review of twenty-six trials of continuous labor support~~  
19 ~~and doula care involving over fifteen thousand women in seventeen different~~

1        ~~countries. The numerous benefits of doula care include decreased cesarean sections,~~  
2        ~~increased spontaneous vaginal births, shortened duration of birth, increased maternal~~  
3        ~~satisfaction postpartum, improved breastfeeding rates, and lower rates of preterm~~  
4        ~~labor and low birth weight.~~

5                ~~B.~~(1)(a) The legislature hereby creates within the Louisiana Department of  
6        Health the Louisiana Doula Registry Board, hereafter referred to in this Section as  
7        the "doula registry board", for the purpose of reviewing and approving doula  
8        registration to allow for health insurance reimbursement of doula services.

9                (b) The doula registry board shall create the criteria for the registration  
10       application, review submitted doula registration applications, and grant registration  
11       status to doulas seeking health insurance reimbursement to promote safe and  
12       equitable care for every mother and every birth in this state.

13               (2) For purposes of this Section, "doula" means an individual who has been  
14       trained to provide physical, emotional, and educational support, but not medical or  
15       midwifery care, to pregnant and birthing women and their families before, during,  
16       and after childbirth.

17               ~~C.~~ B. The doula registry board shall perform all of the following tasks:

18               (1) ~~Review applications for doulas to register to receive health insurance~~  
19       ~~reimbursement in Louisiana~~ Independently review and approve applications for  
20       doulas seeking registration to receive health insurance reimbursement in this state.  
21       The doula registry board shall oversee and manage the entire registration process to  
22       ensure fairness, transparency, and accessibility for all qualified doulas.

23               (2) ~~Approve applications to designate registered doula status~~ Establish and  
24       enforce administrative guidelines for the registration process, ensuring that all  
25       requirements align with best practices in maternal health and doula care.

26               (3) ~~Notify applicants of approval or denial of doula registration status.~~

27               ~~(4)~~ Maintain a statewide registry of doulas approved for health insurance  
28       reimbursement in Louisiana.

1           ~~D. C.~~(1) The doula registry board shall be composed of the following  
2 members:

3           (a) ~~One representative of an organization providing doula services for people~~  
4 ~~giving birth in Louisiana in Region 1 appointed by the medical director of the~~  
5 ~~Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative~~ Seven individuals who serve as a doula for  
6 births in this state from different geographic regions in the state, two of whom shall  
7 represent an organization providing doula services.

8           (b) ~~One representative of an organization providing doula services for people~~  
9 ~~giving birth in Louisiana in Region 2 appointed by the medical director of the~~  
10 ~~Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative.~~

11           (c) ~~One representative of an organization providing doula services for people~~  
12 ~~giving birth in Region 3 appointed by the medical director of the Louisiana Perinatal~~  
13 ~~Quality Collaborative.~~

14           (d) ~~One representative of an organization providing doula services for people~~  
15 ~~giving birth in Louisiana in Region 4 appointed by the medical director of the~~  
16 ~~Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative.~~

17           (e) ~~One representative of an organization providing doula services for people~~  
18 ~~giving birth in Louisiana in Region 5 appointed by the medical director of the~~  
19 ~~Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative.~~

20           (f) ~~One representative of an organization providing doula services for people~~  
21 ~~giving birth in Louisiana in Region 6 appointed by the medical director of the~~  
22 ~~Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative.~~

23           (g) ~~One representative of an organization providing doula services for people~~  
24 ~~giving birth in Louisiana in Region 7 appointed by the medical director of the~~  
25 ~~Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative.~~

26           (h) ~~One representative of an organization providing doula services for people~~  
27 ~~giving birth in Louisiana in Region 8 appointed by the medical director of the~~  
28 ~~Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative.~~

1           ~~(i) One representative of an organization providing doula services for people~~  
2           ~~giving birth in Louisiana in Region 9 appointed by the medical director of the~~  
3           ~~Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative.~~

4           ~~(j) (b) One person woman~~ with lived experience ~~having used doula services~~  
5           ~~for at least two births of birth under doula care.~~

6           ~~(k) (c)~~ One doula with lactation training.

7           ~~(l) One representative from Sista Midwife Productions.~~

8           ~~(m) (d)~~ One representative from Community Birth Companion.

9           ~~(n) (e)~~ One representative from Birthmark Doula Collective.

10          ~~(o) (f)~~ One representative from H.E.R. Institute.

11          (g) The Quality Initiatives Manager of the Louisiana Department of Health  
12          bureau of family health or a designee.

13          (2) Members of the doula registry board shall be appointed by the medical  
14          director of the Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative or a designee.

15          ~~(2) (3)~~ The doula registry board shall elect from among its members a  
16          practicing doula as chairperson. In addition, the doula registry board may designate  
17          any other officers it deems necessary from its membership.

18          ~~(3) (4)~~ Members of the doula registry board shall serve ~~without~~  
19          ~~compensation for up to~~ for a term of two years with the option for reappointment.  
20          Members of the doula registry board shall receive no salary for their services but  
21          may be reimbursed in accordance with travel regulations of the division of  
22          administration.

23          ~~(4) (5)~~ The doula registry board shall hold quarterly public meetings unless  
24          otherwise provided by vote of the doula registry board or by order of the chairperson.  
25          The chairperson shall dismiss from the board any members who are absent from  
26          more than three in-person meetings within a calendar year.

27          ~~(5) (6)~~ The doula registry board may establish subcommittees and appoint  
28          persons to those subcommittees, including persons who are not board members, nor  
29          voting members, as it deems necessary and appropriate to accomplish its goals.

1           E. D. Members of the nonvoting subcommittee shall include and are not  
2 limited to all of the following:

- 3           (1) One representative of New Orleans Breastfeeding Center.  
4           (2) One representative of March of Dimes.  
5           (3) One representative of National Birth Equity Collaborative.  
6           (4) One representative of Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies.  
7           (5) One obstetrician with demonstrated work rooted in community, health  
8 equity, and training in equitable practices.  
9           (6) One certified professional midwife.  
10          (7) One certified nurse midwife.  
11          (8) One community nurse practitioner.  
12          (9) One representative from Louisiana Medicaid.  
13          (10) One representative from Louisiana Hospital Association.  
14          (11) One representative from each private health insurer in Louisiana as  
15 determined by the doula registry board.

16          ~~F. The regional representatives described in Paragraph (D)(1) of this Section~~  
17 ~~shall be appointed from the regions specified on the Administrative Regions and~~  
18 ~~Districts map of the Louisiana Department of Health, hereinafter referred to as the~~  
19 ~~"department".~~

20          G. E. The ~~department~~ Louisiana Department of Health, hereafter referred to  
21 in this Section as the "department", shall promulgate and adopt all such rules in  
22 accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act as are necessary to implement the  
23 provisions of this Section and shall implement and administer the provisions of this  
24 Section as directed by the doula registry board, ensuring that the board retains full  
25 oversight over regulatory actions.

26          H. F.(1) The role of the department is strictly administrative and does not  
27 supersede the authority of the doula registry board in establishing criteria, reviewing  
28 applications, or setting policies. The doula registry board has sole authority to set  
29 criteria and standards for doula registration.

1           (2) The department shall not independently determine an applicant's  
 2           eligibility for registration. The department shall review all applications prior to  
 3           sending to the doula registry board to ensure that applicants are eligible under  
 4           board-established guidelines.

5           (3) The department shall provide ~~staff support~~ administrative staff to support  
 6           the doula registry board. Assigned administrative staff shall do all of the following:

7           (a) Facilitate the process for registration of doulas as established by the doula  
 8           registry board.

9           (b) Ensure that all administrative guidelines align with the policies set forth  
 10          by the doula registry board.

11          (c) Provide logistical support in processing applications with the doula  
 12          registry board retaining full decision-making authority on all application approvals  
 13          and denials.

14          (d) Issue notifications of approval or denial of doula registration status only  
 15          after a decision is made by the doula registry board and in accordance with  
 16          board-established procedures.

17          ± G. Nothing in this Section prohibits any person from practicing as a doula  
 18          in this state, regardless of whether such person is registered in accordance with the  
 19          provisions of this Section.

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#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 514 Engrossed

2025 Regular Session

Willard

**Abstract:** Modifies the La. Doula Registry Board and provides regulatory authority and restrictions relative to the La. Doula Registry Board and La. Dept. of Health.

Present law provides for the La. Doula Registry Board (board) within the La. Dept. of Health (LDH). Outlines legislative findings and provides the board's purpose, composition, and duties. Proposed law deletes legislative findings and generally retains present law.

Present law requires the board to review applications for doulas registering to receive health insurance reimbursement in the state of La.; approve or deny such applications; notify applicants of approval or denial of doula registration status; and maintain a statewide registry of doulas approved for health insurance reimbursement.

Proposed law grants the board full authority to independently review and approve applications for doulas seeking registration to receive health insurance reimbursement; oversee and manage the registration process; and establish and enforce administrative guidelines for registration.

Present law requires board membership to include certain members of doula services organizations who represent all specified LDH regions of the state. Further requires membership to include a doula with lactation training, a person who has used a doula for at least two births, and representatives from certain organizations that provide education and community support services relative to maternal health.

Proposed law requires the board to consist of seven individuals who serve as doulas within different geographic regions in the state of La., with two representing an organization providing doula services. Further requires board membership to include one woman with lived experience of birth under doula care and the Quality Initiative Manager of the bureau of family health within LDH.

Proposed law requires the medical director of the La. Perinatal Quality Collaborative to appoint members of the board.

Present law requires board members to serve without compensation for a term of up to two years. Further provides the option for reappointment. Proposed law retains present law but authorizes board members to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with regulations of the division of administration.

Present law requires the board to elect a chairperson. Proposed law retains present law and requires the chairperson to dismiss from membership any members who are absent from more than three in-person meetings within a calendar year.

Present law requires LDH to promulgate and adopt rules in accordance with the APA to implement the provisions for the board. Proposed law retains present law and further requires LDH to implement provisions as directed by the board, ensuring the board retains full oversight over regulatory actions.

Proposed law provides that the role of LDH is strictly administrative and does not supersede the authority of the board in establishing criteria, reviewing applications, or setting policies. Further provides the board with sole authority to set criteria and standards for doula registration.

Proposed law prohibits LDH from independently determining an applicant's eligibility for registration. Requires LDH to review applications prior to sending to the board to ensure that applicants are eligible under board-established guidelines.

Present law requires LDH to provide support staff to the board. Proposed law retains present law but requires LDH staff to be administrative staff who facilitate the process for registration of doulas; ensure that all administrative guidelines align with board policies; provide logistical support in processing applications; and issue notifications of approval or denial of doula registration status. Further requires all work provided by LDH staff to be in alignment with board-established policies and procedures in conjunction with the board's full decision-making authority.

(Amends R.S. 22:1059.1)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill:

1. Delete the requirement that the La. Doula Registry Board must implement policies that promote fairness, transparency, safety, equitable care, and accessibility.
2. Restore present law requirement that the La. Doula Registry Board must maintain a statewide registry of doulas approved for health insurance reimbursement in La.
3. Restore present law requirement that the board must include one doula with lactation training, one representative from Community Birth Companion, one representative from Birthmark Doula Collective, and one representative from H.E.R. Institute.