

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1784

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 15, 2018

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1784.

This bill provides for the expansion of the State Medicaid program to include coverage for doula care. A doula is a trained professional who provides physical, emotional, and educational support, but not medical care, to mothers before, during, and after childbirth. Research has demonstrated that support from a doula is associated with lower caesarian section rates, fewer obstetric interventions, fewer complications, decreased use of pain medication, shorter labor hours, and higher scores on the APGAR test (which indicates how well the baby is doing outside the womb).

To obtain the federal approval, the Commissioner of Human Services is to apply for such State plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to implement the provisions of the bill and to secure federal financial participation for State Medicaid expenditures under the federal Medicaid program.

The bill would permit the Commissioner of Human Services to establish regulations to implement the bill, including eligibility rules and coverage limitations.