

**House Judiciary**

**04/23/2024 01:30 PM**

**HB24-1459 Birth Equity**

**Typed Text of Testimony Submitted**

<b>Name, Position, Representing</b>	<b>Typed Text of Testimony</b>
Leilah Zahedi-Spung For themselves	Testimony on behalf of Dr. Leilah Zahedi-Spung, Maternal Fetal Medicine, Denver Area  Good afternoon, my name is Dr. Leilah Zahedi-Spung. I am a board certified Maternal Fetal Medicine and Complex Family Planning Physician. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself and in support of HB24-1459 Birth Equity. As a high-risk obstetrician who has trained throughout the southeast and Midwest, I have witnessed first-hand the trauma that patients who are incarcerated experience when they are shackled during their birthing experience. This practice that remains all too common, puts the pregnant person and their baby in harms' way. I took care of an incarcerated pregnant person during my training in the southeast who's emergency cesarean delivery was delayed as the officers searched for keys to unshackle her so we could move her to the operating room. Incarcerated pregnant people deserve the dignity and respect to birth free of shackling. Thank you for your time.



April 2024

To: House Judiciary Committee

Re: HB24-1459— Concerning Protections for Birthing Persons

Dear Judiciary Committee Members:

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is one of the oldest women's organizations in the country, empowering women since 1881. The mission of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy.

AAUW has led the fight on women's health and safety issues, and we have made progress over the years. Several years ago, the Legislature restricted the use of restraints on female inmates during childbirth. HB24-1459 prohibits the use of restraints during labor, childbirth and post-partum recovery while in a medical facility or while being transported to a medical facility. It also requires storage of the mother's breast milk. If there is a time that calls for compassion, it is during childbirth. Recognizing that many of the incarcerated pregnant women are themselves victims of rape or sexual assault, AAUW believes it is essential that we do our best to ensure a safe birthing process, free from restraints.

For these reasons, AAUW of Colorado strongly supports House Bill 1459 and requests your YES vote in committee and throughout the process of becoming law.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Su Ryden". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed in a light blue rectangular box.

**Su Ryden**

**AAUW Colorado Public Policy Co-Director**

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*American Association of University Women--AAUW is a top-rated 501(c)3 charitable organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.*