



NARAL
Pro-Choice Oregon



April 13, 2015

To: House Health Care Committee
From: Michele Stranger Hunter, NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon
Re: Support of HB 3517

Dear Chair, Co-Chairs and Members of the House Health Care Committee,

I am Michele Stranger Hunter, the Executive Director of NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon and Oregon Foundation of Reproductive Health. We work to increase access to comprehensive reproductive health care, to improve health outcomes for both mother and child, and to break down barriers to health care so that all people have the opportunity to thrive.

I respectfully request your support for House Bill 3517. Cover All Kids is an issue of equity, access, and reproductive justice for Oregon families. House Bill 3517 removes existing legal barriers to providing medical assistance to children. We know that these children have very limiting options to accessing care. Their families are likely to be low- income and tend to work for employers who do not offer family health insurance benefits. In a public health crisis we need to be able to reach low income children with the care they need to be healthy.

In Oregon there are 17,600 children who are categorically excluded from services implemented by the Oregon Health Authority. When Oregon passed Healthy Kids and aligned with federal SCHIP statutes, they defined child as "lawfully residing in Oregon." This lock in a definition of child as only those who fit this definition.

HB 3517 fixes this mistake, by authorizing OHA to provide services to this population should they see the need and have the funds necessary. We support House Bill 3517 because we believe that all people, including our youngest, should have equitable access to quality, affordable health care no matter who they are, where they live, or how much their families earn. It is time for us to reassert our commitment to justice and fairness for all Oregonians.

We hope that you will join us in support of House Bill 3517.

Thank you,

Michele Stranger Hunter
Executive Director

NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon
Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health