



TO: The Oregon House Committee on Rules
FR: Jeana Frazzini, Co-Executive Director, Basic Rights Oregon
DA: May 6, 2015
RE: Support for HB 3231 Updating Parentage Laws

Chair Hoyle and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jeana Frazzini and I am the Co-Executive Director of Basic Rights Oregon, our state's leading advocacy group working to ensure that all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) Oregonians experience equality.

Through the decades, state and federal laws have been updated to reflect the changing realities of how families form, live, care for each other, and even separate.

Despite the progress we've made in Oregon to recognize loving and committed LGBTQ couples and their families, some significant barriers remain. Legal experts still strongly encourage LGBTQ parents who are not related to their children by blood to legally adopt them, in order to ensure there are no parental rights issues.

For this reason, we are sponsoring House Bill 3231 which updates Oregon's parentage statutes to better protect all children.

In short, HB 3231 updates Oregon's family law statutes related to parentage with language that more accurately reflects the diversity of today's modern families—regardless of the parents' marital status, sexual orientation or gender identity. This modernization will better protect children by addressing situations that already are turning up in Oregon courts.

When a lesbian couple who is not married has a child using artificial insemination, they are not able to both be on the birth certificate. The non-biological mother may have difficulty being recognized as a legal parent. Under current law, children in this scenario can be denied by one parent the ability to have a relationship with their other parent.

From personal experience, I can tell you this is a scary time for the non-biological mom. I was not on the birth certificates of either of my sons when they were born.

We need to make sure Oregon's laws keep pace with reproductive technology changes and our changing modern families. These updates are important because they protect children and families by ensuring that our laws reflect the lived realities of diverse families throughout Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring forward this bill and I urge your support of HB 3231.