



TO: The Oregon House Committee on Education
FR: Basic Rights Oregon
DA: Feb 27, 2015
RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2261

Chair Doherty and members of the committee,

Basic Rights Oregon urges your support for HB 2261, a bill to allow the Youth Development Council to coordinate statewide services to youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning.

Basic Rights Oregon works to ensure that all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Oregonians experience equality. The need for LGBTQ youth justice is immense. Of all youth experiencing houselessness, 20 percent are LGBTQ. LGBTQ youth experiencing houselessness are more likely to experience victimization and mental health issues.

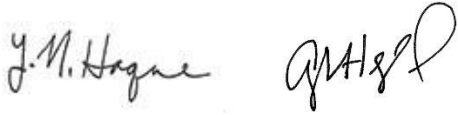
Transgender youth also face unique barriers. The US Transgender Survey, the largest survey examining the experiences of transgender people in the United States with over 27,000 respondents, recently came out with some sobering statistics:

- 77% of those who were out or perceived as transgender at some point between Kindergarten and Grade 12 experienced some form of mistreatment, such as being verbally harassed, prohibited from dressing according to their gender identity, disciplined more harshly, or physically or sexually assaulted because people thought they were transgender.
- 54% of those who were out or perceived as transgender in K-12 were verbally harassed, nearly one-quarter (24%) were physically attacked, and 13% were sexually assaulted in K-12 because of being transgender.
- Seventeen percent (17%) faced such severe mistreatment as a transgender person that they left a K-12 school.

Fortunately, in Oregon we are taking steps to address barriers for transgender youth. The Oregon Department of Education released guidelines for schools in May, 2016 on how to treat and protect transgender youth, and the Oregon Youth Development Council has also seen the need for targeted outreach to assist LGBTQ youth. Basic Rights Oregon is proud to be a first time grant recipient of OYDC. Because of OYDC funding, Basic Rights Oregon will be able to provide trans inclusion training and resources to school districts across the state this year.

HB 2261 will ensure that OYDC can continue this important work for LGBTQ youth into the future. We urge your aye vote.

Thank you,

Handwritten signatures of Nancy Haque and Amy Herzfeld-Copple. The signature on the left is 'N. Haque' and the signature on the right is 'A. Herzfeld-Copple'.

Nancy Haque & Amy Herzfeld-Copple
Co-Executive Directors