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To: House Healthcare Committee

From: The Oregon Students Association

Date: March 6th, 2017

Chair Greenlick, members of the committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Students Association, we respectfully urge you to vote yes on House Bill 2637, which would create a streamlined process for people wanting to change personal information to reflect their identity. This issue is incredibly important to students as many of us identify differently than what our birth certificates, state IDs, driver's licenses, and school documents reflect. Our lived experiences and identities are valid and deserve to be reflected in the documentation we require to navigate through school and through life.

Right now, in order to update a birth certificate, a transgender person must make a court request to a legal name change or gender marker amendment, take a court the court order to OHA's Center for Health statistics, Oregon's Vital Records office. Being publicly outed is a fear among many transgender Oregonians, which may happen when having to defend their reasoning for identity changes to an open court, and having those changes posted on a public bulletin board.

Inconsistency in county court practices also drive up the cost toward a largely low income populace, and these low incomes cannot afford representation to navigate through these difficult processes. Moreover, some courts require intrusive evidence for gender transition, which is disturbing and unacceptable.

This bill will not only make this already taxing and sensitive process simpler, but it will also assist in cleaning out archaic methods of public posting. In the past, public posting has not only put transgender people at risk, but domestic/sexual abuse survivors as well when being required to post restraining order and/or divorce documents with sensitive information on them. Your yes vote will have a wide reaching effect and effectively keep safe our most vulnerable citizens.

We believe Oregon to be a caring and nurturing home for all of its citizens. This bill helps to make all of our people reflect their lives properly and safely. Streamlining this process is the next step and continuing Oregon's inclusive and precedent-setting roll nationally.

We hope you will support making our transgender citizens live happier, safer lives by voting yes on House Bill 2637.

Thank you,

The Oregon Student Association