



NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon

Testimony Regarding HB 5026

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Thank you Co-Chairs Senator Steiner Hayward and Representative Rayfield and members of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human Services for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding HB 5026: financial administration of the Oregon Health Authority.

NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon and the Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health work in communities and healthcare systems across the state to ensure timely, affordable access to all forms of reproductive health care. We are working this session to ensure that all Oregonians regardless of income, citizenship status, gender identity or type of insurance, can access to the full range of reproductive health services. The Oregon Health Authority is critical to this end and needs to have the funds for the vital programs it operates.

Programs that support Maternal and Early Childhood Health, such as Babies First! and Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Visiting, are critical for community health. They work with pregnant women and families, particularly those considered at-risk, to provide necessary resources and skills to raise children who are physically, socially and emotionally healthy and ready to learn.

Oregon students deserve to be able to access health care services, from primary and mental health care to contraception care and health promotion. Oregon's School Nurses and School Based Health Centers are critical as they create greater access to health care for students.

The Oregon Contraceptive Care (CCare) program supports clinics which provide health education and service, including birth control methods and counselling, pelvic exams, Pap smears, pregnancy tests, and referrals to other health and social services to tens of thousands of Oregonians. The Guttmacher Institute notes that "In the absence of the publicly supported family planning services provided at safety-net health centers, the rates of unintended pregnancy, unplanned birth and abortion for all women would be 83% higher in Oregon, and the teen pregnancy rate would be 88% higher."

Restrictions on reproductive health care can have profoundly harmful effects on our health and well-being, particularly for those who already face significant barriers to accessing high-quality care, such as low-income women, women of color, immigrant women, young women, survivors of domestic violence, and transgender and gender-nonconforming people. Fully funding these programs is critical as they have an impact on healthcare costs as well as in the lives of men and women throughout our state.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important legislation.