



March 15, 2017

Chair Greenlick, Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee:

The Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) is the oldest Asian and Pacific Islander grassroots organization in the state. We leverage the collective strength of our 7,000 members statewide through empowering, organizing and advocating with our communities. We urge your support for HB 3391.

Three years ago, we joined the Pro-Choice Coalition of Oregon and adopted an organizational framework affirming the rights, recognition and resources all our families need to thrive—which includes access to the full range of reproductive health options, for all people, no matter who they are, where they live or how much money they make. This was an important step for APANO, because we see how lack of access to affordable, consistent and culturally competent care impacts far too many in our communities. Restrictions on reproductive health care can have profoundly harmful effects on public health, particularly for those who already face significant barriers to receiving high-quality care.

With the imminent repeal of the Affordable Care Act, hundreds of thousands of Oregonians could lose no-cost- share coverage for essential reproductive health services. When the cost of care must first come out of a high deductible, these services can be unaffordable and inaccessible for many. This is particularly problematic for those seeking abortion — a time-sensitive and critical service that 1 in 3 women access by the time they are 45. Furthermore, 48,000 women of reproductive age in Oregon are categorically excluded from Medicaid due to their citizenship status and are prohibited from purchasing insurance with their own money on the Exchange. These women have coverage that ends immediately after labor and delivery, leaving them without care during the postpartum period. Finally, transgender and gender-nonconforming Oregonians need access to services often categorized as “women’s health care,” including gender-specific cancer screenings, but procedural barriers can hinder access to this necessary and lifesaving care.

The Reproductive Health Equity Act establishes comprehensive coverage for the full spectrum of reproductive health services—including family planning, abortion and postpartum care—for many more Oregonians, regardless of income, citizenship status, gender identity or type of insurance.

APANO supports HB 3391 because we know that Oregonians need access to full reproductive health coverage for all families to thrive, for a stronger economy and for a healthier state. We hope that you will join us in support of the Reproductive Health Equity Act.

Sincerely,

Kara Carmosino
Director of Programs and Strategy