



FAMILY FORWARD
OREGON

Smart policies for today's families.

March 15, 2017

Testimony in Support of HB 3391 – Reproductive Health Equity Act
House Health Care Committee
Submitted by Kate Newhall, Family Forward Oregon

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3391, which will eliminate barriers to reproductive health services that still exist for thousands of Oregonians. Family Forward Oregon supports this bill to ensure that all women have access to, and can afford, reproductive health services regardless of their type of insurance, immigration status or gender identity. HB 3391 fills gaps in accessing reproductive health services and ensures equal access to family planning services, contraception, abortion and post-partum care for all Oregonians.

Access to reproductive health services and contraception is a basic health and economic security issue. And yet many Oregonians still lack coverage for the full range of reproductive health services. Getting care can be prohibitively expensive for these individuals and means they often forgo or delay necessary services, which can, in turn, create unnecessary complications and add to the ultimate cost of getting care. It can also exacerbate negative health outcomes, limit family planning options and prevent access to pre-natal and post-partum care.

Several real barriers exist in accessing reproductive health services for many Oregonians: Even though the Affordable Care Act requires insurance companies to pay for the contraception at 100%, there are approximately 18,600 women of reproductive age whose plans were able to maintain cost sharing policies for contraceptives that were in place prior to passage of the ACA. These women are forced to pay out-of-pocket costs for preventative health care services including contraception. There are an additional 43,000 women who purchase health insurance on the Exchange and have deductibles of \$2,500 or more. While most plans do cover abortion, many of those with high deductible plans rarely hit their deductible and struggle to pay the out-of-pocket cost for an abortion. There are also approximately 48,000 women who are excluded from Medicaid and unable to purchase a plan on the exchange because of their immigration status. These women are left without basic access to essential reproductive health care services. Last, transgendered and non-gender conforming Oregonians still need access to gender-specific cancer screenings and preventative health care services, but face barriers from insurance companies in accessing services that are categorized as “women’s” health care services.

The Reproductive Health Equity Act corrects these barriers and ensures that all Oregonians get the full range of reproductive health services at zero out-of-pocket costs, fills gaps in reproductive health coverage for those categorically excluded from Medicaid and precluded from purchasing insurance on the Exchange and prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity in reproductive health care services. We urge your support of HB 33391.