



March 15, 2017

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

On behalf of the Oregon Health Equity Alliance, we respectfully request your support for the Reproductive Health Equity Act (HB 3391). OHEA envisions policies that have the potential to strengthen the health of thousands of Oregonians. Coverage gaps have declined through recent federal and state health reform efforts, where roughly one in 10 Oregonians remain uninsured. These gaps disproportionately impact rural Oregonians, communities of color, immigrant children and adults, women, LGBTQ people, people with chronic conditions and low-wage working families.

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

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, a pivotal time for both mom and baby.

Finally, transgender and gender-nonconforming Oregonians need access to services often categorized as “women’s health care,” including gender-specific cancer screenings. However, procedural barriers hinder access to this necessary and lifesaving care.

OHEA 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. This legislation ensures that all Oregonians are able to decide if and when they have children based on what’s best for them and their family’s circumstances. We hope that you will join us in support of the Reproductive Health Equity Act.

Sincerely,

Kayse Jama
Co-chair of OHEA

Amira Streeter
Co-chair of OHEA