

Date: March 29, 2017

To: House Committee on Health Care

From: Michael Earl Wing

Re: Support for HB 3086

Chair Greenlick, members of the committee, for the record my name is Michael Earl Wing and I am here to testify in support of HB 3086, which would insure that long term HIV/AIDS survivors living with lipodystrophy have access to care.

I was diagnosed as HIV-positive more than thirty years ago on March 6th, 1986, and today I am living with HIV-associated lipodystrophy. The facial wasting that was caused by the drugs that have kept me alive these thirty years has had a negative impact on my employment, as well as housing stability. I have been rejected by landlords and prospective employers outright, due to my lipodystrophy.

My condition is treatable, but the costs are out of reach for someone like me: someone on Social Security Disability, whose only employment opportunities are part-time, and pay minimum wage.

If I were able to receive the recommended treatment for lipodystrophy, it would expand my professional opportunities, as well as improve my mental health. While many HIV survivors are able to bear the stigma of our illness anonymously, those of us with obvious physical symptoms are not so lucky. I cannot hide my illness. My facial wasting prevents me from living a normal life, from finding work, and from keeping stable housing.

Today, I ask that you support HB 3086 and allow Oregonians like me the opportunity to rejoin the public. To find good work, to find stable housing, and to help reduce the stigma associated with long term HIV/AIDS survivors. Thank you for your time.