

May 2, 2017

The Honorable Chair Floyd Prozanski
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Floyd Prozanski and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Women's Health and Wellness Alliance (OWHWA), is a group of legislators, health care personnel, state and local agency staff and citizen advocates, who are dedicated to promoting the health, safety and economic well-being of women. The Co-Chairs of the OWHWA strongly support HB 2673A, and encourage the committee's thoughtful consideration of this legislation.

LGBTQ Oregonians often encounter discrimination, and bias, which creates barriers to safety, economic opportunity, and overall stability. Additionally, transgender Oregonians face unique barriers within the judicial systems, especially when seeking a name change or to align vital records documents with one's gender identity. The process is difficult to navigate, expensive, and intrusive; and even requires a public posting of the change which often presents increased privacy and safety concerns for the petitioner.

HB 2673A creates the option of an administrative process for updating one's name and gender identity on vital records, and removes outdated public posting requirements. These changes will mitigate the fear and potential safety risk posed by the current process as well as provide consistency across jurisdictions. This will improve equity in access to this process, improving outcomes and opportunity for transgender Oregonians.

The OWHWA appreciates the opportunity to share support for HB 2973A, and encourages your Aye vote.

Sincerely,

The OWHWA Co-Chairs:



Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward



Representative Karin Power



Senator Kathleen Taylor



Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer