



Date: February 12, 2019

To: Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Knopp, Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce

From: Grayson Dempsey, Executive Director of NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon

RE: NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon's Support for SB 726, The Oregon Workplace Fairness Act

Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Knopp and members of the Senate Workforce Committee:

NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon is dedicated to developing and sustaining a constituency that uses the political process to guarantee every woman the right to make personal decisions regarding the full range of reproductive choices, including preventing unintended pregnancy, bearing healthy children, and choosing legal abortion. Economic justice and reproductive justice are intimately connected. Without economic security, women's access to healthcare is vulnerable and their ability to take care of themselves and their families is threatened. The ability to earn a paycheck in a safe environment free from sexual harassment is at the core of economic security.

We support SB 726 because this legislation will better protect workers who have faced discrimination in the workplace. We know that current laws don't go far enough to protect harassment victims in the workplace and we support SB 726 because freedom from sexual harassment and violence and equal opportunities in the workplace are essential components of reproductive justice.

As women are disproportionately victims of harassment. 82% of EEOC charges were filed by women¹. Women of color are even more disproportionately victims, filing 56%² of the claims while only making up 37% of the workforce and black women specifically are three times more likely to file a claim of harassment than their white counterparts³. By having BOLI create standards and procedures for employers and employees regarding sexual harassment, we will begin to create an environment where all women in Oregon can work with dignity and respect.

NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon respectfully requests the committee to support SB 726 and commends Sen. Taylor and the committee for giving this legislation due consideration in service to your constituencies and Oregonians from across the state. Furthermore, we commend Vice Chair Knopp for his leadership on this issue. This bill is critical to the workplace safety of all Oregonians.

¹ https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task_force/harassment/upload/report.pdf

² https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task_force/harassment/upload/report.pdf

³ IPUMS-CPS, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org.