

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sarah Evans, my pronouns are she and her, and I live in Salem. I am writing to show my support for SB 704.

I am appalled to know that the "LGBTQ panic defense" even exists, and that, in 2021, we're actually having to talk about creating a bill to ban it. Transgender and non-binary people are just that -- people. I have multiple transgender and non-binary friends, and to think that someone could murder them and then be excused for it just because of my friends' gender identities is horrific. This type of defense sends a message that LGBTQ people are "not human", are of lesser value than straight or cisgender people, or that they are somehow "harming" others with their presence in such a way that "self defense" is needed by the perpetrator.

We like to tout that Oregon values equality and diversity. We cannot leave out our transgender residents. We must show them that they deserve protection in a way that is equal to cisgender Oregonians. I urge you to pass this bill.

Sincerely,
Sarah Evans
Salem, Oregon resident