



April 13, 2021

Oregon House of Representatives  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
House Committee on Rules

Dear Chair Smith Warner, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Holvey, and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon National Organization for Women (Oregon NOW) supports HB 2337, a bill that commits Oregon to actions that identify and may ultimately resolve racial and cultural inequities in the effective delivery of health care in our state.

One of NOW's six core values is the pursuit of racial justice. Today NOW would like to highlight a particular problem: racial disparities in maternal and infant mortality. A recent Kaiser Family Foundation publication<sup>1</sup> reported that Black women are 3 times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications than White women and Native American women are 2 times as likely to die from these factors than White women. Similar discrepancies exist in rates of infant mortality. These differences arise from a complex web of causes, but access to high quality pre- and post-natal care that is sensitive to ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic differences in risk factors plays an important role.

We support HB 2337 because it starts with the active step of making health care more accessible to underserved populations through mobile health care units. It takes the additional steps of strengthening the data collection and analysis that will enable our health care authorities to detect, understand, and find ways to remedy inequities like these in delivering effective care. This is a process that will take a long time. Let's start now to make the necessary changes.

Please support HB 2337. Thank you!

Respectfully,

Christine Chin Ryan  
President, Oregon NOW

H. Rebecca Callison  
Legislative Chair, Oregon NOW

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<sup>1</sup> "Racial Disparities in Maternal and Infant Health: An Overview," November 10, 2020 (<https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/issue-brief/racial-disparities-maternal-infant-health-overview/>)