



To: Senate Committee on Education
From: Basic Rights Oregon
Date: February 3, 2021
RE: Testimony in Support of SB 52

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen and members of the Committee,

Basic Rights Oregon urges your support of SB 52, which seeks to implement an LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Success Plan for Oregon's students. As the state's leading LGBTQ advocacy group, we are in full support of this legislation as it invests in the future of our state's youth.

It is clear that LGBTQ youth need continued support. In 2017, The Oregon Safe Schools and Communities Coalition found that close to half of transgender-identifying youth and just under half of LGBT youth indicated suicidal ideation and that LGBT youth are up to three times more likely to miss school based on reasonable fears of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

These alarming statistics motivated Basic Rights Oregon to champion Adi's Act in 2019, also titled SB 52, which addressed the dire numbers of LGBTQ students dealing with suicidal ideation, and developed model suicide prevention policy for all of Oregon's school districts. But we know that it is not enough for our students to just survive, they deserve every opportunity to thrive. Basic Rights Oregon was invited to participate in the Advisory Group which developed the student success plan identified in SB 52. We believe this plan will put Oregon schools on a path to decrease instances of bullying and harassment and give LGBTQ students the support they need to succeed. SB 52 is the next step to ensure this plan can be effectively implemented by the Department of Education.

Throughout our work, we hear from LGBTQ students who are so directly impacted by what happens at school. When they feel supported, seen, and affirmed, they flourish. And it's clear that this is something every student, no matter who they love or how they identify, deserves.

We're thankful to the Oregon Department of Education for being so proactive with legislation that will benefit and support all Oregon students.

We urge you to support SB 52 for the future of Oregon's youth.

Thank you for your time and consideration.