

Submitter: Jenna Emerson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB491

I am an assistant professor of Gynecologic Oncology in the Department of OBGYN at OHSU. My field specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of gynecologic cancers, diseases which affect women across the lifespan. Facing a cancer diagnosis, preparing for a major surgery and undergoing subsequent chemotherapy and radiation are huge physical and emotional burdens that my patients live with on a daily basis. Unfortunately, for young women and girls who have not yet completed childbearing, the curative cancer treatments I recommend nearly universally result in irreversible infertility. Although I routinely offer and recommend referral for procedures such as oocyte cryopreservation or IVF before starting cancer treatment, these services are costly and not covered by insurance. Because of this, it is rare that any of my patients are able to afford fertility preservation. The ordeal of surviving cancer is difficult enough; when it results in loss of fertility the social and emotional trauma is compounded unnecessarily. I strongly support insurance coverage of fertility treatments - treatments which have the potential to spare my patients one of the many painful elements of cancer treatment.