

Submitter: Debra Koutnik MD

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2002

I urge you to enact HB 2002.

Individual rights are under attack in this country and it is essential that Oregon explicitly stand up for our individual autonomy and make it clear that reproductive healthcare, including abortion care, is a protected right in Oregon. This nationwide attack on reproductive freedom makes HB 2002 necessary because it explicitly protects healthcare providers from negative consequences for providing that care to any individual who seeks it, including those from out of state.

It is also necessary to mandate that when any professional refuses to provide reproductive healthcare to someone based on their own personal biases and beliefs, that requested healthcare **MUST** be provided in a timely manner by another individual. In fact, this Bill should go further, and state that there will be negative consequences (and specify what those would be) if a “public body” delays providing requested reproductive health services solely because of staff refusal. It is not acceptable nor equitable for individuals to be denied healthcare because all the qualified professionals in their community decide to refuse that care.

This Bill will make sure that Oregonians do not suffer the fate of pregnant people in other states who have been forced to carry fetuses even when it threatens their own physical and psychological health. Studies have shown that people forced to give birth against their will continue to suffer negative financial, educational, psychological, and mental health consequences for many years.

The decision when and if to have children should not be made by politicians. That is not freedom, that is an authoritarian theocracy. Every already-born person has the right to make choices about their own body and choose their own future,

I urge you to stand up for the reproductive rights of Oregonians as well as stand up for the healthcare providers of Oregon who provide reproductive healthcare, including abortion care, and pass HB 2002.