

Submitter: Joanne Appelgate

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2002

Please oppose this dangerous legislation, HB 2002. Parents are vital to the wellbeing of society and especially to the wellbeing of their own children. Legally parents are only supposed to be deprived of their parental rights upon a court ruling that determines they are "unfit". Any important decision making for a minor should necessarily involve parental knowledge and consent. The parent is the one responsible for the minor, both physically and financially. The parent is the one who must pick up the pieces when a minor undergoes treatments that leave them scarred either psychologically, physically or both. How dare the government seek to override parents and hide from them critical information for the parents to do their primary job, which is to protect and raise their own children. Instead, HB 2002 seeks to allow healthcare workers to influence and authorize care to minors in place of their parents, and without even informing them. These healthcare workers do not have the minor's best interest at heart, like a parent would. These healthcare workers may have ideological agendas to push and/or financial motivations toward counseling a minor toward gender change treatments. Minors are not allowed to get pain relievers at school, or a tattoo, or get married without parental consent, and yet these legislators think it is okay to propose that minors should be allowed to obtain life-altering treatments that cause sterility and bodily mutilation without parental consent or even parental knowledge. This is simply barbaric. Many people who have had such procedures as minors are coming forward and not only expressing regret about such procedures, but are also pursuing legal action against the hospitals and others that failed to protect them as minors from such devastating practices. This legislation will open up Oregon healthcare providers to such lawsuits, and rightly so. "Gender affirming care" is most often pushed under the guise that without catering to the whims of immature adolescents, the minors will be more likely to commit suicide. However, that argument lacks medical and statistical backing. In fact, many of the people undergoing these treatments end up even more suicidal when they realize that the changes they thought would solve their problems actually made them worse. What these minors need is parental involvement, reassurances that they are valued and do not need to alter the way they were created to feel whole. Healthcare workers who seek to subvert that wisdom are not acting in the best interest of the minor. Oregon should never participate in the weakening of the family, as doing so will weaken the state and nation.