

Submitter: Dawn Jahne

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2002

TO: Oregon Senate Committee on Health Care

FROM: Dawn Jahne, Oregonian Citizen

RE: Support for HB 2002

Dear Chair Nosse and members of the committee,

I am asking you to vote yes on HB 2002, because gender-affirming health care is life-saving care. This bill will close gaps in insurance coverage of critical care for transgender Oregonians.

It was only a few months ago when I first realized I am Transgender and started looking into care. The sheer volume of information I've had to sift through is astounding, even with the help and guidance I've received from my elder Trans friends. At a minimum I'm looking at 200+ hours of electrolysis to remove my facial hair, let alone any further gender affirming care that I find will be necessary as I discover more of who I want to be and how I would like to be perceived.

Oregon is already a leader on trans health care access, but gaps in insurance coverage still exist for care that is crucial for many trans people, including electrolysis (hair removal) which I need to feel like me. Being denied access to this care would cost me tens of thousands of dollars out of pocket, or worse, severe depression and anxiety if I am unable to take out the required loans or afford it. Electrolysis clinics are already few and far between, incurring time costs and monetary costs for travel.

Having this care as well as many others covered by insurance would literally be life saving by helping me to achieve peace of mind, body, and soul.

These procedures are seen as "cosmetic" under Oregon insurance policy, but I can assure you that for trans people, they are about so much more than cosmetics. It's about being recognized and respected as one's truest self.

You have an opportunity to advance legislation that will be truly life-changing—and perhaps even lifesaving—for transgender Oregonians like me. Please remember my story when you are voting on this bill, and please vote yes on HB 2002.

Thank you,

Dawn Jahne