

March 20, 2023

To: Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2002. I am horrified that the US Supreme Court overturned Roe v Wade and ruled that the right to an abortion is no longer constitutionally protected. Also alarming are the states that have sought to pass laws that restrict or completely ban access to reproductive health care services. Similarly, states are seeking to limit or completely ban gender-affirming treatment. While the right to an abortion is protected under Oregon's Constitution, we know from recent history that opponents of access to reproductive rights pursue every potential gap and loophole in these protections. House Bill 2002 attempts to ensure that individuals maintain the right to make decisions about their own reproductive health care. It also recognizes that gender-affirming treatment must be provided to those who need it. Given the increase in mental health crises, to withhold that care, when research shows the success of health care that affirms individuals' gender identities improves the mental health and overall well-being of gender diverse, transgender and nonbinary children and adolescents would be another gross travesty of justice.

The provisions in House Bill 2002 that protect health care providers and individuals from malpractice and licensing repercussions if and when they provide reproductive health care and gender-affirming treatment are laudable. So too is the creation of the Class A misdemeanor for intentionally, knowingly or recklessly interfering with access to or from a health care facility. This bill should prevent groups from using a variety of tactics focused on preventing access to necessary healthcare.

I am grateful to Speaker Rayfield and the Reproductive Health and Access to Care (RHAC) Work Group for their work ensuring Oregonians have access to reproductive health and the ability to make personal medical decisions. I continue to be proud being an Oregonian in part because of the work that the speaker and work group have done. I support their efforts and HB 2002.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth A. Rubin, PhD