

RE: HB2002

I am an adult transgender woman. I am grateful to have had access to trans healthcare. I knew I was transgender when I was 4 though I did not have words for it then. It was very clear to me at age 4 that this was something to hide as the consequences would be bad. I came out to my mother when I was 12 and she took me to see a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist told my mother and me it was a phase I would grow out of. I tried for the next seven years to grow out of it and I never did.

At age 19 I stopped trying to grow out of it and accepted that my gender non conformity was a part of my life but did not have access to any form of trans health care until I was in my 30s and finally transitioned at age 37. Between age 19 and 37 I self-medicated with alcohol to dull my frustration and resentment to a world that could not accept transpeople as people. A world that didn't accept us and was seemingly only focused on what transpeople were doing or wanted to do with our genitals and who we might sleep with. It was a very dark period of my life. I did attempt suicide once and considered it more than once. Transition brought some relief and comfort in my self that allowed me to sober up and become a contributor to the community I live in, in many positive ways. Gender transition health care costs less than fixing a botched suicide attempt.

I support being sure that children have access to quality trans health care. I don't believe for a minute anyone is going to hand out life changing surgeries to young people just because they say they want it. There are already thorough steps that people have to take to go through medical transitions and providing trans health care to youth is not going to harm a child that many suggest is too young to make decisions. I knew at 4 without a doubt that my gender did not meet the expectations that were put on me.

However, I think this bill misses what is so vital to trans people of all ages.

We need to be recognized as a part of our society as a group, however small, that should be treated fairly as humans and not subject to new legislation after every election cycle. Which is what is happening here. While I support the measure, as a trans person, I know that the first thing republicans do if they gain control of the Oregon Legislature is repeal this and place restrictive bills in its place.

We already have quality healthcare for transpeople of all ages here in Oregon. We need a real guarantee that our state cannot give and take our rights away in partisan games like they are right now.

This bill appears to be a play in the partisan games and not especially useful to trans Oregonians in the long run.

Further more, the people that are in opposition to transgender Oregonians have seven bills specifically aimed at hurting trans people. The only one in defense of trans people (that I am aware of) is this bill where we get lumped into reproductive rights bill.

I think it is completely unfair to be tagged on to this as being trans is very thinly related to contraception or abortion rights. If you pass this bill, be sure not to celebrate it as a victory for trans rights.

A victory for trans rights would be to propose an amendment to our constitution that protects us as people in the same manner as religion and ethnicity is protected. The GOP is not proposing bills to keep religious ethnic groups from accessing state resources yet because those are protected. I don't think Oregon's language around protecting trans people is thorough enough and needs to be reviewed and made constitutional so our existence isn't in jeopardy every election cycle. Any thing less is just partisan political gaming and doesn't really do much to stop the harm that is intended to us by a party that nationally is already talking about eliminating transpeople. They start with the children but are already extending their oppressive laws to adult transpeople in other states.

I neither support or oppose this bill. Regardless I think HB 2002 is not enough for what I as a transwoman is likely to encounter in the next 10 years.