



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

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

FR: Catie Theisen, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: HB 2002 Reproductive Care Access Support

March 20, 2023

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across Oregon and is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. As workers, we know that the decision whether or when to have a child has long-term implications for a woman's financial well-being, job security, workforce participation, and education attainment. Studies show clear links between access to reproductive health care and a dramatic increase both in women's participation in the workforce and families' reliance on women's earnings.¹

We were proud to support the Reproductive Health Equity Act in 2019. In response, the Guttmacher Institute reported that Oregon unintended pregnancy rates reached a historic low when Oregonians have access to the full spectrum of reproductive health services.² And we know that Oregonians continue to support making sure that reproductive health care is affordable and accessible, and includes abortion so that everyone has the right to choose when and whether to start a family and the right to bodily autonomy.

However, the *Dobbs* decision worsened the public health crisis around abortion care. The race to criminalize access to health care will only deepen health inequities, create generational consequences and continue to create a fundamentally inequitable economy. Without further protections, people of color and low-income families are most at risk for further economic and health consequences and now, the threat of criminalization.

HB 2002 responds to this by centering the recommendations made by the Reproductive Health and Access to Care Work. The bill protects the workers providing life-saving care;; closes gaps in insurance coverage for gender affirming care, contraception and reproductive healthcare; invests in pilot mobile health clinics; addresses health care deserts around the state; protects individuals from prosecution for seeking or supporting reproductive and gender affirming care; and codifies the right to the full spectrum of reproductive care in Oregon.

Ultimately, we know that reproductive justice and bodily autonomy are fundamentally workers' rights and that everyone deserves access to life-saving medical care. Yet, for too many Oregonians, this care continues to be out of reach due to geography, income or insurance coverage. HB 2002 is a critical step in the right direction to ensure that Oregonians' healthcare needs are met – we encourage your support of HB 2002.

¹<https://nwlc.org/resource/reproductive-health-is-part-of-the-economic-health-of-women-and-their-families/>

²<https://data.guttmacher.org/states/table?state=AL+AK+AZ+AR+CA+CO+CT+DE+DC+FL+GA+HI+ID+IL+IN+IA+KS+KY+LA+ME+MD+MA+MI+MN+MS+MO+MT+NE+NV+NH+NJ+NM+NY+NC+ND+OH+OK+OR+PA+RI+SC+SD+TN+TX+UT+VT+VA+WA+WV+WI+WY&topics=157+158+161+156+159+160+280&dataset=data>

