

Submitter: Ruth Christiansen

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2002

Date: March 22, 2023

To: House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

From: Ruth Christiansen

RE: Support HB 2002

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

My name is Ruth Christiansen and I am writing to express support for House Bill 2002, Reproductive Health and Access to Care, which will help create a future in which every person in Oregon has the ability to make decisions about their own body and access the full range of reproductive, sexual, and gender affirming health care.

Everyone deserves access to lifesaving medical care. Nobody should be denied gender affirming care. In 2023 alone, more than 300 bills attacking LGBTQ+ people have been introduced to state legislatures across the country. As transgender rights in particular are under attack nationwide, Oregon has an opportunity to continue standing as a leader for LGBTQ+ rights and health care access.

For too many Oregonians, reproductive and gender affirming care are still out-of-reach because of geography, income, or insurance coverage.

I am a physician assistant who has been helping gender diverse patients with gender affirming care in Oregon as a primary care provider for the last 9 years. My patient panel is bursting with new patients persistently trying to access this important care and our clinic is almost reaching our maximum capability to care safely and efficiently for our patients. Still there are many more people who need access to trained, gender affirming clinicians. We desperately need more people doing this work. With the attacks nation-wide on gender diverse folks and their clinicians, providers are more hesitant to learn gender affirming hormone therapy and make it a part of their practice. This is the wrong direction. This bill will help move us in the right direction and more importantly will improve health equity and help support and care for people who are marginalized and systemically discriminated against.

This is why I urge your yes vote on HB 2002. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ruth Christiansen, PA-C