

Submitter: Justin Caouette

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2002

March 22, 2023

To:

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care;

Chief Sponsors: Representative Valderrama, Nelson, Senator Lieber, Steiner;

Regular Sponsors: Representative Bowman, Dexter, Fahey, Gomberg, Grayber, Hudson, Marsh, Nguyen D, Nguyen H, Nosse, Pham H, Pham K, Reynolds, Ruiz, Tran, Walters, Senator Campos, Dembrow, Frederick, Gelser Blouin, Golden, Gorsek, Jama, Manning Jr, Meek, Patterson, Prozanski, Sollman, Taylor, Wagner, Woods

I am a public policy volunteer advocate with the Cascade AIDS Project in Portland, Oregon, and a public health Research Scientist within the School of Social Work at the University of Washington. As a prevention services research expert in behavioral health and health care, I strongly support this bill. This is a very important moment in the nation's history, with attacks on gender affirming care making their way to the highest rungs of Congress in other states. We cannot let Oregon become one of those states. Transgender youth already face enormous disparities in mental health due to discrimination within their families, peer groups, and neighborhoods, as well as existing structural disparities in the healthcare system. Policymakers and healthcare workers have an obligation to provide supports for these vulnerable youth where other social systems are failing them. This bill represents one step toward protecting both transgender youth, and the healthcare providers who can help them to make life-improving decisions about their own health.

I strongly support HB 2002.

Sincerely,

Justin Caouette, PhD

Public Policy Volunteer Advocate, Cascade AIDS Project

Research Scientist, Social Development Research Group, School of Social Work,
University of Washington