

April 24, 2023

Senate Rules Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Testimony in Support of SJR 33

Chair Lieber, Vice Chair Knopp and Members of the Committee,

I write on behalf of Lines for Life to offer our full support for passage of Senate Joint Resolution 33. I believe referral to voters to consider the explicit inclusion of these equal protection of rights in the Oregon Constitution will have important benefits that include improvement of mental well-being, a key mission of Lines for Life.

Lines for Life is dedicated to preventing suicide and substance abuse, and promoting mental wellness. As a central part of our work, we speak with tens of thousands of Oregonians in crisis each year – through calls, texts and chats to the 34 crisis lines we answer. Our highly trained call counselors meet these calls with compassion and support, resolving over 95% of the crises we meet – including those struggling with suicidality – without the need to involve law enforcement or other first responders.

All too often, the concerns driving crises of the people who reach out to us are rooted in concerns about personal health decisions, or unequal treatment due to sexual orientation or gender identity. I am confident that expansion of rights with respect to these decisions and personal identity and autonomy will serve to reduce stress and anxiety resulting from fear of abridgement of these rights under color of law by the State or political subdivisions. My hope is that clarifying the Constitutional roots of these rights will help ease this burden and better support Oregonians.

I hope you will join us in supporting passage of SJR 33.

Sincerely,



Dwight C. Holton
Chief Executive Officer