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Chair Lieber and members of the Senate Committee on Rules:

I write on behalf of myself to express total unconditional support for SJR33. I am simply amazed that this is necessary in Oregon and not already embedded in the state constitution.

As the bill states, it is simply an extension of the equality of rights to all Oregonians.

With a few exceptions, it is my experience that Oregonians accept the Bill of Rights and understand that with time, our nation struggles to achieve an ever more perfect union. At the time the constitution was written, many residents of this country did not enjoy equal rights. Indeed, many rights were bestowed by that original constitution on a narrow segment of the population. The narrow segment with rights has gradually broadened, though not without resistance in some quarters, , as basic rights have been extended to include more and more of us. As we progress towards that more perfect union, recognition is growing that we all have the right to be who we chose to be, to love who we chose to love, and to enjoy the freedom to undertake those steps necessary to protect our personal health. SJR33 represents one more step along the road to that more perfect union. Yet, there remain those among us who reject the basic rights that each of us should enjoy; they demand that our freedoms not be increased but be abridged to satisfy their personal intolerant demand of how others should behave and who others should be.

I read a few of the comments filed in opposition to the bill and, frankly, could not stomach reading more. What I see among those opposing SJR33 is a disappointing combination of:

1. Demanding the right to hate others who are different,
2. Basing arguments on pure outright lies about the views of Oregonians regarding, for example, abortion. Doubting the claims that Oregonians oppose abortion I checked. According to the Pew Charitable Trust, (Pew, 2014) 9 years ago fully 63% of Oregonians believed abortion should be "Legal in all/most cases." The reader might reasonably counter that these are old data and do not reflect current views. Of course, to do so, one would have to deny the data presented in Pew (2023) which show exactly the same percentage agreeing that abortion should be "Legal in all/most cases." It is especially

troubling to find an MD writing “The majority of Oregonians believe there needs to be some regulation for abortion and gender care” and that “Women who have had an abortion experience mental health issues 60-70% at 10 year followup,” without offering a shred of evidence. Interestingly, a quick search reveals a review of the issue (Reardon 2018) that concludes: “it is impossible to conduct research in this field in a manner that can definitively identify the extent to which any mental illnesses following abortion can be reliably attributed to abortion in and of itself.” Too many opponents of this proposal seem to have very narrow and rigid right wing extremist views that they extrapolate are shared by others - even a majority of Oregonians.

3. Unfortunately, as I have often experienced those arguing for a ban on abortion either assume all pregnancies occur within marriage or just ignore that fact that rape and incest exist, and sometimes a zygote or fetus is the result of such acts. Others, meanwhile, argue that the incestuously raped individual should be forced to carry that fetus to term. Imagine the mental health issues that such individuals will carry for their lifetimes. To those demanding such individuals carry to term, I ask: suppose it were your wife, sister, daughter or grand-daughter who suffered the incestuous rape; do you really think such a painful experience should destroy the rest of your loved one’s life?
4. A general lack of humanity or caring for the right of others to enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness the way they wish to do.

I note that the proposal calls for a ballot measure simply provides Oregonians an opportunity to express themselves on the issue. Even if the measure were to pass, it would only restrict the state of Oregon from infringing on rights and equality. Those testifying in opposition to the bill who express hate for others different from themselves would not be affected; they would retain the same rights to be hate-filled as they now have. And no-one would be forced to have an abortion. Everyone’s rights to carry a fetus to term would be protected.

The notion that the state should have the right to decide who Oregonians shall be, or who they shall love is obscene. Let’s give Oregonians the opportunity to voice their will on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan R.P. Journet". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Alan R.P. Journet Ph.D.

Sources:

Pew (2014) Views about abortion by state. Pew Research Center 2014

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/religious-landscape-study/compare/views-about-abortion/by/state/>

Pew 2023 Views about abortion among adults in Oregon. Pew Research Center 2023

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/religious-landscape-study/state/oregon/views-about-abortion/>

Reardon D. 2018 The abortion and mental health controversy: A comprehensive literature review of common ground agreements, disagreements, actionable recommendations, and research opportunities. PMC PubMed Central ®

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6207970/>