

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and members of the Senate Committee on Healthcare,

My name is Seth Johnstone, and I'm asking for your support of SB535 on behalf of Basic Rights Oregon (BRO).

As the longest-serving LGBTQ2SIA+ rights organization in Oregon, BRO's mission is to ensure both legal and lived equality for all LGBTQIA2S+ Oregonians. All Oregonians should have control over their bodies and access to all reproductive healthcare, including IVF and fertility services. This bill would be life-changing for many LGBTQ2SIA+ Oregonians wanting to start or grow their families, and would remove the disproportionate barriers to care faced by our community as well as BIPOC Oregonians.

Right now, the out-of-pocket costs of fertility services and IVF treatment puts it out of reach for many Oregonians. Considering that one in six people experience infertility, this is a glaring omission. Oregon is a leader in our nation when it comes to reproductive rights, bodily autonomy and family planning protections. Yet even today, thousands of Oregonians do not have access to the resources they need to start or grow their families or address infertility challenges.

SB535 will require comprehensive insurance coverage for IVF in Oregon for plans regulated by the state. When this bill becomes law, Oregon will join other states in having this policy, and will also be aligned with the coverage policies many of our state's largest employers already have. Oregon is recognized as one of the best states when it comes to both LGBTQ2SIA+ rights and reproductive freedom—but the lack of IVF access is a significant gap in our laws and our LGBTQIA2S+ families feel the impact.

By voting YES to advance SB535, you have the chance to close this gap and ensure Oregon is a place where all individuals and families are welcome. Given the national assault on queer and transgender rights, women's rights, and racial justice, it's now more important than ever that Oregon remains a safe haven and leading example for bodily autonomy and healthcare access.

Building a family is a priceless experience—one that all Oregonians deserve a chance to have, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity or income level. You can make that a reality, and ensure a strong future for Oregon. Thank you for considering our testimony, Seth Johnstone (he/him) Basic Rights Oregon