

Testimony of Melissa Ohden, MSW
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Oregon House Committee on Judiciary, Chairman Jason Kropf, Oregon HB 4088

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Chairman Kropf, members of the committee, my name is Melissa Ohden. I am from Kansas City, Missouri, representing The Abortion Survivors Network and am testifying today in opposition to HB 4088.

The Abortion Survivors Network is the only organization in the world dedicated to supporting women whose abortions do not go as planned and the infants who survive this outcome.

I am here today to oppose HB 4088 because it prioritizes provider immunity instead of patient safety, particularly when abortions do not end as planned, and continued pregnancy and abortion survival occur.

At *The Abortion Survivors Network*, we frequently hear from women who were told their abortion was “complete,” only to learn weeks or months later that they are still pregnant and their child survived. Continued pregnancy and a surviving infant are not outcomes they were expecting. Facing fear, uncertainty, and trauma, women need information, documentation-like access to their abortion records, not legal barriers to oversight and responsibility of the provider.

HB 4088 blocks cooperation with out-of-state and federal authorities, restricts access to medical records, and limits transparency in cases of harm. When complications arise, this bill makes it more difficult for women to seek answers, medical care, or justice.

At ASN, we currently support four abortion survivors who are Oregon constituents. Their lives and their mothers’ experiences show that abortion outcomes are not always predictable—continued pregnancy and live birth can and do occur—and when they do, systems, including abortion providers, must provide more safeguards, not fewer.

This bill expands immunity beyond licensed physicians to less-regulated providers, reducing recourse when standards of care are not met. History shows that weakened oversight puts women at risk. Every major medical abuse scandal in abortion care has occurred where oversight failed.

Oregon already has some of the most permissive abortion laws in the nation. There is no access crisis. This bill instead adds protection from scrutiny, even when allegations involve coercion, abuse, or medical harm.

Women deserve information and support. Survivors of abortion deserve a start in life that helps them and their mothers overcome a traumatic experience, not more barriers and less organized support. No law should make it harder to respond when abortion does not go as planned.

Thank you,

Melissa Ohden, MSW

The Abortion Survivors Network