

Dear Chair Representative Kropf, Vice-Chair Chotzen, Vice-Chair Wallan and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Laura Mann. I live in Tigard, Oregon. I'm writing in strong support for HB 4088.

I am close with two gender diverse children who were profoundly affected by their ability to access gender affirming care in Oregon. One child I know began questioning their gender at age 8. They took puberty blockers for a while before deciding to proceed with their natal puberty. The puberty blockers gave them extra time to understand what they were feeling and wanted for the future without causing any negative side effects. The other child I know is a trans teen girl whose gender dysphoria causes such intense distress that she has panic attacks and goes mute. Since beginning gender affirming hormone therapy, she has gained the confidence to wear a color other than black to school. It's a small step, but her willingness to be perceived by others grows as her outer image reflects her identity. Without access to this care, I fear this child's life would be in danger. Our community needs this bill because we are informed people making informed decisions, guided by medical professionals. Science is real, and medical professionals deserve the respect they have earned for many years of intensive study. It is incredibly insulting for the government to try to invade private, medical conversations about how people live in their bodies or how to parent their children's bodies. That kind of overreach is clearly discrimination meant to intimidate people out of receiving care. Oregon has finally caught up with the rest of the country in realizing that we can pump our own gas. We can also make our own healthcare decisions.