

To: House Healthcare Committee
From: Mia Alvidrez
Date: February 25, 2017
RE: Vote YES on HB 2673

Dear Representative Mitch Greenlick and House Healthcare Committee Members,

I am writing to ask your support to pass HB 2673. I am a transgender woman living in the Bend area. I have lived in this area for a year and a half. I grew up in a low-income household in El Paso, Texas and am a first generation Mexican American.

I moved to Oregon to serve as an instructor for a wilderness therapy program. In 2016, I finally accepted my gender after living in fear for years. I am fortunate to have access to health care through my employer, but I delayed updating my name and gender marker because the process was incredibly complicated and I was uncomfortable with the public posting requirement.

Having identity documents that did not reflect my name and gender made me feel degraded, very exposed and that somebody would find out and spread the word to the entire town that I was transgender. Imagine if any time you go out in public someone questions whether you own that car by asking you to show them proof. If you don't have it, you fear for your life. That's what this is like.

Last summer, I finally began the process after attending a training that Basic Right Oregon held in Eugene. From there, I went to Deschutes County, where the staff was incredibly kind, but many were unfamiliar with the process. It required me to advocate for myself, which I could do because of the training. Fortunately, there was one staff member who was well versed in the process and was super helpful. It took me nearly a year, but I just completed name and gender marker process.

Identity documents are incredibly important for helping us live normal lives. This bill will help several transgender people in Oregon. I strongly encourage you to pass HB 2673.

Thank you.

Mia Alvidrez
Madras, Oregon