

February 26, 2019

TO: House Democratic Leader Jennifer Williamson, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary
FR: Bob Joondeph, Executive Director
RE: Support for HB 2589-1

Disability Rights Oregon (DRO) is the *Protection and Advocacy* office for Oregon, providing legal-based advocacy services to Oregonians with disabilities across the state. DRO supports HB 2589 with the -1 amendments.

When the ADA was enacted in 1990, it included a section that was designed to assure that certain human characteristics were not considered as “disabilities” under the law. 42 USC Sec. 12211 still states that “disability” does not include “homosexuality” and “bisexuality”. When Oregon restructured its disability discrimination laws in 2017, it adopted this terminology wholesale.

In 2019, it is time to bring our descriptors up to modern standards, replacing “homosexuality and bisexuality” with the term “sexual orientation.” Doing so will not change the meaning of the law or separate it from the standards of the ADA.

In sum, HB 2589 and the -1 amendments will maintain the close connection between state and federal disability discrimination laws while removing anachronistic and offense language from our law books. DRO supports these reasonable changes.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of HB 2589.