

Meyer Stephenson

Employment Law

Christina Stephenson
Attorney at Law

1 SW Columbia St., Suite 1850, Portland, OR 97258
E: christina@oregonworkplacelaw.com
P: 503-459-4010 F: 503-512-5022

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Via Email to hjud.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov
House Committee on Judiciary

Re: Testimony in Support of House Bill 2589
On behalf of the Oregon Trial Lawyers Association

Chair Williamson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2589. Oregon Trial Lawyers Association members fight for workers who face on-the-job discrimination for reasons such as their disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. OTLA members strongly support the efforts of HB 2589 to ensure workers are treated fairly and with dignity.

HB 2589, along with the already filed amendment, removes outdated and offensive language from ORS, including the terms “transsexualism” and “transvestism.”

The bill also clarifies that a person’s sexual orientation and gender identity are not, “physical or mental impairments.”

Crucially, this bill would not erode existing protections for any individuals. Individuals with disabilities will have the same protection they have now— regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The crux of a disability will be squarely where it should be: focused on whether a person has a, “physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of the individual” – not focused on the sexual orientation or gender identity of the individual.

OTLA urges a yes vote on HB 2589.

Sincerely,
Christina Stephenson