
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon

February 27, 2023

Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden and members of the Senate Healthcare committee,

On behalf of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, I'm writing today to express support for SB 491, and to urge the committee to pass the bill as introduced. As an organization dedicated to the advancement of health equity and who helped to pass the landmark Reproductive Health Equity Act in 2017, we believe this bill makes an important advancement in access to the full spectrum of reproductive healthcare for Oregonians.

Oregon has led the nation in passing policies that have reduced health inequities, such as the Reproductive Health Equity Act, Cover All Kids, and Cover All People. These policies aim to reform a health system that has perpetuated unequal access to healthcare through a tiered system of coverage and access based on income, insurance, immigration status, zip code, or gender identity and sexual orientation.

The reproductive justice organization, Sistersong, defines reproductive justice as the right to parent, the right *not* to parent, and the right to parent your children in safe and sustainable conditions. At Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon we advocate for a healthcare system that allows all people to have control over their bodies and their futures, especially when it concerns how and when people choose to build their families.

Equitable access to assisted reproduction including fertility treatment such as IVF, ICI, IUI and ICDI is critical to ensuring all people can access the full spectrum of reproductive healthcare. Policies regarding assisted reproduction have a disproportionate impact on LGBTQ+ people, individuals with low incomes, non-partnered people, Black, Indigenous and other Women of Color, and individuals with disabilities. We see this as central to achieving reproductive justice in our state.

To that end, we would like to express support for SB 491 as drafted. We are particularly happy to see the inclusion of a study to develop a roadmap with defined benchmarks to include Oregonians who rely on state health plans for coverage in this version of the bill. For the nearly 1 in 3 Oregonians covered by OHP, which disproportionately includes LGBTQ+ and BIPOC individuals, this is an important step to ensure we are not exacerbating existing inequities in our health system.

We are also happy to see the bill require all state regulated commercial plans to include this coverage, without any harmful exemptions that might exacerbate inequities in our health system.

We applaud Chair Patterson for leading the effort to expand access to fertility service. We believe the current is the best path to equitably expand access to assisted reproduction coverage and not leave our most impacted communities behind.

We urge the committee to pass SB 491 to give all Oregonians the opportunity to grow their families without the barrier of cost.

Sincerely,

Cassie Purdy
Political Director
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon