



March 20, 2023

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in Support House Bill 2002

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair Goodwin, Vice-Chair Nelson and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon (ACLU of Oregon). The ACLU of Oregon is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing civil liberties and civil rights, with more than 28,000 supporters statewide.

We strongly and proudly support House Bill 2002, which would codify our right to the full spectrum of reproductive healthcare, expand access to gender-affirming and reproductive healthcare, and create protections for patients and providers.

No one should be denied life-saving healthcare or be forced to carry a pregnancy against their will and face the life-altering consequences of being denied essential care. The ACLU of Oregon works to ensure that every person can make the best decision for their own body, health, and life without undue political interference. Reproductive and gender-affirming care are essential healthcare services that all Oregonians deserve access to as part of our constitutional liberties.

The Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* took away our federal constitutional right to abortion — an attack on bodily autonomy and reproductive freedom. The decision has opened the door for anti-abortion attacks across the country in an effort to ban abortion nationwide, and even criminalize it. Currently, a Texas judge is considering a case filed by extremist anti-abortion groups that are seeking to revoke FDA approval for mifepristone, an abortion drug with a safety and efficacy track record of over 20 years.

Across the country, including in Oregon, we have also seen attacks on our trans community with discriminatory bills that limit their access to essential healthcare. Gender-affirming care is life-saving care. We must protect our community's access to healthcare and autonomy to make decisions about their bodies. That means eliminating barriers to trans healthcare and ensuring that trans people have meaningful, comprehensive access to transition-related care without burdensome and unnecessary preconditions and limitations.

Time and time again, people in Oregon have made our values clear: We trust people to make decisions about their bodies. We believe that everyone in our state — no matter how much money we make or where we get insurance — deserves gender-affirming and reproductive care, including abortion.

House Bill 2002 would advance Oregon's work in protecting people's right and access to reproductive and gender-affirming care by:

- **Protecting providers and health centers:** Protecting providers' ability to provide care to all patients who seek gender-affirming and reproductive healthcare in Oregon. Shielding individuals from criminal and civil liability for supporting or providing reproductive healthcare. Preventing interference with health care centers and protecting providers from harassment and abuse. Ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of providers is protected
- **Expanding Access:** Closing gaps in insurance coverage for gender-affirming healthcare and ensuring contraception access in the Oregon Health Plan. Addressing reproductive healthcare deserts by expanding services at existing health centers at public institutions.
- **Ensuring Fundamental Rights:** Codifying the right to the full spectrum of reproductive care, protecting the privacy of individuals who receive, support, or provide reproductive and gender-affirming care, and preventing people from being criminalized for their pregnancy outcomes.

By passing House Bill 2002, you have an opportunity to affirm Oregon's values and leadership in protecting access to reproductive and gender-affirming care. **The ACLU of Oregon urges your support for House Bill 2002 and asks you to pass it out of committee.**

Respectfully,

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