

Submitter: Gregory Hickey

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2002

As a law enforcement officer, and before that as a counselor in a psychiatric hospital, I witnessed many young women and men's lives literally destroyed by unwanted pregnancies. Having no choice thrust young people into a lifetime of poverty and despair, and often resulted in their children becoming wards of the state and sometimes criminals. In a psychiatric hospital, as I was working on a second masters degree, I met a young man who had become a woman, and was a maintenance person at the hospital. My first reaction was one of disgust. It was not until several years later in a chance meeting, I had more encounters with her. She was able to explain to me how transitioning to a woman had saved her life.

While I respect the opinion of many who believe transitioning to another sex may give some an uncomfortable feeling, I understand. Allowing people to transitioning during puberty may not be appropriate, given the hormonal surges which make youth impulsive. However, getting an abortion at a youthful age will likely save more than one person's life. Women and girls should have the right to make that choice. Furthermore, religion has no place in government or law-making, as many legislators would like to enforce their religious beliefs onto others. Abortion should remain legal in Oregon, even for adolescents, and without parental permission.