

Submitter: Byron Kimball

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2002

I want to thank the honorable members of this committee for granting me the opportunity to speak before you today. My name is Byron Kimball. I'm here today to urge you to protect Oregonians' access to necessary reproductive and gender affirming health care by passing HB 2002.

I began gender affirming treatment, a process that involved therapy, hormone replacement therapy and over four surgeries, several years ago.

My transition involved not only forgoing or paying out of pocket for care my insurance provider wouldn't cover but waiting months and even years for hormone replacement therapy and surgeries.

Despite all this, when I was finally able to access the care I needed: I don't think I can really, truly express the relief and peace I felt as my body slowly felt more and more like my own.

More than anything else this past year, it pains me that there are people fighting to steal this away from people like me, those of us with gender dysphoria. Or that so many people, even in the best of circumstances, still have to wait for months, years, for the care they depend on to finally be themselves.

That's why, today, I hope this committee will vote with dignity and humanity in mind. Oregon can be a leader in modeling what taking care of our neighbors looks like. And it starts by ensuring that, no matter Oregonians' care needs, that access to health care is protected for years to come through, as I implore of you all, voting yes on HB 2002.