

TO: Oregon House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

FROM: David Fargo

RE: Support for HB 2002

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice Chair Goodwin and Nelson, and Committee Members,

I am asking you to vote yes on HB 2002, because gender-affirming health care is life-saving care. This bill will close gaps in insurance coverage of critical care for transgender Oregonians.

I was denied access to medical care, surgery twice within last year in Nevada because insurance did not cover cost or mental health referral letters were being denied. Because of discriminatory policies, I've had housing problems and disability inducing outcome caused by denial of surgery. My education and career has been halted because of this.

I'm consulting with a primary care provider and a psychiatrist in Oregon. However, it is difficult to understand the medical care system and find the right insurance and providers.

Transgender care is important to psychiatric, mental well-being: lowering severity of depression, trauma and criminality by providing a new mentality and new health experience. Looking good is important for competitiveness in employment and provides economic advantages in hiring process.

You have an opportunity to advance legislation that will be truly life-changing—and perhaps even lifesaving—for transgender Oregonians like me. Please remember my story when you are voting on this bill, and please vote yes on HB 2002.

Thank you,

David Fargo