

March 21, 2023

**Please Vote Yes on HB 2002**

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Elise Josephson, and I am writing today in support of HB 2002. I am directing most of this letter toward the gender affirming care portions of the bill, but I am supportive of the entire bill.

For transgender people like me, access to gender affirming care isn't a cosmetic choice we make thinking "I could look better." Gender affirming care is something we seek to lessen the distress we feel as a result of the deep incongruence between our gender and our sex assigned at birth. This care is expensive and for people who don't have a substantial disposal income the cost can be a serious barrier to care. In rural areas, like southern Oregon where I am from, the costs can be even higher due to the lack of providers. This bill lowers those cost and helps transgender people receive the care we need.

I am always troubled to hear anecdotes of people who underwent the difficult process of gender transition when it wasn't the right choice for them. I have heard these anecdotes throughout this discussion. However, if high quality gender affirming care is available in all cases it may well reduce this occurrence.

Quality gender affirming care starts with deciding whether gender transition is the care an individual needs and wants. It is a deep failing that certain people did not get the healthcare resources they needed to make the right choice for them in the gender care process; however, the solution for the problem of people who did not get enough healthcare in the past is not to less healthcare in the future. The solution is more healthcare which lies at the heart of HB 2002.

In a time of increasing hostility to reproductive health and gender affirming care, Oregon has an opportunity to break the trend with HB 2002. We have an opportunity in this bill to care for native born Oregonians like me who have always called Oregon home, and to protect those who have a newfound of love for our beautiful State.

Please vote yes on HB 2002.

Sincerely,  
Elise Josephson  
Law Student  
Eugene