

Good afternoon, Chair Nosse and members of the House Committee on Behavior Health and Health Care. My name is Kason Bonds, and I am a college student here in Oregon. Today, I am testifying in support of HB 2002, which modifies provisions relating to reproductive health rights.

I do not want to claim to have an in-depth understanding learned from my personal experience as I am a cisgendered gay, white male who has not had to access these services yet I still need to speak out. As a college student, I know firsthand about not having discretionary spending and not being prepared for unexpected expenses. The fact that 47% of Americans are not prepared to cover an unexpected \$500 expense, the average cost of a medication abortion without insurance, underscores the urgent need for affordable and accessible reproductive health care in our state.

HB 2002 centers those who face the most barriers to accessing care in policy-making and resourcing. By protecting providers' ability to provide care to all patients who seek gender-affirming care and reproductive healthcare in Oregon, and preventing interference with health care centers and protecting providers from harassment and abuse, we can ensure that everyone in our state has access to life-saving medical care.

The Dobbs decision, which many Americans are still grappling with, worsened the public health crisis around abortion care. Without further protections, people of color and low-income families are most at risk for further economic and health consequences and now, the threat of criminalization. By passing HB 2002, we can prevent the criminalization of access to health care and ensure that all Oregonians, regardless of their income or geography, have access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health care, which is a basic human right.

I want to also draw your attention to the fact that nearly 3/4 of transgender Oregonians do not live near a provider who has openings within a month to receive services. This can translate to years-long waitlists for life-saving gender-affirming care. HB 2002 addresses this issue by closing gaps in insurance coverage for gender-affirming care and expanding access to care in medically-underserved regions through a pilot mobile health clinic program. As transgender rights in particular are under attack nationwide, Oregon has an opportunity to continue standing as a leader for LGBTQIA+ rights and health care access.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support of HB 2002. I urge you to prioritize the health and well-being of all Oregonians by passing this important legislation.

