

DATE: March 20, 2023

TO: Chair Nosse, Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare

FROM: Morgan O'Rourke-Liggett

RE: HB 2002

Hello Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare.

My name is Morgan O'Rourke-Liggett, I am a Support Group Facilitator and Board Member for the Mid-Willamette Transgender Support Network, and a proud queer, nonbinary, trans adult. Access to gender affirming care and reproductive care has, and continues to save my life. This bill will fill many gaps in access to care that are essential for everyone to express bodily autonomy.

Before coming out as transgender, I used birth control as a teen to regulate irregular and painful menstrual cycles. Access to this care made it possible for me to continue my athletic activities with little interference.

After coming out, I began to experiment with different forms of gender affirming care: changing my pronouns, name, wardrobe, and trying on a binder. Once I knew what fit me, I legally changed my name and gender marker. My insurance wouldn't cover my top surgery so I worked all the holidays and overtime that I could as a park ranger to pay for it out of pocket. Any time I start a new job, I frantically search to see if my testosterone will be covered and contemplate if I'll have enough to pay for it out of pocket or if I'll have to sacrifice something to do so. Despite these barriers to access, gender affirming care has improved my life beyond measure.

For me and my transmasculine brothers, reproductive care is another key form of care. There are too many stories of my brothers experiencing negligent care and malpractice that leads to severe harm or death. We need access to pregnancy care, abortions, pap smears, pelvic exams and other reproductive care. However, we are often denied this care due to transphobia and because this isn't covered for men in insurance plans. I am fortunate enough to have an OB who supports me with the care I need. Everyone should have access to this care regardless of reason or gender.

My heartaches watching the over 300 hateful bills being proposed and passing across the country. Some of which this legislative body is complicit in.

A bill like this will allow queer and trans youth to grow up and become elders of a new generation. The protections from this bill will help so many adults who attend our support groups expressing concern about access to both reproductive and gender affirming care.

Oregon has the chance to be on the right side of history. This is why I urge you to vote **yes on HB 2002**.