



Re: In support of HB 2002, Protection of Rights to Reproductive Health Care and Gender Affirming Treatment

Dear Committee Chair Rob Nosse and Vice-Chairs Christine Goodwin and Travis Nelson and Members of the Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee,

The Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network (COIN) is in strong support of this important and timely legislation, HB 2002, to protect Oregonians' freedom of access to the full spectrum of reproductive health services and sexual and gender affirming care. COIN is made up of Indivisible groups from across Oregon that are volunteer-led and made up of voters that work to protect our democracy and freedoms and promote social and economic justice.

Oregonians have long supported the freedom of people to make their own decisions regarding reproduction, including whether and when to become a parent, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Oregonians have long agreed people should be able to access quality, affordable reproductive health services including family planning and contraception, pregnancy termination, miscarriage management, prenatal, postnatal, and delivery care; and more. Oregonians have also supported access to sexual and gender affirming care.

Since the 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*, extremists have chipped away at the freedom from forced pregnancy. In Oregon there have been strong efforts to deny access to reproductive health services, leaving "deserts" throughout the state where folks cannot afford or even find such care. Oregonians have fought back against these efforts to undermine our reproductive health freedoms. Oregon's Reproductive Health Equity Act was a model for protecting reproductive freedom and expanding access to affordable reproductive health services. This 2017 law also protected health care access for individuals regardless of gender identity.

*Roe* has now been overturned and there are serious threats nationally to reproductive health freedoms and services including pregnancy terminations, contraception, and treatment for miscarriages. These threats will impact Oregonians and their health care providers. Extremists are busy in other states trying to outdo each other in the severity of their laws criminalizing reproductive health care decisions and pregnancy outcomes.

These extremists have inflicted untold suffering on people and their families and left health care providers and health centers in a legal quandary as to whether and how to provide reproductive health care including life saving care. It is not an exaggeration to say lives have been jeopardized and even lost because of efforts to criminalize health care decisions relating to pregnancy termination and treatment of miscarriages.

Extremists have also attacked and threatened not only the health care freedoms, but also the other freedoms and even lives of trans and other LGBTQ2SIA+ folks. These extremists have used other state legislatures to try to pass hundreds of bills this year alone to deny freedoms to trans or queer folks. They have spread all manner of disinformation and hate as they campaign to destroy the freedoms and lives of people simply based on their sexual orientation and gender identity.

COIN urges Oregon legislators to step up as you have in the past and pass HB 2002

- To expand reproductive health care freedom and rights of access to include the full spectrum of reproductive health care
- To protect providers and health centers that are providing health care to Oregonians seeking reproductive health care and gender-affirming treatment, and
- To expand access to reproductive, sexual, and gender-affirming health care particularly for folks in rural Oregon, students, and low-income families.

There is no time to wait. We all want an Oregon where everyone can live their best life and be part of a thriving community. This is only possible if everyone has the freedom to make their own decisions and access the quality health care relating to reproduction, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Thank you.

Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network (COIN)