



TO: Oregon House Committee on Judiciary
FROM: Todd Addams, Interim Executive Directors, Basic Rights Oregon
DATE: 3/29/2023
RE: Support for House Bill 2890

Chair Kropf, Co-Chairs Andersen and Wallan, and members of the committee,

My name is Todd Addams, and I'm writing on behalf of Basic Rights Oregon to urge you to vote YES to advance House Bill 2890. Basic Rights Oregon is the state's longest-serving LGBTQ2SIA+ advocacy organization.

LGBTQ2SIA+ people are estimated to be incarcerated at [three times the rate](#) of the general US adult population. The statistics are even starker when it comes to transgender and queer people of color. This is because our communities experience higher rates of discrimination, houselessness, mental health and addiction struggles and violence—all factors that increase a person's risk of being arrested and imprisoned.

LGBTQ2SIA+ people are over-represented in Oregon jails and prisons, and we have a stake in ensuring every incarcerated person in Oregon has fair access to the full range of medical and mental healthcare. House Bill 2890 will build off three recommendations from Oregon's Task Force on Corrections Medical Care. This includes ensuring all incarcerated people in Oregon will have access to mental health and addiction treatment services—something crucially needed in our jails and prisons, as the fentanyl crisis continues to impact Oregon.

Another crucial provision from HB 2890: Directing the Oregon Department of Corrections to ensure all adults in custody have access to personal electronic devices with limited uses to access educational materials, health care, and communications with loved ones and counsel. Being incarcerated is an isolating experience, and it doesn't just harm the people in prison—it also harms their families and other loved ones who experience their absence. Making sure incarcerated Oregonians are able to communicate in a timely fashion with their loved ones will have a material impact on their mental health, and will have a widespread positive effect on the communities most severely impacted by incarceration, including the LGBTQ2SIA+ community.

Basic Rights Oregon's work is based in the core belief that everyone in our state deserves equality, no matter who they are or what their circumstances are. That includes equal access to healthcare and communication with their loved ones. As a state, we still have much work to do to curb the over-incarceration of LGBTQ2SIA+ people, people of color, and other vulnerable groups. But HB 2890 will improve the lives of incarcerated Oregonians, and the health of our entire state. We urge you to vote YES on HB 2890.

Thank you,
Todd Addams, Interim Executive Director, Basic Rights Oregon