

Submitter: Mariah Terrill
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Dear Joint Ways & Means Committee of Oregon,

Our state will be healthier, stronger, and more resilient when everyone has what they need to thrive. That's why I support the People's Budget—a clear set of policies and investments that will lift up our communities and strengthen the state by using a racial, gender, and economic justice framework.

The People's Budget includes smart, community-led policies, investments, and workforce supports to address systemic inequities in Oregon, including the Fair Shot Agenda:

Indigenous Language Justice—SB 612, SB 911
Reproductive Health and Access to Care—HB 2002
Stable Homes Homelessness Prevention Package—HB 5511, HB 2001, SB 611
In Defense of Humanity—SB 337, HB 2467

Key investments outlined in the People's Budget to advance immigrant justice, fix Oregon's broken public defense system, make childcare accessible and affordable, and many other important investments are not adequately funded under the Co-Chairs Budget Framework. Legislators must invest in communities now - rather than reserving even more revenue in our already strong and healthy rainy day fund.

\$10M to fully fund the Reproductive Health and Access to Care program at OHA - The Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v. Wade eliminated the federal constitutional right to abortion and set a dangerous precedent for who has the authority to make decisions for us about our bodies. At the same time, states across the nation are taking steps to ban and restrict access to gender-affirming care.

For too many Oregonians, reproductive and gender affirming care are still out-of-reach because of geography, income, or insurance coverage. Eighteen states currently have abortion bans or serious restrictions in effect, including our neighbor Idaho. This decreased access exacerbates existing reproductive health care deserts as our state experiences a surge in out-of-state patients. Washington state enacted very similar legislation to this bill in 2021, and there has been very little fiscal impact to the state. Like any other form of life-saving health care, gender-affirming care should be accessible. Access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health care, including abortion and gender-affirming care, is a basic human right.

I grew up in rural Central Oregon. I have witnessed what living in a reproductive health care desert does to young people and parents. They are left without the knowledge and/or resources to adequately care for themselves and their children and then are mercilessly shamed and judged because they should know better? We are all better than that, and Oregon is better than that. Do not leave more Oregonians without the knowledge, resources, and care they deserve and that is their right as human beings in this country and on this planet. In 2018 I found myself unemployed and in need of an abortion, a procedure which costs upwards of \$500. I am incredibly thankful for the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) which allowed me to access the care I needed when I needed it without insulting and shameful waiting periods or any extra hoops. If it weren't for OHP I don't know where I would be today. It's another reminder that abortion cannot just be legal, it must be readily accessible to those who need it.

I urge you to support the policies and investments in the People's Budget and the Fair Shot Agenda.

Sincerely,
Mariah Terrill