
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon

February 7, 2024

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, Members of the committee,

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon respectfully requests the committee's support of House Bill 4070 to make investments in our school based health centers. As one of the leading advocates for access to comprehensive, inclusive and medically accurate sex education, we believe all young people deserve access to the medical and social-emotional supports they need to be healthy and thrive.

HB 4070 provides critical resources that youth and families across Oregon need now. Oregon is ranked last in the nation for youth mental health. According to the Oregon Health Authority's 2022 Student Health Survey, 34% of 8th grade student respondents described their mental health as "poor" or "fair". Nearly 30% of 8th graders reported feeling symptoms of depression in the previous year.¹ For LGBTQIA+ students, these issues are compounded.

HB 4070 provides evidence-based resources that will be quickly available for schools to support youth mental and physical health. For low-income youth and families living in rural parts of the state, school based health centers are often one of the few available access points for physical and mental health care. .

A study conducted in Oregon found that youth are 10-21x more likely to seek mental health support at a school-based health center (SBHC) and that SBHCs that increased mental health capacity were 12% less likely to report a depressive episode; 16% less likely to report suicidal ideation; and 18% less likely to report a suicide attempt.

We cannot wait to invest in these resources for Oregonians youth. HB 4070 would allow us to immediately increase our state's capacity to support and meet the needs of young Oregonians. Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon urge the committee to support HB 4070.

Sincerely,

Cassie Purdy
Political Director
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon

¹ <https://www.bach-harrison.com/SHSDataPortal/Documents/2022%208TH%20Grade%20SHS%20Questionnaire.pdf>