



## House Education Committee

HB 2577

Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Lois Anderson, Executive Director, Oregon Right to Life

Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

Oregon Right to Life respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to House Bill 2577. While we recognize the importance of accessible health care for students, we have deep concerns regarding the expansion of School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) under Oregon's current laws, which exclude parents from their children's health care decisions and lack necessary oversight. This bill further compounds these concerns by potentially directing additional taxpayer funding toward controversial medical services that undermine parental rights and transparency.

### Parental Rights & Lack of Oversight

Oregon law already grants minors as young as 15 the ability to consent to abortion, along with other controversial medical treatments, like gender-affirming care, without parental involvement. Even minors under the age of 15 can access these procedures without parental knowledge if a health care provider determines that involving parents is not in the minor's "best interest" or could result in "emotional abuse or neglect."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Oregon law protects the confidentiality of these services, preventing parents from accessing critical information about their child's medical decisions.<sup>2</sup> House Bill 2577 fails to address these concerning provisions and could further isolate parents from their children's well-being.

### Expansion Means More Funding for Controversial Services

According to the Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) 2024 School-Based Health Center Status Update<sup>3</sup>, SBHCs provide services both in person and via telehealth. While primary care, which includes reproductive health, makes up 52% of SBHC visits, there is no specific reporting on abortion or related referrals. Expanding SBHCs without clear limitations on what services they provide will likely result in further state funding for procedures that many Oregon parents and taxpayers find deeply concerning.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors\\_109.640](https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_109.640);

<https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le9541.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/reproductive-health/final-rule-fact-sheet/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le-101754.pdf>

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## **Lack of Transparency & Accountability**

SBHCs operate under a unique web of privacy laws<sup>4</sup>, including HIPAA and FERPA, making it difficult for parents and the public to understand the scope of services available and provided to their children. Unlike traditional medical providers, SBHCs are not required to disclose specific details about the procedures or referrals they offer.<sup>5</sup> This lack of transparency, coupled with the state's aggressive stance on expanding abortion and other controversial services like gender-affirming care, raises serious concerns about accountability and oversight.

## **Conclusion**

Governor Tina Kotek has made it clear<sup>6</sup> that expanding access to abortion and other controversial services, like gender-affirming care, is a core priority of her administration; SBHCs play a significant role in advancing this agenda. While SBHCs provide many well-intended services, Oregon's current legal framework creates serious ethical and policy concerns that cannot be ignored.

For these reasons, we strongly urge the committee to oppose House Bill 2577. Parents deserve the right to be involved in their children's health care decisions, and taxpayer dollars should not be used to fund controversial medical procedures under the guise of student wellness.

Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>4</sup><https://coephi.org/resource/information-sharing-and-confidentiality-in-school-based-health-centers/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le-101754.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://x.com/GovTinaKotek/status/1882953153102197169>