



Hello Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Javadi and Nelson, and members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care,

My name is Seth Johnstone, I'm here representing Basic Rights Oregon to urge you to vote YES to advance House Bill 2292. As the state's longest-serving LGBTQ2SIA+ advocacy organization, Basic Rights Oregon applauds this legislation which will eliminate barriers to effective HIV prevention and treatment.

HB 2292 will ensure that patients are able to gain immediate access to the full range of available HIV treatments and therapies that improve adherence and health outcomes. Taking effective HIV treatment every day can reduce the amount of the HIV virus in the body to an undetectable level. According to the latest research, patients who reach and maintain an undetectable viral load have effectively no ability to transmit HIV to others. Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, available in a daily pill or an injection, is 99 percent effective at preventing HIV transmission.

Despite this potential, new HIV infections have been increasing since 2020, to levels not seen in over 10 years. This increase in infections is disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations. That includes members of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community, and particularly Black, Latinx, and Indigenous folks. Throughout the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 90s, the United States government turned their back to the suffering of patients, and the wider pain of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community.

Medicine, public understanding of HIV/AIDS, and acceptance of LGBTQ2SIA+ people have come a long way since those days, but now we are under a new attack: executive order to eliminate programs across the federal government threatens to upend the CDC's efforts to combat HIV infection rates among Black, Latino and transgender people. The CDC began removing all content related to gender identity from its website, including HIV-related content, and technical assistance and training resources for agencies and clinics that receive Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, which provides safety net funding for the care and treatment of low-income people with HIV.

As LGBTQ2SIA+ folks are facing a federal assault on our rights—and our humanity—it's more important than ever for states like Oregon to continue leading by example. By supporting this bill, you are ensuring Oregon is and will be a safe haven for LGBTQ2SIA+ people, especially when it comes to their health.



The state has a new role to play to ensure that vulnerable Oregonians have access to the HIV medications they need to thrive. HB 2292 provides that guarantee. We urge you to vote YES on HB 2292.