



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB548
SUBMITTED TO OREGON HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
MAY 6, 2025**

Chair Kropf, Vice Chair Wallan, Vice Chair Chotzen, and Distinguished Committee Members:

Global Girls Worldwide Women adamantly supports and urges the passing of SB548, an act relating to raising the age to marry to 18, with no exceptions.

The marriage age laws that allow 17-year old children to marry must be replaced in order to protect minors, usually girls, from being coerced or forced to marry by a parent or parents who simply sign a form. These marriages are almost always to adult men, who are avoiding criminal prosecution under statutory rape laws.

Girls who are married as minors experience limited access to or the end of: their education, health care, economic opportunity, and legal rights. The limbo of no longer being able to access the protections in place for children, while at the same time not recognized as an adult leaves the minor barren of rights, protection, and opportunity. Marriage before age 18 has been recognized worldwide as a human rights violation.

Under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Target 5, 193 countries including the United States, have promised to end child marriage by 2030. UNICEF predicts efforts will need to move at 17 times the current rate to reach that goal. States and territories across the U.S., including Washington, are passing 18 No Exceptions legislation and Oregon must not become a destination state for child marriage.

Legislation banning child marriage ends a human rights abuse and is without cost. GGWW urges those who represent Oregon to vote Yes on SB548.

GGWW works toward gender equity by providing resources to girls and women, supporting allies, raising awareness and calling for reform. We believe individuals and local movements to heads of nations are essential in securing equity and safety.

Thank you for your consideration of this very important bill to end a human rights violation.

Kelly Vaughan
CEO, *Founder*
GGWW