

Submitter: Kimberly Suh
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4135

Dear Chair Bowman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kimberly Suh and I am a high school student. I am writing in support of HB 4135, which designates March 4th as HPV awareness day.

Access to HPV vaccination and cervical cancer screening—while incredibly effective in preventing disease—is uneven across Oregon. HPV vaccination prevents 90%+ of HPV-related cancers, doing the important work of keeping our communities safe from easily preventable cancer. However, only 67% of Oregon adolescents have completed the recommended HPV vaccine series. This, coupled with the fact that just 53% of Oregon women ages 25-44 are up to date on cervical cancer screening, means that many cases of cancer that could otherwise be prevented are impacting people across the state. Those from rural communities, low-income families, and communities of color face the greatest barriers in access, and disproportionately face the impact of our failure to provide them with these vital preventative services.

HB 4135 is important because it helps to raise awareness of this important issue. It designates March 4th as HPV awareness day in Oregon, promotes HPV vaccination & routine cervical screenings across the state, and recognizes the role of HPV in causing several types of cancer. It also acknowledges the devastating disparities in Oregon's HPV vaccination completion rates & access to routine cancer screening. Finally, it encourages the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), schools, county health departments, and orgs to share prevention information on March 4th every year. As a high school student, I have seen firsthand the scale of which education can work wonders. Oftentimes, hesitancy or inaction towards vaccination to prevent these cancers simply has to do with the fact that youth our age haven't been taught. Encouraging awareness is absolutely essential for shaping a healthy and long-lived future for teens like me, and this bill is a crucial part of that.

Vote yes on HB 4135 to help fight HPV and cervical cancer.