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

House Committee On Rules
Oregon State House of Representatives
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Bowman and Members of the Committee,

I am a cisgender female, and a parent to children assigned female at birth. I believe in promoting the life enhancing benefits vaccines and science have provided us. I feel incredibly lucky to be able to protect my children's health with the HPV vaccine. 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.

Awareness is the first step in addressing these issues of access, and is the least our leaders can do to begin managing this preventable public health issue.

Vote yes on HB 4135 to help fight HPV and cervical