

## **Testimony in Opposition to HB 4088**

I am submitting testimony in opposition to HB 4088.

I fully support strong privacy protections for both patients and providers. People seeking medical care should not be subjected to harassment, intimidation, or politically motivated interference, and clinicians should be able to practice without fear of bad-faith legal attacks.

At the same time, good patient care should not be political. Medicine functions best when it is guided by evidence, transparency, and rigorous evaluation - not by laws that insulate entire areas of practice from scrutiny because they are politically sensitive. When medical policy becomes primarily a political shield, patient safety and quality of care are at risk.

Privacy and protection must be balanced with transparency, accountability, and the ability to practice evidence-based medicine. HB 4088 goes too far in restricting access to health outcome data and oversight mechanisms that are essential for patient safety and high-quality care.

Medical standards of care are not established in isolation. They depend on ongoing data collection, outcome tracking, peer review, and coordination with federal agencies and international research bodies. By broadly shielding records, limiting disclosure, and restricting cooperation with outside regulators and researchers, this bill risks cutting Oregon off from the very systems that allow medicine to improve.

**Researchers need access to de-identified health outcome data to study trends, identify complications, evaluate long-term effects, and refine best practices. Blocking or severely limiting this access will not protect patients—it will harm them. This is especially concerning in areas of care where long-term outcomes are still being studied and medical understanding continues to evolve.**

Ironically, the populations this bill is intended to protect will be harmed the most by reduced transparency. Without robust, accessible data, we cannot accurately determine which treatments are most effective, which carry the greatest risks, or how outcomes vary across age groups and health profiles. Evidence-based medicine depends on the ability to ask difficult questions and learn from real-world results.

Although HB 4088 has received some minor amendments, it still creates serious risks in numerous areas:

- Reduced accountability and oversight
- Barriers to independent and longitudinal research
- Legal uncertainty and jurisdictional conflicts
- A chilling effect on outcome monitoring and quality improvement

Good intentions do not eliminate unintended consequences. Laws that place medical practice beyond meaningful review ultimately undermine public trust and weaken patient care.

I urge lawmakers to reject HB 4088 and instead pursue legislation that protects patient privacy **while preserving transparency, accountability, and access to the data necessary for ethical, evidence-based, and non-politicized medical care.**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Holly Harrington

## **Testimony in Opposition to HB 4088**

I am submitting testimony in opposition to HB 4088.

I strongly support patient and provider privacy, and I agree that people seeking medical care should be protected from harassment or politically motivated interference. However, good patient care should not be political. Medicine works best when it is guided by evidence, transparency, and accountability - not when entire areas of practice are shielded from scrutiny because they are controversial.

HB 4088 goes too far by broadly restricting access to health outcome data, oversight, and cooperation with outside regulators and researchers. Medical standards of care are established through ongoing data collection, outcome tracking, peer review, and coordination with federal and international research. Limiting access to de-identified data undermines evidence-based medicine and makes it harder to identify risks, complications, and best practices.

Ironically, the people this bill is intended to protect, namely trans-identifying patients, are likely to be harmed by reduced transparency. Without robust outcome data, we cannot accurately evaluate the effectiveness or long-term health impacts of treatments or improve care over time.

While well-intentioned, HB 4088 creates serious risks: reduced accountability, barriers to independent research, legal uncertainty, and a chilling effect on quality improvement. These unintended consequences will ultimately weaken patient care and public trust.

I urge lawmakers to reject HB 4088 as written and instead pursue legislation that protects privacy **while preserving transparency, accountability, and the ability to practice evidence-based, non-politicized medicine.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Holly Harrington