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The New York Times

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

January 31, 2017

If the Affordable Care Act is repealed, coverage of birth control with no co-payment is one of many benefits that Americans could lose. Now legislators in Oregon have introduced a bill intended to protect access to birth control in the state, along with a broad range of other reproductive health care services, including abortion.

The measure would require insurers in Oregon to cover all types of contraceptive drugs and devices approved by the Food and Drug Administration with no co-payment, co-insurance or deductible. It would extend the same requirement to a number of reproductive health services, including prenatal care, well-woman visits, screening for sexually transmitted infections, voluntary sterilization and abortion.

The bill also includes a provision that would prohibit insurers from discriminating against patients based on gender identity — for example, by refusing to cover gynecological exams for transgender women.

Under the Affordable Care Act, 30 million women gained co-pay-free access to preventive services like contraception, according to an estimate by the Department of Health and Human Services. An increase in the use of long-acting birth control methods has helped decrease the rates of unintended pregnancy and abortion nationwide.

By codifying the protections of the Affordable Care Act, the bill would protect Oregonians' access to birth control and other preventive health care in the event of a repeal.

But the Oregon bill would go beyond the Affordable Care Act by establishing a comprehensive list of essential reproductive health services that must be covered without a co-payment. Its sponsors recognized that people need access to the full range of reproductive health care in order to participate fully in society and the economy. Especially for patients with high-deductible health plans, abortion can be prohibitively expensive even if it is covered.

The bill, which is expected to come up for debate in March, may serve as a model for other states. New York is already moving in the right direction, with regulations announced this month to require insurers to provide co-pay-free coverage of contraceptives and abortions deemed medically necessary by a doctor.

Oregon's bill is a powerful defense, at the state level, of necessary reproductive health care.