



So all families can thrive.

March 15th, 2017
House Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon

Re: Support for HB 3391, the Reproductive Health Equity Act

Dear Chair Greenlick, co-chairs and Members of the committee,

On behalf of Forward Together, I urge you to support HB 3391, the Reproductive Health Equity Act. Forward Together is a multi-racial organization that works to transform culture and shift policy to ensure that all women, youth, and families have the rights, recognition, and resources they need to thrive. We support HB 3391 because this bill closes gaps in equity so that all Oregonians have access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care services, regardless of their income, citizenship status, or gender identity, or type of insurance.

With the imminent repeal of the Affordable Care Act, hundreds of thousands of Oregonians could lose no-cost-share coverage for essential reproductive health services. High deductibles will put these services out of reach for many. This is particularly problematic for women seeking abortion — a time-sensitive and critical service that 1 in 3 women access by the time they are 45.

Furthermore, 48,000 women of reproductive age in Oregon are categorically excluded from Medicaid due to their citizenship status and are prohibited from purchasing insurance with their own money on the Exchange. These women have coverage that ends immediately after labor and delivery, leaving them without care during the postpartum period, a pivotal time for both mom and baby.

Finally, transgender and gender-nonconforming Oregonians need access to services often categorized as “women’s health care,” including gender-specific cancer screenings. However, procedural barriers hinder access to this necessary and lifesaving care.

Restrictions on reproductive health care can have profoundly harmful effects on public health, particularly for those who already face significant barriers to receiving high-quality care. This legislation ensures that all Oregonians are able to decide if and when they have children based on what’s best for them and their family’s circumstances.

Forward Together supports HB 3391 because we know that Oregonians need access to full reproductive health coverage for all families to thrive, for a stronger economy and for a healthier state. We hope that you will join us in support of the Reproductive Health Equity Act.

Thank you,
Sami Alloy
Oregon Campaigns Manager, Forward Together