

March 15, 2017

Chair Greenlick, Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Women's Equity Coalition, I respectfully request your support for the Reproductive Health Equity Act (HB 3391).

Founded in 2013, OWEC is dedicated to advancing equity for Oregon women and girls. Our membership is primarily organizations serving women and girls, as well as individuals dedicated to advancing gender equity. Our coalition is organized around core principles that determine how we prioritize our advocacy, convening, and collaboration efforts.

HB 3391 has the complete support of OWEC because it directly reflects our commitment to Full Healthcare Access:

By "full healthcare access" we mean that women and girls, at every stage in their lives, can afford and have access to medical, behavioral, and reproductive healthcare without undue burden and stigma. We also mean investing in women's healthcare research to make it better.

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. When the cost of care must first come out of a high deductible, these services can be unaffordable and inaccessible 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.

The Reproductive Health Equity Act establishes comprehensive coverage for the full spectrum of reproductive health services — including family planning, abortion and postpartum care — for all Oregonians, regardless of income, citizenship status, gender identity or type of insurance. 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.

OWEC 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.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Alexander & Jodi Ballard-Beach
Co-Chairs, Oregon Women's Equity Coalition



Adelante Mujeres
Age and Gender Equity in the Arts
American Association of University
Women of Oregon
Clackamas Women's Services
Coalition for Equal Access for Girls
Domestic Violence Resource Center
Dress for Success Oregon
Emerge Oregon
Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest
Not OK PDX
Oregon CEDAW Coalition
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and
Sexual Violence
Oregon Commission for Women
Oregon NOW
Raphael House
Rock N Roll Camp for Girls
Saturday Academy
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