



February 21, 2017

Dear Chair Monnes-Anderson, Co-Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

Basic Rights Oregon works to ensure that all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer Oregonians experience equality by building a broad and inclusive politically powerful movement, shifting public opinion and achieving policy victories. Through our transgender justice and racial justice programs, we seek to ensure that members of our community who experience multiple forms of discrimination and navigate multiple systems of inequity can change the policies that most impact their lives, so that we can all work to end homophobia, transphobia and racism. We know that our movement for equality is bigger than one vote, broader than one issue, and stronger than the fear and intolerance that we must overcome.

At Basic Rights Oregon, we are working towards an Oregon where everyone has the basic health care they need. We urge you support the legislation SB 558 to cover all kids this session.

Every child deserves a healthy start in life. Health insurance coverage is one of the single most effective ways to ensure that children receive the preventative health and medical care they need to thrive in school and life. In Oregon, two percent of low-income children do not have any medical coverage even if income eligible. Without health insurance, these children are less likely to see a doctor for common, treatable health conditions like sore throats and earaches, as well as chronic conditions like allergies and asthma.

SB 558 extends the Oregon Health Plan to all children residing in Oregon up to 300 percent of the federal poverty line. This extension will ensure that all children have access to the health care services they need to be successful in school and throughout their lives. Additionally, SB 558 guarantees culturally competent outreach to newly eligible children and their families.

The future of healthy and thriving children depends on timely and preventative health care. Access to health coverage results in lower high school dropout rates and an increase in college attendance and completion. SB 558 ensures that on day one of school all children come into class healthy and ready to learn.

Oregon needs to take the next step and extend healthcare coverage to all children. We hope that you will join us in support of Cover All Kids so that Oregon can have healthier children, families, and communities.

Thank you,

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is "Nancy Haque" and the second is "Amy Herzfeld-Copple".

Nancy Haque & Amy Herzfeld-Copple  
*Co-Executive Directors*