

**From:** [James and Paula Bryant-Trerise](#)  
**To:** [HHC Exhibits](#)  
**Subject:** statement in opposition to HB3063  
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Hello, my name is James Bryant-Trerise, and I'm a resident of Portland and a community college instructor in Oregon City. Please vote no on HB3063. Here are some reasons why you should.

Medical and legal definitions, by necessity, lag behind the experience of people. They can't help but do so, because it's those experiences which demonstrate that current definitions are inadequate. When I was a sophomore in high school in 1980, the dictionaries still defined the word "gay" as meaning "happy and carefree," but if I had tried to use it that way at that time I'd have been ridiculed. Now, however, the dictionaries have changed to reflect actual experience of the word. Similarly, a medical or legal definition is a paradigm set up at a certain time, but experiences occur and changes become necessary. Were this not the case, there would be no need for legislators; what comes down once would apply for all time.

But legal and medical definitions change; what's seen as true now isn't true—or is incompletely true—in the future. By removing exemptions, this bill would have the government enforce the currently defined paradigm, treating that paradigm as though it were eternal truth. It would attempt to define out of existence the personal experiences questioning that paradigm, and it's personal experiences that drive the ongoing and never ending search for truth, whether scientific truth or otherwise.

Have the courage not to exclude the questioners of the current paradigm from society. Learn from history: the questioners—"Does the sun really go around the earth?" "Shouldn't I be able to read the Bible in English?" "Does bleeding people really help cure them?" "Should doctors wash their hands before performing surgeries?" "Should I, a black woman, give up my seat on a bus to a white person?"—the questioners drive progress. And yet this bill would exclude from society the questioners and silence the questions, just as the legal and medical establishments current to all my examples tried to do in their day.

Every one of you legislators—left, right, or center—would vote against a state or federal constitution that disallowed change. That's because you all—center, right, and left—know that to enshrine current perceptions and paradigms as the truth for all time is to straitjacket humanity and human progress. By removing exemptions, this bill straitjackets Oregonians into a paradigm one group sees as true now, when that same group is supposedly dedicated to constant change and constant improvement. But how can it improve when it will not listen to and seeks to exclude those who question it? Do not give in to the hubris that says, "What we think now will always be" and that adds, "If you think differently, you can't be part of us." Do not give in to the tyranny of the medical moment. Do not vote for this bill.

James Bryant-Trerise

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