PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

House Democrats Vote to Protect and Expand Reproductive Health Care
HB 3391, the Reproductive Health Equity Act, passes 33-23

While the Trump Administration and Congressional Republicans in D.C. continue their efforts to slash access to women's health, Democrats in the Oregon House today stood up to preserve and expand comprehensive reproductive health care to all Oregonians.

House Bill 3391, the Reproductive Health Equity Act, ensures that all Oregonians receive the full range of preventative reproductive health services they need at zero out-of-pocket cost – regardless of their income, citizenship status, gender identity, or type of insurance.

"I believe that affordable access to reproductive health care shouldn't depend on who you are, where you live, or how much you earn," says Rep. Julie Fahey (D-West Eugene & Junction City). "Health care is a basic human right."

HB 3391 requires health insurance plans to cover a full range of contraceptive and preventative care without cost sharing, including STD screenings, certain cancer screenings, vasectomies, IUD insertion, and abortion.

It also requires that the Oregon Health Authority implement a program to reimburse the costs of reproductive health services to individuals who would be eligible for medical assistance if not for their immigration status. This program also includes coverage for 60 days of postpartum care, providing critical coverage to the 48,000 Oregonians who have coverage for labor and delivery that stops immediately after birth.

Over the course of several months, the legislature heard testimony from numerous Oregonians about the need for access to affordable reproductive health care, including from transgender and gender-nonconforming Oregonians who have been denied key coverage because of their gender identity. HB 3391 prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

"For people living paycheck to paycheck, denying coverage for abortion or birth control can jeopardize a family's financial security and push them deeper into poverty," says House Majority Leader Jennifer Williamson (D-SW & NW Portland). "I believe this bill makes sure all Oregonians have affordable access to the care they deserve in order to make decisions about their health."

Republican-led legislatures in other states have been cutting reproductive care through draconian budget cuts and legislation making it harder for women to access critical services. Republican politicians in Washington D.C. are attempting to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which would cause Oregonians to lose no-cost preventative reproductive health care and essential benefits. With HB 3391, Oregon will be moving boldly in the opposite direction, protecting and expanding access.

"When everyone in our community has access to health care—including contraception, reproductive health services like STD diagnosis and treatment, pre- and post-partum care, and abortion—it improves the health of individuals, families, and entire communities," says Rep. Jeff Barker (D-Aloha), a retired police officer and chief sponsor of the bill. "When people are healthy, they're able to work, able to care for their families, and are spending less money on emergency services. This benefits them individually, but it also benefits the economies of our local communities. Communities in which prosperity is widespread are communities with less crime, less violence, and less turmoil."

The Reproductive Health Equity Act passed 33-23 and will now be taken up by the Senate.

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