

**JEFF HELFRICH**  
**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
DISTRICT 52



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

May 1, 2023

Timothy G. Sekerak  
Chief Clerk of the House  
State Capitol Building  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Vote Explanation on HB 2002

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

Today, I voted “no” today on House Bill 2002-B.

There are many parts of this bill that I have problems with, but my biggest issue is this bill strips parents of their right to be involved in their child’s life-altering medical decisions.

There are bad parents in our state. I don’t deny that. But the overwhelming majority parents are good and try to do right by their children. Just because we may disagree with how someone raises their child does not mean the parents are neglectful, abusive, or dangerous.

To quote Chief Justice Berger when writing the opinion of the court in *Parham v. J.R.*, 442 U.S. 584 (1979):

*“The law’s concept of the family rests on a presumption that parents possess what a child lacks in maturity, experience, and capacity for judgment required for making life’s difficult decisions. More important, historically it has recognized that natural bonds of affection lead parents to act in the best interests of their children.*

*The statist notion that governmental power should supersede parental authority in all cases because some parents abuse and neglect children is repugnant to American tradition.*

*Simply because the decision of a parent is not agreeable to a child or because it involves risks does not automatically transfer the power to make that decision from the parents to some agency or officer of the state.”*

I believe the best people to raise a child are the parents, not the state. In my opinion, House Bill 2002-B removes parental involvement and awareness from important situations. I support children, parents and families over the government which is why I voted “no” on House Bill 2002-B.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Helfrich  
State Representative, House District 52