

## Senate passes bill to require employee health insurance to cover birth control costs

by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources

Legislation will also provide emergency contraception option for victims of sexual assault

SALEM, Ore. - The Oregon Senate this week passed House Bill 2700, legislation that will require birth control coverage in employee health insurance plans that offer prescription drug coverage and provide access to emergency contraception in the emergency room for women who are victims of sexual assault.

“For too long women have been denied health insurance coverage for the cost of birth control,” said Senate Majority Leader Kate Brown (D-Portland). “This bill simply provides women with fairness and equity for prescription drug coverage.”

Included in House Bill 2700 is the option for victims of sexual assault to receive emergency contraception in any hospital in Oregon. One in six Oregon women has experienced sexual assault in their lifetime.

“Women need access to every tool available to deal with one of the most traumatic experiences they can face,” said Senator Ginny Burdick (D-Portland). “This bill is about compassion and caring when dealing with sexual assault.”

“As a nurse, I have seen what this will mean for victims of sexual assault,” said Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham). “This is an essential piece of legislation for women’s health.”

Contraceptive equity has been addressed in the legislature in previous sessions, but never passed both chambers.

“It is amazing to me that we had to wait until 2007 to pass this legislation,” said Senator Vicki Walker (D-Eugene). “After years of work, the day for contraceptive equity is here.”

“For over a decade as a House and Senate member, I have worked on this issue,” said Senator Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin). “I take great pride in its passage.”

House Bill 2700 will now move to the Governor’s desk for his signature.

*Senate passes bill to require employee health insurance to cover birth control costs by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources*