

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass
Vote: 7 - 0 - 0
Yeas: Cowan, Gelsner, Gilliam, Kotek, Maurer, Olson, Tomei
Nays: 0
Exc.: 0
Prepared By: Andy Smith, Administrator
Meeting Dates: 5/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires employers to grant unpaid leave for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking for purposes of obtaining protective orders or other safety measures. Declares emergency, effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Seriousness of domestic violence across United States and Oregon
- Financial plight faced by victims who lose jobs while dealing with domestic violence
- Appropriate length of time for unpaid leave and “reasonable” language in measure
- Undue hardship exception for employer
- Positive impact for employers because of reduced long-term employees absences

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Currently, employers with six or more employees must allow a crime victim to take unpaid leave for the purposes of attending a criminal prosecution. Senate Bill 946 requires employers with six or more employees to grant unpaid leave for victims of domestic or sexual violence or stalking for purposes of obtaining legal or law enforcement help, obtaining medical attention, obtaining services of a domestic violence shelter or rape crisis center, psychological counseling or relocation.

National data related to the receipt of welfare indicates that more than 50 percent of women receiving welfare have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime. These studies show that up to 30 percent of women receiving welfare are currently in domestic violence situations.

Senate Bill 946 is very similar a 2003 victim’s right bill (Senate Bill 610), which afforded victims of crimes similar unpaid leave provisions.