

Testimony in support of HB 3390  
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April 2, 2013

Chair Dougherty and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my views on HB 3390. Since I can not attend the hearing in person, I am submitting my testimony in writing.

I have worked at my current job as a dispatcher for a cab company for 13 years, and before that I drove a cab for seven years, mostly with one company. But still, after all these years, I only get paid sick leave after I've already been out sick for three days. I can't afford to not get paid for three days, so if I get sick, I take medications to mask the symptoms, and I go to work sick. It's hard to get better this way but I have no choice because I can't afford to lose a day's wages.

As you know, this is a terrible year for colds and flu. When I caught the chest cold that was going around, I had to work. It's difficult to answer phones when I can barely talk, with coughing fits that last up to five minutes. Not to mention all the germs I was spreading. Had I had sick time from the first day of my illness, I could have stayed home and gotten over the worst of it before returning to work.

And it's not just me. Where I work, lots of people come to work sick because they can't afford to stay home. There are single parents and families for whom missing a day's wages means going without food. This isn't right. Everyone needs to be able to take paid sick leave when they're sick – on the first day they're sick.

The working people of Oregon want and need paid sick days. I hope you will act on behalf of us all by supporting HB 3390.