



The House Committee on Rules

Dear Chair Garrett and Members of the Committee,

My name is Caitlin Baggott, I am the Executive Director of the Bus Project and I am writing in support of Earned Sick Days, or HB 3390-2. The Bus Project engages young people as volunteers on issues that matter to our generation.

Recently, Portland passed Earned Sick Days into law, a win we that were involved in and very excited about. Last summer our volunteers collected letters from thousands of Portland residents in support of earned sick days. We heard in conversation after conversation that young workers are passionately interested in this issue.

Oregon is home to over half a million young people live aged 20-29 who work, play and vote here. And, as it turns out, of the 80% of all low-wage workers who do not have access to earned sick days, those half a million young people are disproportionately impacted this reality. In turn, this puts those new to the work force at a double disadvantage: they have limited economic flexibility as few have created a financial safety net so early in their careers.

Some may imagine that young people have less responsibility or are supported by parents but his is not the case. In 2010, people under the age of 35 represented  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the overall work force. And they're not working to buy lattes and concert tickets. They're saving to start a family or care for the family they have. In Oregon, the average age of motherhood is 25. These are not young people with no responsibilities, these are young workers with significant, and often overwhelming, responsibilities. Working and raising a family without the ability to earn time off when illness strikes can have a lifelong negative impact on both the parent and the child.

The current system disadvantages an already struggling demographic who make up the majority of the low-wage workforce. Earned sick days provides a cushion for those facing incredibly tough choices between their health, their child, or their job.

At the Bus Project, I employ a dozen permanent staff who are generally young. We're a non-profit, and we operate on a modest budget and I can tell you that offering paid time off has not had a negative impact on our work or our budget. It leads to a more focused, effective and healthier workplace. The earned sick days policy requirements for Oregon businesses are small compared to the positive impact that would result: improved public health, productivity and job stability, and improved economic security.

I urge you to support the next generation of Oregon by supporting this common sense public interest policy, HB 3390-2 Thank you for your time.

---

*Innovative Democracy for Our Generation*

busprojectfoundation.org ★ 333 se second ave ★ portland, oregon 97214