



*Experience.* AT YOUR SIDE.

To the Government Affairs Director of Family Forward Oregon:

My name is Marie Laper. My address is 2158 NW Mazama Drive in Corvallis. I am a social worker, licensed in the State of Oregon, and work for Willamette Valley Hospice. I am the manager of the Bereavement Program. I have worked in mental health, counseling crisis and grief work for over 25 years.

I am writing to express my support of HB 2950, the Family Bereavement Leave. As I sat down to write this letter, we had gotten a request to call someone, who 's loved one died on Monday unexpectedly in the home. She called our agency requesting bereavement support for herself and her three children who witnessed attempts to save the life on her loved one. She couldn't talk today (Wednesday) because she was at work. She asked that we call tomorrow.

This is an example of the many stories we here throughout the year; people who are experiencing grief , and who are mourning, but for a variety of reasons, are unable to take the time from work to be with their family and loved ones, to attend to the very things that make this transition easier: time to prepare for the end of life rituals, time to provide support to one another, to remember the deceased in a way that can help them to return to a "new normal" without their loved one. We know that delaying appropriate grief can have long lasting effects on one phsycially as well as emotionally.

I support HB 2950, and request a hearing on this important bill that will afford loved ones have the opportunity to attend to basic loss-related activities. People who take advantage of this benefit, will return to work better prepared to meet their work responsibilities. They will be less distracted, and less prone to accidents, errors, and be more productive overall.

Allowing people to mourn, and to grieve is the right thing to do. It demonstrates the compassion for our friends, families, co-workers that is fundamental to our culture.

Thank you for your consideration.