



Amigos
Multicultural Services Center
PROMOTING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

February 16, 2015

To: Senate Workforce and House Business and Labor Committees

From: Amigos Multicultural Services Center and youth members of its youth group Juventud FACETA

Re: Support of SB454 and HB2005

Dear Chairs Dembrow and Holvey and Committee Members,

Amigos MSC's mission is to promote respect for the human rights of immigrants from Latin America, particularly youth and young adults, whose dignity and capabilities have been challenged by poverty, unjust treatment, and social exclusion. Our vision is a society in which Latino immigrant communities receive just and equitable treatment, and experience both respect and inclusion when interacting with institutions that have been insensitive to their needs and their human dignity. We work to achieve this by providing a platform from which marginalized Latino members of the community can be raised above the methods of oppression that exist in our community.

The Board of Directors of Amigos and Youth members in Juventud FACETA believe in the right of people earning paid sick time. All families in the state deserve access to time to recover from illness or to take care of children when they are sick. The reality is that not all employers offer paid sick time to their workers and won't do it unless there is a law requires them to do it.

Latino immigrant families value the importance of hard work and teach their children of it – but then we see our families working hard and not get something as basic as paid sick days. In the current economic climate, in which 30% of Latinos in Oregon are living in poverty, paid sick leave could make a huge difference for our families.

We know that this is an issue that affects all communities, however among Latino workers in Oregon – our parents, aunts, uncles, neighbors and friends – 66% have no paid sick time. And yes, this has profound effects on our families' capacity to pay the rent, keep food on the table, stay healthy, and even keep our kids in school.

Our families are a part of Oregon and we deserve to live with dignity, including when we get sick, just like everyone else. Unless there is a law to equalize the playing field creating fairness there will be too many without time for self-care or able to care for their sick family members. Please pass paid sick time legislation now.

Sincerely,

Maria Mendez,
Amigos Board President
Juventud FACETA graduate

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“We can't prepare the future for our youth, but we can prepare our youth for the future”.
President Roosevelt



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