

February 16, 2015

To: Senate Workforce and House Business and Labor Committees
From: Anjeanette Brown
Re: Support of SB454 and HB2005

Dear Chairs Dembrow and Holvey and Committee Members,

I wish I could be at the hearing to testify in person but unfortunately I can not afford to take the time off work. I work as a waitress at a restaurant in Gresham that is part of a large chain. I have worked with the parent company for 10 years, off and on. Before that I worked in construction, telecommunications, restaurants, transit, and child care. I have three children. I have never had a single paid sick day.

A few years ago, when I was working in construction, I sprained my ankle badly and couldn't go to work for a week. I didn't have any paid sick days, so I lost a whole week's pay -- which meant I wasn't able to pay all my bills and wasn't able to pay for gas. It took a month for me to catch up on my bills.

I also had to go back to work before my ankle was healed, because I just couldn't afford to take any more time without pay. After a few hours of working each day, my ankle was really swollen and painful. My injury never fully healed and I still have problems related to it, despite having changed jobs.

A single mother of three sons, I also struggle to care for them when *they* get sick. Earlier this winter, when my youngest got the flu, one of my older sons had to stay home from school to care for him. His high school would excuse the absence, but my employer would not. And I couldn't afford to take the time away from work anyway.

Paid sick days would have made a big difference to me in these situations. Please pass HB 2005 and SB 454. The hard-working people of Oregon deserve this basic protection.