



February 16, 2015

To: Senate Workforce and House Business and Labor Committees
From: Bill Dickey, Owner, Morel Ink
Re: Support of SB454 and HB2005

Dear Chairs Dembrow and Holvey and Committee Members,

My Name is Bill Dickey I am the co-owner of Morel Ink a commercial printing, direct mail, and promotional products distributor, located in NE Portland, and a member of the Main Street Alliance of Oregon's Statewide Leadership Circle. We have approximately 30 employees; our 16 production employees are covered by a union contract. I am in full support, and proud of Portland's Paid Sick Leave ordinance. I support House Bill 2005 and Senate Bill 454, to create a statewide Paid Sick Leave standard.

My first reaction to the paid sick leave proposal was that we probably already offered this to our employees. I knew we did not dock our salaried employees for missed sick days, after researching our union contract I learned that we did not offer sick pay per say. We do offer vacation pay, holiday pay & funeral pay, and was grateful to learn that if I offered paid vacation or what is known as earned paid time off, I was already covered by the ordinance. We offer one weeks paid vacation after one year of employment, which builds up to 3 weeks paid vacation after 5 years of employment. What we did not have was a specific plan on how to accrue the time off for the first year, with the Portland ordinance we now have a rule for how to give out paid time off in the first year as they earn it, so that is actually helpful.

I have always believed that employees who are sick should stay home. I want to avoid the flu or cold from rolling through the company whenever possible. But more over I want employees to feel that it is cool to take a day when they need it for any reason, it builds loyalty, trust, and goodwill. There are plenty of times I ask them for an extra effort so is only seems fair to give back when they need it.

I am here today to request that the State of Oregon pass this policy statewide. It would end confusion for suburban Portland employers who have employees working in Portland. It would also end confusion from various entities having various policies. I think this policy is the right thing to do, for people who think this is big government telling them what to do, I think of this analogy... Workers comp insurance is a mandatory rule; all employers have to provide this coverage to their employees. Years ago it was not mandatory but now it is. This policy will be like that - in few years people will just think that it is a forgone rule, something that is just done. Finally for all of us who already offer this benefit, it levels the playing field so that we all play by the same rulebook and have the same basic benefit expenses.

One other thing of interest is that I thought I was offered paid time off when I was in the restaurant business, over 30 years ago! I realize this is hearsay...but out of curiosity, I contacted my former employer, who is still in the restaurant business and asked him if my recollection was correct. He informed me that my memory was correct that they offered paid vacation when I was a manger and still do today, so this ordinance will not affect their restaurants in the state either. Thank You.

Bill Dickey