



February 16, 2015

To: Senate Workforce and House Business and Labor Committees  
From: Dr. Mark Gabriel, Owner, The Wellness Center, Portland  
Re: Support of SB454 and HB2005

Dear Chairs Dembrow and Holvey and Committee Members,

My name is Dr. Mark Gabriel, I own and practice at The Wellness Center, based in NE Portland, and have 4 employees. We are a chiropractic center that offers treatment for spine-related issues such as back pain, neck pain, and sciatica injury rehabilitation. We offer additional wellness services including massage therapy and an effective weight loss program. At The Wellness Center, we take personal interest in our patients and care about their complete health, so an issue like paid sick days is very important to me. I am writing today in full support of HB 2005 & SB 454, creating a state-wide paid sick days standard for all employers.

Being a doctor, individual and public health are constantly on my mind. I've seen first hand the consequences that we must face as a community when illness spreads. When employees don't have access to paid sick days, and are forced to choose between paying bills and going to work sick, there is a serious public health risk.

Millions of people may have been infected with the H1N1 virus by co-workers who came to work sick. Like other health codes, this is an area that affects all of us as a community and requires a minimum standard. The vast majority of workers with no access to paid sick days are those working closely with the public, handling food, or caring for our loved ones—this poses a very serious risk of spreading illness.

Further more, it's a healthy equity issue. All workers—no matter where they work—should be able to care for themselves and their dependent family members when routine illness strikes—and still pay their bills.

Since I have less than 5 employees, currently my business is required by Portland law to provide protected time to my staff, but I choose to provide paid sick days. In SB 454 & HB 2005, I see that the standard is the same for all employers, regardless of size, and I support that. After all, everyone gets sick now and then, and still needs to be able to pay all of their bills each month—no matter what size business you work at.

Please make the right choice for Oregon, our small businesses, friends and families. Please pass HB 2005/SB 454 and make sure that no Oregonian needs to make the impossible choice of going to work sick and keeping food on the table.

Thank you,  
Dr. Mark Gabriel  
The Wellness Center