



February 16, 2015

To: Senate Workforce and House Business and Labor Committees
From: Sabrina Parsons, CEO, Palo Alto Software, Eugene
Re: Support of SB454 and HB2005

Dear Chairs Dembrow and Holvey and Committee Members,

As a board member of the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce, Chief Executive Officer of Palo Alto Software and its 52 incredible Eugene-based employees, a member of the Main Street Alliance of Oregon Executive Team, and a mother, I couldn't be more pleased that our state is seriously considering a paid sick time policy for Oregon. HB2005 and SB454 have my full support.

HB 2005 & SB 454 are smart policies that make it possible for people to stay home from work when they're sick, need to see the doctor or care for a sick loved one. Without a common sense standard, too many of our friends and neighbors are forced to work sick, skip that doctor's appointment, and send sick kids to school because they can't afford to miss a day's pay.

To be frank, I don't think that's the kind of community we are. I think Oregon is the kind of community where employers and employees alike are treated with respect — a way of thinking and doing that makes for a healthier Oregon where employers succeed in part because their employees can succeed.

At Palo Alto Software, we know from experience that recognizing our employees as whole people with responsibilities outside of work — and providing them the tools to manage work and life — isn't just the right thing to do; it's critical to inspiring great work and keeping turnover low. The truth for us has been: When you treat workers with respect and help them do great work, that's what you get in return — great work.

There long have been those who, when faced with change, predict the sky will fall and never fail to claim that now is not the right time. Historically, that happened in discussions over health and safety regulations, child-labor laws, and limits to how many hours are safe to work — all of which we now see as important, common sense policies. Time and again, these unproven scare tactics are trotted out to stand in the way of positive change, yet they never prove true in the end.

Experience with sick time laws in other places once again shows these claims to be false. Fact is, workers are underusing their allotted time, businesses aren't flocking to other locales, new businesses continue to open, and economies continue to grow — with sick time in place! San Francisco instituted a similar policy in 2007, and seven years later, although full-time employees can earn up to nine sick days, the median taken per year is actually only three days. Which doesn't surprise me one bit. And importantly, in those forward-thinking places that

already have adopted paid sick time, people are healthier and better able to care for their own and their children's health without risking their financial security or getting fired for staying home ill.

I'm excited for Oregon to be taking this very positive step into a more prosperous future where everyone in our community has access to paid sick time for those inevitable times when a cold or the flu or a well-child visit requires time off work.

Let's be a leader in the United States and declare that it's time all businesses take care of all of our workers.

It the right thing to do, and that's just the kind of state we are.

Thank you,
Sabrina Parsons
Palo Alto Software