



Representative Paul Holvey  
Chair, House Committee on Business and Labor  
900 Court St NE, H-277  
Salem OR 97301

February 13, 2015

The Elders in Action Commission is a senior advocacy council that advises the City of Portland, Multnomah County and the Department of Aging and Disabilities on elder issues and services in Oregon. As such, we support affordable, high quality health services for older adults and adults with disabilities. The Elders in Action Commission supports SB 454 and HB 2005, requiring all employers to implement paid sick time for all employees.

An alarmingly high number of Oregonians (47%), working in the private sector, do not earn sick time. For many, this means they are forced to attend work, exposing others to illness. Adults without paid sick time are 1.5 times more likely to go to work sick – where they can infect co-workers and clients. Workers are 60 percent less productive when working from the office while sick and people with the flu who don't stay home cause their co-workers to take 20 to 30 percent more sick days.

In other cases, workers must leave sick children or aging parents home unattended. The latter increases the anxiety and decreases the productivity of the worker while leaving ailing family members alone for long periods of time.

Finally, lower wage earners are much less likely to have sick leave. Less than 30% of Oregonians making \$20,000 a year or less have sick leave available to them. At this wage level, any action that might jeopardize employment is avoided.

We strongly urge you to pass a sick leave bill during this legislative session. We believe that Oregon workers of all ages and their families will benefit from available sick leave.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Gentile". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Bill Gentile  
Chair  
Elders in Action Commission