



February 16, 2015

Testimony before the House and Senate Committees on HB 2005 and SB 454

Chair Holvey and Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committees,

My name is Brittany Quick-Warner and I am the Director of Business Advocacy for the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce. I am also the co-owner, with my husband, of a small business in Eugene.

Nearly a year ago the Local Government Affairs Council of the Eugene Chamber of Commerce heard from paid sick leave advocates and local employment attorneys on the benefits and challenges of a paid sick leave ordinance that was eventually passed in Eugene in July of 2014.

In conversations remarkably similar to the ones you have had today, our community and our Chamber deliberated over the impacts of this potential ordinance on employees and employers in our area. The Eugene Chamber, with the direction of our members, ultimately opposed the local sick leave ordinance. In multiple surveys conducted over the period of several months, it was clear that- just as in employment policies- the reactions and concerns from employers and employees were not one-size-fits-all.

As the ordinance was drafted and administrative rules were created one of the biggest and most obvious concerns that surfaced was the differing regulations from city to city when it came to employment policies.

Many of you, if not all of you are likely familiar with our neighboring community "just across the bridge". Despite our "Great Divorce" the Eugene and Springfield communities are still intimately connected as are the governments, businesses and the employees who live and work there. While many relationships can be categorized as "complicated" the Eugene paid sick leave ordinance has made the relationship for Eugene and Springfield businesses unnecessarily complicated. Tracking employees as they travel in and out of Eugene- as implied by Commissioner Fritz from Portland in her earlier testimony- is bound to be time consuming, and extremely administratively burdensome.

If state legislators believe that a statewide law mandating paid sick days is the best thing for the State of Oregon, then we urge you to please simplify this bill and protect the businesses in our state by not allowing local jurisdictions to implement their own laws.

As I listened to the invited testimony throughout the day, many of our concerns with the Eugene ordinance were expressed by businesses and representatives from Portland.

- Tracking for these ordinances is complicated and will impact businesses that already provide the benefit being mandated.
- Accruing sick leave in increments of one hour per 30 hours worked is inconsistent with most employment policies that currently exist.
- Allowing for use of time in one hour increments leaves employers vulnerable to abuse and scheduling conflicts.
- For many small businesses, the biggest cost will come from investing in tracking systems and administering the reporting and notice requirements.

Unlike some advocates suggested throughout the process of building our ordinance, a paid sick leave bill will have a significant impact to many of the businesses in our state.

As a small business owner myself, I found it frustrating and offensive when someone suggested how significant or not this law would be on business. Having put thousands of hours and sleepless nights in to making sure we can pay the bills at the end of the month and provide the services we are passionate about providing, it is hard to swallow when someone else tells you what is and isn't significant to your business. Providing paid sick leave for employees will have an impact, whether large or small, significant or insignificant, on most if not all employers in Oregon. I urge you all to respect that fact and work hard to compromise with advocates and opponents to create policies with employees and employers and not just for them.

Thank you.

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