

March 30, 2015

Senate Workforce Committee

I am writing this to ask you to support SB 470. Unemployment for classified school employees.

I am a 57 year old single woman who has worked for my district for 17 years. I love my job and I choose to do this job because I believe that the students are our future and that I DO make a difference. A lot of time I/We are the only constant in many childrens' lives and when they see me they are in a safe environment. Classified employees are some of the only resources that teacher and parents have to alleviate the effects of large classroom, budget cuts and limited resources that have taken place in the past years.

Not only are classroom resources tight but so are mine especially during the Summer months (10-12 weeks)

I have worked hard all my life yet I do not have the same rights that other Oregonians employees have. The reason I do not have the this right is because I choose to work with children, our future, and choose to do this in the public sector. There is not any other employee in Oregon that is told that they can not get unemployment during their off season. This is Discrimination.

People say get a Summer job. Easier said that done. Employers want students not people of my age and they don't want to hire just for 10-12 weeks.

In the past I have relied on my tax returns and my ability to save a little money during the regular school year, about a total of \$2,000.00, to get me through the Summer. I also would work Summer school for my district. In recent years due to cut backs, no COLAS, the rise in the cost of insurance and the district using college interns for Summer school (They do not have to pay the interns) I have not been able to save enough to get me through the 10-12 weeks of the Summer.

Summer vacation does not mean my obligations also take a vacation. It just means I have to rely on State subsidies ie: food stamps and other resources. I also put off paying some of my obligations which I try to catch up on for 3-4 months after I get back to work. I will scatter my bills. Pay water and not electric then the following month pay part of the electric and put off the water until the last minute. I will pay very little on my house payment and put off my insurance until the following month. This is how my vacation goes. Very stressful time.

Vacation! Not for me. You spend your vacation with friends and family and having fun. I spend mine trying to make ends meet. I use to be able to go camping and fishing and spend time with my grandchildren. Due to the cost of traveling and other expenses I no longer can do this. I see my grandchildren less and less because of the cost. If I had unemployment I would be able to make the trips during the Summer months. Vacation-not for me.

It seems to me it would be more cost effective to let us collect unemployment and pay taxes on it instead of me collecting public assistance. We do not want a handout we just want equality.

I ask you to please allow me to have the same opportunity that every other employee in Oregon has. Vote yes on SB 470

Thank you  
Gloria Lundin  
Oregon Classified Employee