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May 5, 2015

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means
From: Salem Area Chamber of Commerce (SACC) Board of Directors
Re: Position on Compulsory Sick Leave – Senate Bill 454 – A Engrossed

To Co-Chairs Bates, Nathanson, and members of the subcommittee:

The SACC has been in existence since 1884 to protect the basic principles on which free market enterprise was established. As such, *we ask ourselves one central question* when determining our position on proposed legislation:

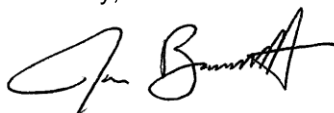
“Will this legislation strengthen or hinder the ability of the private sector to grow and create jobs for area residents?”

The SACC opposes SB 454 for the following reasons:

- SB 454 will force some business owners to cut other costs in order to pay for the benefit, potentially including payroll layoffs and/or hiring freezes.
- SB 454 quietly nullifies the fundamental and historic responsibility and right of a business owner to run their organization as they see fit, and to offer the benefits they can afford commensurate with what the marketplace will bear.
- SB 454 would place the entire burden of program cost on the business owner. Many we have surveyed who do not currently offer this benefit would like to provide paid sick leave to their employees but do not as a matter of affordability.
- SB 454 unfairly targets some of the Chamber’s smallest, most vulnerable business members by requiring that small businesses adhere to new regulatory policies decided for them by government.
- SB 454 still does not require a reasonable employee “investment” in their job or with their current employer before eligibility to accrue and / or use paid sick time begins. A longer investment in the job would be prudent before mandated paid sick leave accrues. We believe this will assist in avoiding abuse of any adopted statewide policy.
- SB 454 is written without reasonable, real time checks and balances that would allow a business owner to ensure that potentially costly benefits requests are legitimate before labor and productivity losses are incurred.

We realize that Compulsory Sick Leave remains a priority policy issue within the 2015 Legislative Assembly. We remain opposed to government mandating benefits provided by private employers to employees. We believe this direction to be a slippery slope that compromises Oregon’s economic competitiveness. Please oppose SB 454 as amended.

Sincerely,



Chief Executive Officer
Salem Area Chamber of Commerce



President
Salem Area Chamber of Commerce