



Tom Chamberlain, *President*
Barbara Byrd, *Secretary-Treasurer*

3645 SE 32nd Ave,
Portland, OR 97202
www.oraficio.org

503-232-1195

afl-cio@oraficio.org

TO: Chair Dembrow
Senate Committee on Workforce and General Government

FR: The Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: **Opposition to SB 1594, and any rollbacks to Oregon's sick time law**

February 16, 2016

The Oregon AFL-CIO, representing over 300,000 working Oregonians, is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. We are proud to have been part of both the Fair Shot for All Coalition and the Everybody Benefits Coalition that worked so hard last session to ensure workers can afford to stay home when they are sick, and when a family member is sick.

Oregon paved the way for workers during the 2015 Legislature in passing our sick time law, SB 454. The bill before you, SB 1594, represents an unnecessary rollback of a policy that has barely taken effect. As we learned through the last legislative session, paid sick time is a workplace policy that is desperately needed across the state. We heard stories of workers forced to choose between taking care of their sick kids and being able to afford their prescriptions. This is not the Oregon we purport to be, nor a reality we should go back to.

SB 1594 allows an employer to deduct the value of sick time from an employee's overall compensation package on public works projects. SB 1594 would take away a right that workers on public works projects have already obtained (as of January 1, 2016) and goes against the legislative intent of the sick time law. Protecting all workers, their families, coworkers and consumers from spreading illness and disease or losing out on much needed pay is something that this legislature sought to remedy when passing SB 454 last year.

In addition, many construction workers change employers frequently as work demands necessitate. For these workers, they could be penalized several times over the course of a year and have sick time deducted by multiple employers even if they never get to use that sick time.

We have significant concerns about any efforts to undercut the rights provided to Oregon workers under SB 454 in 2015.

The Oregon AFL-CIO strongly opposes SB 1594, and any efforts to undermine Oregon's sick time law.