

From the desk of:
Representative Shemia Fagan
SB 1532

Julie, 36, Clackamas
House District 51
Janitor

My name is Julie, I am 36 years old, and I work as a janitor at the airport. I get paid \$11 an hour, but for what I do and the knowledge I have, I deserve more.

At work, I take care of 15 gates. This means taking out the trash, wiping them down, making sure the carpet's clean, among other things. I've got three operations downstairs that I take care of, too. If they need something done or supplies or their trash, I take care of it. I take care of one of the flight lounges, too; I go in there four times at specific times and freshen up their bathrooms and gather up their trash. I make three to four trips to the compactor a day, I make three trips to my gates, and if we're short a person, I've got to take care of them to. And I do this in an 8 hour shift. I've trained numerous people, I know what everything needs to be taken care of, the difference between night shift and day shift, I've worked all of the areas – you name it, I've done it all.

I feel overworked and underpaid.

I live with my husband and my two teenage daughters in Clackamas. My husband works for the same company I do, but he isn't working right now because he was injured on the job. He isn't receiving any worker's compensation, so we are living on just my income – I pay our rent, electricity, phone bill, and for the little food we can afford. I do get health care through the state, and we get a small amount of food stamps, but it's still not enough for the four of us. I personally eat once a day – that's it.

Everything's getting so expensive – prices of gas food rent, everybody's just raising everything. And we can't afford it. They need to raise our pay so we can actually afford the basics. I have a family to support, so it'd be nice to be able to take care of them, and support them without having to struggle or see anybody go without the basic essentials. Basic things like food, hygiene products - like deodorant, shampoo, and body soap. Clothes, too. My dad helps me out with things like clothes and the kids' school supplies, because I can't afford it on my own. My kids are troopers. They are down to earth, that's the way I've raised them. We go Goodwill and thrift store shopping – they love it. They appreciate everything that they get.

If I made more money, I'd love to take them on vacation, and to go out and do more stuff with them. Maybe take them out to a decent meal, or take them out to a movie, or go camping or do something fun.