



March 8, 2017

Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Knopp, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kevin Billman; I am the Director of Legislative and Community Action for the United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 555.

UFCW represents nearly 24,000 workers in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Our members work in several industries including retail, meatpacking, and health care. We are a diverse group of workers that have grown into being the largest private sector labor union in Oregon. We respectfully urge you to oppose SB 779 to rollback paid sick days in Oregon.

Local 555 worked tirelessly to pass sick time ordinances in both Portland and Eugene, and ultimately in one coalition to pass a strong and inclusive statewide paid sick time law for Oregon workers during the 2015 session. This law is meant to ensure that workers are able to take paid time off when they or a family member are ill. We see this as an important public health measure and as a basic right that all workers should have.

All too often Oregon workers were going to work sick because they couldn't afford to take the time off or they feared retaliation – even losing their job - if they missed even one day of work because of illness. We are proud of this new law, which benefits hundreds of thousands of workers in our state who waited too long for this right.

Although SB 779 may be characterized as a simple technical fix, we respectfully disagree. We see it as a clear policy change. We see workers in Oregon who are currently eligible to receive paid sick time losing that eligibility. We see it as a roll back or elimination of paid sick time for workers in Oregon, and we are opposed. Indeed we are opposed to any changes to the new sick time law that roll back or eliminate protections for any worker in Oregon. If even a single worker loses access to paid sick time, we see that as too many. We believe we should all be

working together to expand the very basic rights we have achieved here in Oregon, not rolling them back.

We are hopeful that you will join us in opposing SB 779.

Thank you committee members for allowing me to share with you,

Kevin Billman  
Director of Legislative and Community Action  
UFCW Local 555