

Chair Lively and Members of the House Early Education and Family Support Committee,

My name is Helen Anderson and I live in McMinnville. I am a mother of 3, a registered nurse and the current Mrs. Oregon. Paid family leave is such an important one; I chose to make it my platform and topic of my visiting lectures when speaking to groups of community leaders in my role as Mrs. Oregon.

In 2016, at Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce events and leadership trainings I have shared the data for supporting paid family leave. The most common reactions to my presentation are surprise and disbelief at our lack of support for new families. When I present a map of the world with the countries without a paid family leave policy (US, Papua New Guinea and Swaziland) highlighted, listeners are shocked. In small towns and urban areas, I have seen the support for a paid family leave policy.

The data is compelling -a 2016 study in PLOS examined data from 300,000 births in 20 countries.

- Each month of paid maternity leave results in 7.9 fewer infant deaths per 1000.
- Children are 22-25% more likely to have well child visits and vaccinations on schedule.
- Non-parental care quality is variable, especially for very young babies.

California has had paid family leave since 2004. Data collected at the 10 year mark showed women returning to work after paid leave are 39% less likely to be receiving public assistance. Mothers with paid leave available are 93% more likely to return to that same job. The pay gap is also shrinks since mothers don't lose seniority and restart at the bottom of the pay scale each time she has a baby.

When mothers have the ability to return to work, instead of quitting, we all benefit – work force participation increases our tax base and reduces payouts for assistance. The financial rewards continue over the long term since more social security payments contributes to more financial security in advanced age – research shows motherhood is risk factor for poverty. A paid family leave policy would reduce this risk.

While the proposed policy addresses more than parental leave, that is the focus of my testimony and my experience as a speaker presenting. Oregon needs to join other progressive states that thoughtfully weighed the evidence and chose to support new moms and babies.

If you would like to review the data further, I would be happy to meet with anyone that wishes to discuss.

Helen Anderson, MSN-Ed, BSN, RN, CLE

Mrs. Oregon 2016