

Dear Representative Lively and committee,

My name is Rachel Jesequel and I live in Beaverton. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of SB3087.

My husband Kevin and I have a blended family. The birth of our daughter two years ago was very difficult and left me incapacitated for about a week with great difficulty to walk.

Kevin was only able to take two days off to be with me in the hospital. If he had not returned to work after those two days, he would have been replaced. We live paycheck to paycheck as it is, and our family could not afford for him to take unpaid leave and certainly could not afford for him to lose his job.

As it was, our medical bills for the birth were high and we were truly scared about losing everything. As a result our family had a very rough start with our new baby.

Our family was stressed because Kevin did not have the much needed time to bond with our baby nor was he able to support me in caring for our baby. I had a really difficult recovery from the birth, and it was very hard to take care of the baby myself. In addition to my physical pain, it was painful for me to witness Kevin not having the much needed bonding time with our new baby.

My husband works very hard outside our home and he loves his family. With paid family and medical leave, Kevin could have taken the time to support me in caring for our baby, and he would have had the very important bonding time. It would have made a big difference for the whole family if he could have been home to help. Kevin and I believe that it is very important for men to have paid family leave because it would change the whole dynamic of families. It would build a family bond from the beginning, and it would help to level the playing field in the work place because both men and women would be expected to take time off for a baby. It would also change children's lives, because fathers could be more involved. Many men like Kevin want to take time off work when their children are born but can't because of finances and fear of losing their jobs.

I am asking you on behalf of our entire family -- and all Oregon families -- to please support SB3087.

Thank you again for this opportunity of offer my testimony.