



March 20, 2017

Chair Paul Holvey  
House Committee on Business and Labor  
900 Court St. - State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon. My name is Stacy Cowan, I am with SEIU 503 and I'm here today to testify in support of HB 3060 on behalf of the 65,000 members of SEIU 49 and SEIU 503. SEIU has a long history of working to improve the contracting process through transparency, accountability and setting a high standard for contractors receiving public dollars.

SEIU represents both contracted employees by the state and state employees. In 2009, we supported legislation to require public contracting agencies to compare the anticipated cost to contract out with the cost to perform the work in-house on procurements for services worth more than \$250,000 dollars. The purpose of this legislation was to provide a system to ensure that we are being as efficient with taxpayer dollars as possible. We strongly believe that we should scrutinize how every tax dollar is spent and make sure companies that the state contracts with are transparent and have the same high standards for their employee's safety. This is critical to being good stewards of our public dollar. HB 3060 is a step in that direction towards protecting workers safety on the job.

**Sexual harassment, sexual assault, and discrimination are significant problems in Oregon workplaces.**

**Women in Oregon face the second highest frequency of rape and in sexual assault in the U.S., according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).**<sup>i</sup> The federal Bureau of Justice Statistics has found that eight percent of rapes in the U.S. occur while the victim is working.<sup>ii</sup> Some studies have estimated 5,000-17,000 sexual assaults in U.S. workplaces each year.<sup>iii</sup>

This is a huge problem that often remains hidden. **Too often, victims of workplace sexual violence feel that their employer is not prepared to hold perpetrators accountable. As a result, more than 60 percent of workplace rape and sexual assault cases go unreported,** according to an estimate by the Bureau of Justice Statistics. That's the lowest reporting rate among all violent crimes in the workplace.<sup>iv</sup>

How to reduce the risk of sexual assault, harassment and discrimination is not rocket science. **The solution begins with employers maintaining policies and practices to ensure employees and managers are trained, complaints are thoroughly investigated, and perpetrators are held accountable.**

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Public contracting should be a model of best practices in human resources and HB 3060 is a clear best practices standard in preventing workplace harassment and sexual assault. When contractors are paid with the public's funds, they should be held to a standard that protects the public's interest in safety and fairness. I urge your support of HB 3060 and I'm happy to answer any questions.

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<sup>i</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "National Intimate Partner Sexual Violence Survey," [https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf), accessed January 13, 2017, pp. 68-69.

And according to the Women's Foundation of Oregon, "An extrapolation of Oregon survey data from the Centers for Disease Control indicates that perpetrators have sexually assaulted over 1 million women and girls in Oregon—more than half of the state's female population."

"Count Her In: A Report About Women and Girls in Oregon." Women's Foundation of Oregon, September 2016. <https://womensfoundationoforegon.org/uploads/CountHerInreport.pdf>.

<sup>ii</sup> Duhart, D. (2001). Violence in the Workplace, 1993-99. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Available at <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/vw99.pdf>.

<sup>iii</sup> Chen, Helen, Alejandra Domenzain, and Karen Andrews. "The Perfect Storm: How Supervisors Get Away with Sexually Harassing Workers Who Work Alone at Night." Berkeley, CA: Labor Occupational Health Program, U.C. Berkeley, May 2016. <http://lohp.org/the-perfect-storm/>, accessed January 13, 2017, p. 4.

<sup>iv</sup> Harrell, Erika. "Workplace Violence, 1993-2009." U.S. Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, March 29, 2011. <https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=2377>.