

HB 3087 Paid Family Leave

Chair Lively and members of the committee:

The Oregon Women's Rights Coalition supports HB 2087. We recognize that women and men working in Oregon face hardships when they need to take time off to care for a family member.

This bill provides a needed element for those taking time off work to care for a loved one or a new family member: some financial help. Taking time off work without compensation is a luxury for very few Oregonians. Taking time off work without compensation is a hardship for most Oregon workers.

This bill provides a shared cost between the employer and the employee. As a former small business owner, I would have loved to have had the ability for one of my employees to take paid time off to care for her teen-age daughter.

A month after I agreed to be the Public Policy Advocate for OWRC in 2001 one of my three staff members called me and asked if we could meet after work. She didn't want to quit her job but her teenage daughter had just been diagnosed with melanoma. She didn't want the office to be impacted but she didn't know when she would be at work. We didn't have a paid family leave program which would have made it easier.

What we did have was flexibility. The staff and I all met together to discuss options. Dora didn't want to give up all her work time. With a three-person staff, I needed to be assured that no one on staff was left alone in the office. We decided we would place signs on the door and adjust hours so that we were closed one hour during the day to accommodate lunch breaks when Dora was unable to work.

If we would have had paid family leave in place, Dora could have been able to spend more quality time with her daughter during treatment and I would have been able to hire a temporary person to work with her clients.

Paid family leave would have been beneficial for Dora, her co-workers and the office. Because we did not have paid family leave we made do, but at a cost to all of us.

Please support paid family leave.

Marcia Kelley

Oregon Women's Rights Coalition