



Adelante Mujeres
Age and Gender Equity in the Arts
American Association of University
Women of Oregon
Clackamas Women's Services
Coalition for Equal Access for Girls
Domestic Violence Resource Center
Dress for Success Oregon
Emerge Oregon
Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest
Not OK PDX
Oregon CEDAW Coalition
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and
Sexual Violence
Oregon Commission for Women
Oregon NOW
Raphael House
Rock N Roll Camp for Girls
Saturday Academy
Stop Sexual Assault in Schools
YWCA of Greater Portland

ADDRESS

PO BOX 33530
PORTLAND, OR 97292

CONTACT

559.970.3769
541.326.9515
OREGONWEC@GMAIL.COM

OREGONWEC.COM

March 22, 2017

Chair Lively, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Women's Equity Coalition (OWEC) strongly supports the passage of the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act (HB 3087).

Founded in 2013, OWEC is dedicated to advancing equity for Oregon women and girls. Our 27+ membership is primarily organizations serving women and girls, as well as individuals dedicated to advancing gender equity. Our coalition is organized around core principles that determine how we prioritize our advocacy, convening, and collaboration efforts.

HB 3087 has the full support of OWEC because it directly reflects our commitment to advancing Economic Success:

By "economic success" we mean that all women and girls can independently meet their basic financial needs, their earning opportunities are not hindered by family responsibilities or societal norms, and they are supported to earn positions and the competitive salaries that accompany them.

Women still provide the majority of unpaid caregiving within the home, whether it is for a child or for an elderly parent. Women are also the primary or co-breadwinner in more than two-thirds of Oregon families. Without universal policies like paid family leave, women continue to face significant barriers to staying in the workforce and maintaining their earnings when family caregiving needs arise. This leads to both short-term and long-term economic insecurity, wage gaps, and wealth gaps for women and the families who rely upon them.

The wealth gap for women in Oregon is as wide as it is long. The Women's Foundation of Oregon states in their recent Count Her In report, "The gender wealth gap in Oregon is created and perpetuated by the state's wage gap, limited home ownership opportunities, barriers to workforce participation, discrimination, and the increased cost of family care. These realities compound year to year, generation to generation, and they form a wealth gap that cripples the financial resilience of Oregon women and their families."

OWEC members believe that it is time for Oregon to take note of the struggles women and families have when it comes to the responsibilities of caregiving. It is only through policy interventions like HB 3087 that we will begin to break the cycle of diminished opportunities for women to build wealth.

We urge you to stand with women and families and lend your support to this bill.

Rebecca Alexander & Jodi Ballard-Beach
Co-Chairs, Oregon Women's Equity Coalition