



March 23, 2017

Chair Lively and members of the House Early Childhood and Family Supports Committee:

On behalf of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of OR, we respectfully request your support for HB 3087, the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act.

We are committed to promoting the economic, social, and physical well being of all persons. In order to bring this goal to reality, we have worked toward assuring greater availability and access to benefits and policies that promote work-life balance.

Because so many Oregonians work and are also caregivers — for children and spouses but also for aging parents and grandparents — family and medical leave is key to employees' success in the workplace. A significant portion of persons who experience long-term care needs rely exclusively on family and friends to provide care. It is also clear that the need for caregiving is not a problem that is going to go away, and in fact with the aging of our population, is only going to worsen.

Care-giving responsibilities also fall disproportionately on women. Women who are family caregivers are also 2.5 times more likely to live in poverty and five times more likely to receive Supplemental Security Income [Family Caregiver Alliance: National Center on Caregiving]. Healthy employees will also reduce unneeded reliance on public assistance.

Importantly, HB 3087 provides for a shared method of providing funds for family medical leave. Employees as well as employers make a contribution of the employee's salary into a pooled insurance fund managed by the state of Oregon. When benefits are sought, the employer need not intervene any further and wage replacement comes from the state fund. This process provides the employee an opportunity to care for a loved one, but also saves the employer time and money in having to manage wage payment.

AAUW of OR supports HB 3087 because it helps employees take care of themselves and their families, and helps employers thrive with productive, committed employees.

Sincerely,

Trish Garner
State Public Policy Chair
AAUW of OR
503-407-2341
garner37@mac.com