

Business Needs a More Reasonable Approach to Family Leave

Most businesses support the concept of family leave. Many already offer paid leave or disability insurance that can be used for extended family leave related absences. But HB 3087 overreaches and creates conditions that would make it costly and difficult for businesses – especially small ones – to plan and manage their operations.

- HB 3087 expands Oregon Family Leave Act protections to employers of all sizes. Current law applies only to employers with 25 or more workers. Leave requirement are especially hard on small businesses, because they have fewer options for replacing workers who are on leave.
- Employees could request leave to provide care for people outside their family, including “an individual whose close association to the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.” This is an ambiguous and subjective definition, which could easily be exploited.
- The conditions under which paid leave must be granted are extensive, including not only parental leave, military leave and caring for a family member with a serious health issues but also any other reason covered under the Oregon Family Leave Act. Combined with new paid sick leave benefits afforded to Oregon employees, Oregon’s traded sector employers, which directly compete with goods produced in other states, are in danger of being unable to compete because of the ever-increasing cost of labor in this state.
- The length of leave is overly burdensome to employers – 12 weeks, with an additional six weeks for parental leave. This could leave some small businesses short-staffed for much of the year.
- In contrast to most other states that mandate paid family leave, HB 3087 requires employers to pay for part of the program. Oregon employers have been subjected to several new employment mandates in the past two years, including paid sick time and minimum wage increases. Requiring additional payments and staffing considerations for family leave is **asking too much from businesses that already face higher costs than competitors in many states.**
- Employers will be required to file annual reports to the Department of Revenue on employee hours worked and amounts due to the family leave fund. The time required to do this is unduly burdensome, especially for small businesses that already are short-staffed.

Please consider a more limited program that balances the needs of employees and employers.

Associated Oregon Industries
National Federation of Independent Businesses
Northwest Food Processors Association
Oregon Association of Nurseries
Oregon Business Association
Oregon Homebuilders Association

Oregon Metals Industry Council
Oregon Plumbing, Heating & Cooling
Contractors
Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association
Oregon School Boards Association
Oregon State Chambers of Commerce

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