



April 3, 2017

Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Knopp, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kevin Billman; I am the Director of Legislative and Community Action for the United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 555 and I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 828 both -3 & -4 amendments.

We represent over 20,000 workers in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Our members work in several industries including retail, meatpacking, and health care. We are a diverse group of workers that have grown into being the largest private sector labor union in Oregon. We respectfully urge you to support Senate Bill 828-3-4 and provide working Oregonians with a Fair Work Week.

Far too often workers in Oregon, especially those in the retail, food service, and hospitality industries are being scheduled in a way that gives them little to no control over their life. Many receive work schedules with very little notice often less than a week, and sometimes as little as the same day. They have no say in their own work schedules. They do not know from week to week how many hours they will work or when those work hours will be. They do not know what their weekly paycheck will amount to. What their life schedule will be. When they will sleep. How they will take care of their family obligations. These inconsistent schedules are wreaking havoc on family lives and economic security.

Workers simply cannot realize the “American Dream” when they only have a few days notice of work schedule. When they don’t have a predictable paycheck. When they can’t schedule childcare or healthcare. When due to these employment practices they are unable to go to school, get a second job, or start their own business. Unfortunately many of these workers, although they would rather not, are forced to use our social safeguards like food stamps and Medicaid in order to survive. Employment is intended to lift people out of poverty and keep them off of our social safety net, not drive them into it. At least that is what the Oregon Primary School system taught me. Oregon taxpayers should not be

forced to foot the bill just because profitable corporations are trying to maximize profit, even when it means chaos for their workers.

Senate Bill 828-3-4 is a start toward solving these problems. This Fair Work Week proposal would bring stability to workers schedules while still allowing businesses the flexibility they need to operate. It gives workers more say in their schedules and more stability in their lives. Both employers and employees would have flexibility in scheduling. Senate Bill 828-3 incentivizes adequate notice of schedules and provides compensation for employee flexibility in situations where short notice schedule changes are necessary. It gives workers a reasonable number of hours between work shifts to rest, both for their health and for their safety. Senate Bill 828-3-4 provides the opportunity for workers who want to work more hours with their current employer the ability to actually receive those hours if they are available. It increases the possibility of workers moving toward full time employment, and potentially increased employment benefits.

Fair Work Week is about respect and dignity. It is about giving hard working Oregon families a sense of security, and leveling the playing field for employers who are already doing the right thing. It's about work-life balance. It's about a fair economy that works for all Oregonians, about finding ways to strike a balance between the needs of employee's and the needs of employer's. It's about moving workers off of the social safety net. It's about the "American Dream" and the ability of all Oregonians to achieve it. Today I'm here on behalf of the members of UFCW Local 555 and we are encouraging you to support Senate Bill 828-3-4.

Thank you Senators for allowing me the time to share with you,

Kevin Billman
Director of Legislative and Community Action
UFCW Local 555