

Chair Lively and members of the committee,

My name is Sabina Urdes. I had my child in my mid-twenties, when I was overburdened with student loans and credit card debt. On top of that, even though I had been working full-time my entire adult life, I had yet to have an employer offer me benefits or an official salary. Forget about savings – even with pay of \$50K/year (which is considered middle class) I could barely afford food after I paid off all my bills and debt every month!

When I was pregnant, my employer wasn't big enough to be required to give me unpaid, job-protected leave. I was at the mercy of my employer. He said he would think about it and let me know when my pregnancy was nearing the end. This caused me great stress and uncertainty during my pregnancy. I went to work even when I was sick or weak because I was trying to save my sick days for after I gave birth, in case they didn't give me any paid time off. Without getting paid while I was away recovering from childbirth, we would have become homeless because we had no way of paying our rent.

A few days before going into labor, my boss told me they would give me 8 weeks of paid time off to recover from childbirth if I signed a document saying I would come back after 8 weeks instead of 12. I had no choice but to sign it, considering my financial situation and the fact that I would have no job protection without it.

Childbirth was rough for me. I ended up in the ER and almost died. I had to have four blood transfusions and be hospitalized in very bad shape. Nonetheless, around two weeks postpartum, I was feeling pressured to work from home because my boss signed on my maternity leave even though he didn't have to. So I started putting in work whenever I could even prior to my official return after 8 weeks. I ended up with postpartum depression and paralyzing anxiety, which affected both the bonding with my child and my relationship with her father.

Even as a working, middle-class woman, a paid family leave savings account would not have helped me. I didn't have any money to save. Many, many people are in my situation – working hard, paying the rent and the bills, and just getting by. While a paid family leave savings account may sound like a good idea for people who make a lot of money, it simply will not work for most of us.

And even for those who could afford to save enough money for their own paid family leave, this bill wouldn't give them any job protection – so they'd still be in the situation I was in -- at the mercy of their employer.

Please do not support HB3336. It is a totally inadequate approach to what is a very important issue for all of us in Oregon.