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TO: Chair Lively
Vice-Chair Hack
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Members of the House Committee on Early Childhood and Family Supports

FR: Jessica Giannettino, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: *Oregon AFL-CIO Opposition to HB 3336*

April 4, 2017

My name is Jessica Giannettino representing the over 300,000 working Oregonians of the Oregon AFL-CIO. We consider ourselves a voice for all workers in the legislative process. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 3336. Often, we will weigh in on issues that most of our members already have access to, but the broader workforce doesn't like; paid sick time or minimum wage. Access to paid family leave however, is the outlier of these worker protections and is something only select industries have taken up at the bargaining table. While we appreciate the growing interest in expanding access to paid family and medical leave to Oregon's working families we do not believe that creating a tax credit for a family leave savings account will accomplish that goal in an equitable way.

The unspecified tax credit that is created by HB 3336 won't benefit low wage workers, many of which we know are women of color and have little savings to rely on to begin with. Conversely, by creating a tax credit for businesses to provide essentially a health savings account to workers we're likely asking those same workers who we're attempting to help, to foot the bill. Either by reducing their income tax returns or by putting them in a position to discover that critical state funded services they would stand to benefit from either gone or substantially reduced.

Additionally, there is no access to protected time for a worker to take the leave. Even if a worker has been able to save enough money with the provided family leave savings account there is no guarantee their employer will allow them to take the time, or that their job will be there when they return.

We applaud the bi-partisan effort to create a paid family leave program, but have deep concerns that HB 3336 will do little to help Oregon's working families. Instead, we'd ask you to support HB 3087 which creates a jointly funded wage replacement structure to ensure the most vulnerable workers have the most support.