



March 23, 2020

Co-Chairs Roblan and Holvey and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the over 15,000 workers AFT-Oregon represents in our state's universities, community colleges, and K-12 schools, thank you for your work to address the COVID-19 crisis.

As the virus spreads exponentially, the impacts are touching all of us. We are grateful to Governor Brown and local leaders for taking action through emergency declarations and preventative measures to help curb the growth of this pandemic. As the Joint Special Committee on Coronavirus Response continues to meet, we ask you to take into consideration the impacts that are likely to be felt by our members across Oregon as a result of this crisis:

- Healthcare Access-- Many AFT-Oregon members lack access to health insurance, which is why it is vital that Oregon ensures every individual who needs care during this public health crisis has access to care regardless of ability to pay or insurance status.
- Additional Paid Leave -- Many high risk individuals have already been forced to use much of their paid leave as a result of COVID-19; however, they will still need paid leave after this crisis is over. We ask the Legislature to ensure additional paid leave is provided to Oregonians who have had to deplete their earned benefits as a result of this crisis.
- Direct Assistance -- It is very clear that the economic impact of COVID-19 will be catastrophic and result in record high unemployment. We ask the Oregon Legislature to ensure funds are allocated to bolster unemployment insurance, expand access to housing, nutrition services, and other social services.
- Career Technical Education Instruction -- Community colleges should be given the flexibility to have face-to-face courses, while maintaining social distancing, in fields that cannot be fully done online (CTE, health care, welding, automotive, etc.) in order to prevent further faculty layoffs.

Thank you for your consideration. AFT-Oregon looks forward to continuing to work with you on these and other policy solutions to serve our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jaime Rodriguez'.

Jaime Rodriguez
AFT-Oregon President