



Tom Chamberlain, *President*
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TO: Chair Taylor
Vice-Chair Knopp
Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce

FR: Tom Chamberlain, President, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: Support of SB 722, Unemployment Insurance for Excepted Workers

My name is Tom Chamberlain, and I'm the President of the Oregon AFL-CIO. The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across the state and we're proud to be a voice for all workers in the legislative process. Of those 300,000 workers, we have 3 affiliate unions whose members were forced to work without pay as a result of the most recent reckless government shutdown.

Working people and their livelihoods should never be used as political pawns. I applaud Governor Brown, Legislative Leadership and especially President Courtney for introducing SB 722. This bill will ensure that in the case of another needless shutdown, workers across Oregon can count on their state to ensure they have some help in providing for their family's most basic needs.

I want to tell you a little bit about some of these workers. These workers belong to one of 3 unions, NATCA, who represents air traffic controllers, AFGE who represents many types of workers like BLM workers and Transportation Security Officers and IFPTE who represents federal engineers.

By passing SB 722 you will help folks, like a BLM worker in Salem who wished to go unnamed. She had to go to food banks when she was told, prior to this bill, that she didn't qualify for unemployment insurance. Her \$1150/month apartment increased by \$100 this month. She told her union she was obviously grateful for the help from the food bank, but the food items were expired, and she worried about getting sick. Or a couple in Eugene who are both transportation security officers, who just happened to have a baby when the shutdown occurred. Their co-workers, union, and Labor's Community Services Agency provided them with gift cards so they could make ends meet. Or a worker in Sheridan who almost faced eviction until they took out a payday loan. And lastly Joe, who is a veteran. He sold plasma during the shutdown to make ends meet. I've been around the legislature a long time, rarely is there the chance to make such an immediate and profound impact on a worker as the opportunity before you.

Thank you for the time today. I encourage swift passage of SB 722 shortly after it's introduced.