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Employment Law

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March 18, 2019

Via Email

House Committee on Business and Labor

Re: Testimony Regarding House Bills 3023/ 3379
On behalf of the Oregon Trial Lawyers Association – Workers’ Rights Section

Chair Barker and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding House Bills 3023 and 3379, relating to vehicle-for-hire services. As you know, Oregon Trial Lawyers Association members work for access to justice in a number of areas. OTLA Workers’ Rights Section members, in particular, fight for workers who are misclassified as independent contractors or are otherwise not paid fairly.

We commend the committee for taking up the important issue of regulating vehicle-for-hire services. In thinking about how these services are safely and equitably integrated into our communities, it is important to continue the separate conversation regarding how workers are classified by these services. We commend Representative Holvey for bringing the stakeholders together to ensure that this conversation continues. We understand that the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries has an advisory opinion that determines that workers for vehicle-for-hire services should generally be considered employees and we support this approach.

As the committee works through the bills, we implore you to ensure that both consumers and workers are protected through strong non-discrimination provisions. In order to ensure that such non-discrimination protections are effective, they must be enforceable. By providing an enforcement mechanism through ORS 659A.885(3), the committee will be able to effectively ensure strong non-discrimination protections.

Sincerely,
Christina Stephenson