

Hello Committee Chair Rep Barker and Committee Persons,

My name is Zachary Steele and I am the owner of Steele Insurance Agency located in Dallas, OR and reside in Monmouth, OR.

As a business owner in the State of Oregon I am writing to you in **opposition** to House Bill HB3031.

I opened the doors of my insurance agency in February of 2014 as a young 24 year old with a dream. Here I stand 5 years later still chasing my dream of self-employment and the freedoms it provides. However, that dream has become harder and harder to maintain because of legislative mandates and regulations that are creating a hostile environment for small and large businesses alike in our great state. HB3031 is just another example of hostility towards the small business community.

While I understand the intent of the bill I disagree with its execution. As a small business owner I have employed anywhere from 1-3 part time employees. I take pride in signing the front of the check for my employees that allows them to feed their families, pay their bills, and live out their own dreams. Unfortunately, HB3101 would not allow me to continue to grow my staff and eventually employ them full time. Most employees don't understand that when we write them a check we not only pay their income taxes to both state and federal governments but that we also have to match that amount out of our pockets/profits. Business owners do not open their doors to be a charity (although most all of us do donate heavily to local charities as well). We open our businesses to support our own families and to generate legacies for our families.

The private sector and public sectors already have answered this issue by providing Disability Insurance, Personal Time Off, Sick Time (that is earned by the employee) and personal savings. Oregon cannot continue to legislate business out of our State and this is just another example.

As national competitiveness rankings have shown, doing business in Oregon is often costlier and more difficult than running the same business in other states. With every workplace mandate the Legislature has passed, the competitive distance between Oregon and other states has increased.

We understand the intent of this bill. However, the proposals establish impractical requirements on businesses, large and small, and will cost Oregonians billions.

As a Business Owner, a citizen, an NFIB member, and a Dallas Area Chamber of Commerce Member. I strongly urge all of you on this committee to kill this bill in committee and not pass another unnecessary burden on to the tax payers.