



March 25, 2019

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nancy Haque and I'm the Executive Director of Basic Rights Oregon. I'm writing to respectfully request your support for HB 3031, the FAMILI Equity Act. Basic Rights Oregon is an organization that advocates for public policy that meets the needs of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities, and centers on racial and transgender justice. Protecting and supporting our communities is why our organization supports the FAMILI Equity Act.

LGBTQ workers are some of the most economically disadvantaged in the workforce, with many facing immense hurdles including unequal pay, benefits and taxation.¹ Having paid time off to care for themselves or someone close to them is especially rare.

Even if a workplace does offer paid family and medical leave, we are still at a disadvantage because legal statutes that define "family" don't include a very diverse representation of what families look like for LGBTQ communities and communities of color. In 2014, 85 million people were living in extended families—up from 58 million in 2001. Extended families, defined as those departing from the "nuclear family" model of married parents and their minor children, are disproportionately people of color.²

Many members of LGBTQ community also depart from the "nuclear family" model, as sixty-four percent of LGBTQ adults between the ages of 45 and 64 said that they have a chosen family.³ This includes people who are not biologically related or legally related, but so emotionally connected that they are considered family. They love and support each other throughout sickness, health, and everything in between.

The LGBTQ community and communities of color shouldn't be left behind in Oregon, which is why we're here in support of the FAMILI Equity Act. Its expanded definition of "family" represents the unique, diverse representations of families that many people are a part of. Nearly 326,000 Oregon residents live with nonrelatives—such as roommates, friends, or significant others. When an individual is sick or has a

¹ Movement Advancement Project, Center for American Progress, Human Rights Campaign, Freedom to Work, and National Black Justice Coalition. November 2013. A Broken Bargain for LGBT Workers of Color. <http://www.lgbtmap.org/workers-of-color>.

² Michela Zonata, "Housing the Extended Family," Center for American Progress (October 2016), <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2016/10/19/146422/housing-the-extended-family/>.

³ Still Out, Still Aging: The MetLife Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Baby Boomers, MetLife Mature Market Institute and American Society of Aging (March 2010), pp. 16-17. <https://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/mmi/publications/studies/2010/mmi-still-out-still-aging.pdf>.

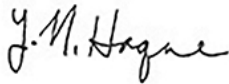
medical emergency, they often rely on individuals they live with—even absent a blood or legal relationship—for help and caregiving⁴.

It's time for Oregon to join the increasing number of states that are passing paid leave protections with inclusive family definitions. Since 2016, Arizona, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and 8 localities have passed paid sick and safe time laws that cover chosen and extended family. Under these 11 laws, an estimated 15 million workers will gain the right to use paid sick time to care for chosen and extended family.⁵

By passing the FAMLI Equity Act in Oregon, we can ensure that no one has to choose between paying their bills and taking time off to care for people they love.

HB 3031 is a vital step forward in making sure that all Oregonians have access to paid family and medical leave. We strongly encourage you to support the FAMLI Equity Act.

Thank you for your time.



Nancy Haque

Executive Director
Basic Rights Oregon

⁴ See Selected Social Characteristics in the United States: Oregon, U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP02, https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_5YR_DP02&prodType=table%20c (last accessed January 2019).

⁵ A Better Balance, Center for American Progress, Family Values @ Work & Forward Together, Making Paid Leave Work for Every Family (December 2016), p. 1, <http://www.abetterbalance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/LGBTpaidLeave-report.pdf> (see endnote 1 for an explanation of how the figure of 7 million workers was calculated for 5 of the 7 laws). For the remaining laws: 1) Estimates for New York City's sick time law based on Shira Gans, "NYC's Paid Sick Leave Law: First Year Milestones" (New York City: Department of Consumer Affairs, 2015), <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dca/downloads/pdf/about/PaidSickLeaveLaw-FirstYearMilestones.pdf> (adjusted for employment growth and the federal workforce); 2) estimates for Rhode Island's sick time for non-government workers based on July 2017 data from Bureau of Labor Statistics, Rhode Island, https://www.bls.gov/regions/new-england/rhode_island.htm#eag_ri.f.3; and unpublished estimates by A Better Balance for San Antonio, Austin, New Jersey and Duluth based on Bureau of Labor Statistics data and the Institute for Women's Policy Research. For the laws, see: Los Angeles Code § 187.04(G); Saint Paul Code § 233.02; Chicago Code §1-24-010; Cook County Code § 42-2; Arizona Revised Statutes § 23-371(H)(5); Rhode Island Statutes § 28-57-3(1), (9); New York City Administrative Code § 20-912 (as amended in 2017 by Int. No. 1313-A) Austin Code §4-19-1(E); N.J. A1827 ACS 1R (2018) (to be codified); Duluth Ordinance No. 10571(to be codified); San Antonio Ordinance 18-4820 (to be codified).