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March 22, 2019

TO: House Business & Labor Committee and Senate Workforce Committee
CC: Senator Tim Knopp, Representative Cheri Helt, Representative Jack Zika
RE: Oppose HB 3031 Paid Family Leave

Chair Barker, Chair Taylor and members of the House Business & Labor Committee and Senate Workforce Committee:

This letter is in opposition to HB 3031. The Bend Chamber of Commerce represents more than 1,300 businesses who employ 25,000 people. Our members support the intent of this bill and understand the challenges and hardships for working families on maternity and paternity leave, or missing work due to illness. However, this bill places far too much burden on employers and businesses.

This bill will come at a significant cost to Oregon businesses and we face very real unintended consequences of businesses leaving our state, downsizing or closing due to increased costs -particularly small business and companies with very low margins. Mandated payroll tax for leave of 32 weeks is simply impossible for many Oregon businesses to bear.

Doing business in Oregon is already often costlier and more difficult than running the same business in other states. Our chamber members are concerned that the cumulative impacts of revenue-generating and new workplace mandates coming from the 2019 session like HB 3031 will increase the costs of doing business beyond the breaking point.

We urge your committees to find another, more equitable and affordable solution to supporting family leave.

Sincerely,

Katy Brooks, CEO