

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am a married mother of two children and a co-owner at a national company (160+ workers) that employs more than 20 people in Portland. I am writing in *support of HB 3031, the FAMILI Equity Act*.

I worked for almost 20 years before having children. I am lucky to work someplace with generous vacation and sick day accruals, so I was able to take 3 month paid maternity leaves both times. Every baby deserves this time with its parents, both mother and father. I love my job, yet I wanted even more time with each child. And what about mothers who cannot afford to leave work for even a few weeks? They go to work too soon and risk their own health as well.

Paid family leave also allows families to care for aging parents and other sick family members. Subsidizing home-based care for a few weeks is a more humane way to run our society. Now that I used my accrued days for two maternity leaves - and use paid time off for when children get sick - when my parents eventually need my help, I will have to take mostly unpaid time to care for them.

As a business owner with workers in about 10 states, my company has a dilemma: either offer paid family leave selectively in the states that require it - Washington and Massachusetts - or create an entirely independent system to treat all our workers equally yet meet/exceed each state's requirement. If Oregon can approve HB 3031, that will tip our scales and help build the expectation that *all* workers should benefit from paid family leave. We know from experience that this will increase longevity at our company and avoid the need to spend time and money hiring and training new workers by retaining our current workers even as they age from youth to heads of household.

In cooperation,
Jessie Myszka
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