

March 25, 2019

To: The House Business and Labor Committee and the Senate Workforce Committee

From: Maribel Franco

Re: Support of HB 3031

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maribel Franco and I live in Salem. Parents and families aren't able to take time off to care for themselves, a new born baby, or sick loved ones this is horrible. When my little girl was 6 months old when I was in an accident, while helping a family member out by giving them a jump start, I got pinned between both cars and was taken to the hospital. I had surgery to repair my broken bones and had nails put in place I was in a brace for several months. I was there to help that day out of kindness and understanding of the need of the other person. But life was not kind, it took many months from me and brought pain, tears and stress. It took away what should have been happy days that we will not get back. My partner at the time was the only one working as I was attending to our first baby. Life before the accident was beautiful and we were learning how to be good parents juggling all the balls new parents learn to juggle.

Once out of the hospital I went home and for a few days I had family to help me but their ability to be around and help was brief they all had responsibilities of their own to get back to. A week after my accident there I was alone to attend to myself and my baby girl. Unable to carry her needing to use crutches to get around and not able to do it all at the same time. I crawled and dragged myself on the living room floor to get around with her. My partner would leave things I would need as close to my reach as possible and helped around the house when he got home. But he worked long hours and it was hard for him to do everything that was need to attend to both of us. He felt horrible having to leave us there alone. At the same time we could not afford for him to miss work. The tension, pain and stress was so unbearable at times the experience left many mental scars.

For families like mine that are just starting out life is already stressful and difficult. When you add a situation that makes it even worse, how can we be asked to choose one basic need over another. This experience is not unique to me, I'm sure that like ours there are many families that face unexpected challenges and when that happens we should be protected in a way that values what we value most the need to be with our loved ones when they need us the most. Please pass HB3031 so that other families don't have to make decisions that sometimes can make or break a vulnerable new family like mine.

Sincerely,

Maribel Franco