

March 25, 2019

To: The House Business and Labor Committee and the Senate Workforce Committee
From: Kelli Martin
Re: Support of HB 3031

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kelli Martin and I'm here tonight with Family Forward Oregon and I live in Beaverton.

Our oldest daughter was born with a critical congenital heart defect that necessitated open heart surgery. I had quit my job after being told she would not be able to be in daycare. After being told her recovery would be 1-2 weeks in the hospital, my husband put in for 6 weeks of unpaid leave thinking it would be ample. After surgery, she had lots of complications that kept her in the hospital for 2 months. At the 5 week mark, my husband had the excruciating choice to either stay at our daughter's hospital cribside as she fought for her life, spending every valuable second with her, not knowing at times if she would ever come home with us, or return to work. He decided to extend his leave for the full 12 weeks of unpaid leave. This choice put us in financial hardship that we have never fully recovered from.

When our youngest child was born, we couldn't afford for him to take any unpaid leave so he took 4 sick days and then went back to work, missing out on so much bonding time in the precious newborn period. As hard and heartbreaking as our experiences were, it is unbelievable that I reflect on these times from a place of privilege. During our tenure at Doernbecher, we met mothers spending days or weeks at the hospital alone because their partners had to work. Worst of all, we saw children in the hospital alone because both of their parents had to work. I support this bill because we need maternity and paternity leave, and leave that allows for appropriate time for bonding.

Please pass HB3031 so no Oregonian family ever has to experience what we did.

Sincerely,

Kelli Martin