

Good day Chairman Barker:

I am writing to voice my concern as a business owner over HB 3031. I run a small insurance office in rural Oregon. I have between 2 and 3 employees at any given time. I have been in business for just over 3 years and while I work for a large insurance company as an independent contractor that hires and manages my own employees, I would be impacted so detrimentally by being required to not only provide 32 weeks of time away from my office for the birth of a child but also pay the person. The hard part for me is that I can figure out how to work short staffed for a period of time, but to have the time I'm required to now allow be increased to 32 weeks and pay the person would kill my business. 32 weeks is such a long period of time that I would HAVE to find another person to come to work and paying the other person on top of the person that is off is impossible.

I am working very hard to provide a work environment that allows my employees to enjoy their lives with their families and loved ones while also feeling accomplished in their work. By mandating such things, you are taking away my ability to differentiate my work environment for retention of great employees. I have plans to continue to expand the benefit offerings I have for employees as my business grows, and this piece of legislation would dictate how I provide for employees which I feel is an infringement of my rights as an American business owner.

I completely understand the need to be off when a baby is born or a family member ill, however there are many ways for us to plan for such events. For example insurance policies for short-term or long-term disability or we can save accordingly. I believe that we are trying to legislate ourselves to a place that Oregonians do not need to think for themselves. Please do not hamstring our citizens in such a way. Allow us to thrive through working, learning and applying principles we learn through life lessons, schooling (formal or not) and mentors.

I hope you will take my words to heart and think through the repercussions that such a bill would have on free enterprise in Oregon.

Sincerely,
Rachael Spoon
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