

To: Senate Workforce and House Business and Labor

From: Tina Lyons, Owner, Double River Forwarding

Date: March 25, 2019

Re: Letter in Support of HB 3031

Chairs Senator Taylor and Representative Baker, Vice-Chairs Senator Knopp, Representative Barreto and Representative Bynum, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Tina Lyons. I am a member of Main Street Alliance and the owner of Double River Forwarding, a small company that handles agricultural export shipments, based in Portland. I wear many hats and deal with varied challenges every day. I depend on my staff to help keep our customers happy and our business running strong. My staff are critical to the success of my business, which is why investing in them is a smart business decision, and why I want to keep them.

Export regulations are critical to each transaction we handle. Training a new employee is costly and time consuming. That's one reason I do all I can to make sure they stay working for me. It's difficult to compete with large companies who can afford to offer more robust benefit packages. One thing I wish I could do right now, but can't, is offer paid family and medical leave.

All of my staff are women; like it or not, women are most frequently the caregivers in the family, and therefore need the time to care for their sick loved ones, their aging parents, or for themselves. A state managed paid family and medical leave insurance plan, like the one proposed in HB 3031, the FAMILY Equity Act, would allow help me to offer this critical benefit to all my employees, assisting them in taking the time off they need, and easing the burden of missing paychecks.

One of the best things about the FAML I Equity Act is that it's affordable. Since it's funded by small employee and employer payroll contributions, my employees and I have a shared responsibility in funding it. We've done the math, and it would cost about \$2.00 per week for each of our employees. This is a very small cost and is dramatically outweighed by all the benefits.

My employees are the most important part of my business, as our company is built on customer service. That's what we do all day long, help our customers. So, my employees are very important to me. I want to make sure my staff knows I care about them and support them. HB 3031 would help me do that.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter, and for your support of HB 3031.