

March 25, 2019

Chair Jeff Barker, House Business & Labor Committee:

hbl.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Chair Kathleen Taylor, Senate Workforce Committee:

swf.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Senator Kim Thatcher

Sen.kimthatcher@oregonlegislature.gov

Representative Courtney Neron

Rep.CourtneyNeron@oregonlegislature.gov

My business and residence are located in Wilsonville. I am one of thousands of small business owners in our State with a direct employee base of less than 25 people. Additionally I subcontract with hundreds of other small business who collectively employ many people. Collectively my company creates jobs for several hundred to over one thousand people each year. I happen to be a Commercial Building Contractor. Other small business in sectors across all categories have similar business to business relationships, which in total create tens of thousands of jobs each year. Together, we are the backbone of Oregon's economy. But if the current Family Leave bills are approved, most small business will be unable to afford compliance. Many will be faced with the decision to close their doors or leave the state.

Oregon will not be able to sustain a healthy and robust economy with these continued attempts to regulate and require employers to dramatically change the balance and competitive nature of small business. Even the Staff Summary Impact Statement indicates the Fiscal Impact of these bills is not clear and FURTHER ANALYSIS IS REQUIRED.

While there are many attempts in Salem this session to add burdens to small business, HB 3130 and SB 947 are just two examples of backbreaking legislation. If the goal is to slow down economic growth, lower the number of jobs, and make a wider gulf between competitors, these bills accomplish those goals.

I am compassionate and believe a good relationship between employees and employers is great. But “relationship” is the key word. The Oregon Family Leave Act provides protection for both. However, the movement to include the smallest of the small businesses (one or more employees) and require them to pay twice for one position (SB 947) or to add yet another tax (and cost of doing business) to a business is backbreaking.

I already can and do support an employee who needs family leave. I can put the plan together that works for the employee, fellow employees and the employer. Every situation is different. Requiring a business to maintain a job for an employee who is absent for 8 months (32 weeks), at full pay, full benefits PLUS the tax is entirely unreasonable and unsustainable.

Please vote NO on HB 3031 and SB 947. Sometimes a compassionate idea is a stab in the heart of already compassionate people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Lessler", written in a cursive style.

Brian Lessler
President/CEO
PDG Construction Services, Inc.