

April 24, 2019

To: Chair Taylor and Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce  
From: Paloma Sparks, OBI  
RE: OBI Statement on HB 2341 and HB 2593

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**Chair Taylor and Members of the Committee:**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on this important issue for Oregon Business & Industry members. OBI is Oregon's most comprehensive business association representing approximately 1,600 businesses that employ nearly 330,000 people. We represent multiple sectors and serve as the state's Retail and Manufacturing Councils.

Oregon businesses strive to ensure our workplaces are welcoming and comfortable for all of our employees. We recognize that from time to time laws must be updated to reflect the changing nature of work and family.

HB 2341: Under current law it is unlawful to discriminate against an employee due to pregnancy. Current law also requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to employees who have conditions that substantially limit one or more major life activities. The law has been somewhat unclear, however, about employers' obligations with regards to requests for accommodation from employees who may have limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition. House Bill 2341A clarifies workplace protections for applicants and employees who may have limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition. Employers with six or fewer employees may be eligible for an exemption if they can show that requirements of the law would impose an undue hardship on their business.

HB 2593: Under current law, employers with 25 or more employees are required to allow an employee a 30-minute rest period to express milk during each four-hour work period. HB 2593 updates Oregon's law to provide employees with greater flexibility on the timing and frequency of breaks and to more closely align with new federal regulations. House Bill 2593-A requires all employers to provide reasonable rest periods for employees to express milk as often and as long as needed for the child's first 18 months. Employers with 10 or fewer employees may be eligible for an exemption if they can show that providing these breaks would impose an undue hardship on their business.

OBI thanks Representative Power and Representative Boshart Davis for their work to pass legislation that addresses both the needs of employees and businesses. We appreciate their willingness to work with us to craft compromise legislation that eases some of the burden on the smallest employers who struggle to provide the flexibility envisioned in these laws.

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