



June 10, 2019

Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee,

The Fair Shot for All Coalition is a united movement of more than 30 community based organizations and labor unions fighting together for racial, gender and economic justice. We are writing today to strongly urge you to vote YES on HB 2005-3 to make sure that every Oregonian is able to give or get the care they need without risking their ability to pay the bills.

Most Oregonians at some point in their lives will need to take time away from work to deal with a serious personal or family illness, or to care for a new child. Federal and Oregon law provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for some workers but these laws don't apply to everyone, don't cover all types of family members, and they require a worker to choose between taking the time they need and working to put food on the table.

These dated laws were created as part of the ongoing institutional and structural racism and gender-based discrimination that has created huge disparities in income, wealth, health and quality of life for people of color, women, LGBTQ Oregonians, and immigrants and refugees.

Paid Family & Medical Leave has been a legislative priority for the Fair Shot for all Coalition since 2017 and this legislative session we have the opportunity to fix these glaring loopholes that perpetuate racial, gender, and class inequities. And it is long overdue for this body to take action on this legislation - in the right way.

HB 2005-3 includes critical provisions that intentionally address the economic inequality that Oregon workers -especially women and people of color - face when they need to take extended leave from work for the unavoidable and human necessities that most of us will experience at one point or another.

- It covers all workers — whether they're full-time, part-time, or self-employed — and their employers will make a small contribution into a state-managed insurance fund.
- It provides a level of income replacement adequate to support basic household expenses while you are out on paid leave.
- Benefits provided by the paid family and medical leave insurance program have a sliding scale to provide low-income workers with a higher percentage of wage replacement while placing an appropriate cap on the level of benefit any worker can receive from the program, ensuring access to the program across income levels.
- It is funded from equal contributions from employers and employees made through a payroll deduction at a level sufficient to ensure a fiscally solvent and self-sustaining program.
- When a worker needs time to care for themselves or a family member, they will apply for benefits through the state fund. Employers will be able to offer this benefit to their employees that they otherwise could not afford, and without the administrative burden.

- The bill will use an updated definition of “family member” to recognize those excluded by the current definition (siblings, extended family members, chosen family members, and others), as well as to recognize diverse types of care responsibilities.
- Workers using the paid family and medical leave benefit will be protected against any discrimination, retaliation, or other work-related consequences for using it.

We strongly urge your yes vote on HB 2005-3 to ensure that no Oregonian has to choose between caring for themselves or family and losing income.

About Fair Shot

Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, Basic Rights Oregon, Bus Project, Causa Oregon, Coalition of Communities of Color, Community Alliance of Tenants, Family Forward Oregon, Forward Together, NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon, Northwest Workers' Justice Project, Oregon AFL-CIO, Oregon AFSCME, AFT-Oregon, Oregon Education Association, Oregon Latino Health Coalition (OLHC), Oregon National Organization for Women, Oregon Nurses Association, Oregon Student Association, Partnership for Safety and Justice, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, Portland Jobs with Justice, Rural Organizing Project, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), Unite Oregon, Urban League of Portland, Voz Workers' Rights Education Project, and the YWCA.