



June 11, 2019

Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Williamson and Wilson and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of OR, we respectfully request your support for House Bill 2005-3.

Benefits currently provided under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and the Oregon Family Leave Act are simply not sufficient for families who have to do without time off for serious personal or family emergencies. In addition, for the citizens of Oregon, a decision to stay home to care for a sick child or family member could jeopardize their job or family income. Balancing the responsibilities of work and family is difficult for employees, negatively impacting business productivity, making recovery from major illnesses or injuries difficult, and in some cases inhibiting the healthy development of children.

HB 2005-3 supports infants and new parents. For example, paid family leave results in mothers' breastfeeding at higher rates and for longer periods, reducing the rate of childhood infections, and it also increases the odds that developmental delays will be detected earlier, when interventions will be most effective.¹

HB 2005-3 supports adults throughout their life span. Workers who have access to paid leave tend to remain in the workforce, have higher wages over time, and rely less on public assistance and food stamp benefits. As a result, they contribute more to their own economic security and to the security of the economy as a whole.

HB 2005-3 supports businesses. Employers benefit when workers stay in their jobs. Paid family and medical leave also reduces recruiting, hiring, and training costs. Importantly, employers who coordinated their own benefits with a state program likely realized cost savings from the program when employees used paid family leave either instead of or in combination with employer-provided benefits, such as paid sick leave, temporary disability, designated paid family leave, or vacation.²

Statistics do not tell the full story of the emotional toll that is exacted by employees' having to choose between caring for a family member and going to work. Life's

¹ Dan Grinfias, Buchanon Angeli Altschul & Sullivan, *Paid Parental Leave Continues to Gain Traction, Oregon Civil Rights Newsletter*, Dec 2016.

² Linda Houser and Thomas Vartanian, *Policy Matters: Public Policy, Paid Leave for New Parents, and Economic Security for U.S. Workers*, Center for Women and Work: Rutgers, April 2012.

transitions are not always easy and it is up to the wider community to take responsibility to provide some level of support to those experiencing them.

HB 2005-3 will make a genuinely positive difference in the lives of the citizens and businesses in Oregon. The paid medical and family leave program established in HB 2005-3 is practical, takes in account the interests of various sectors of our economy and is the compassionate thing to do.

Respectfully,

Trish Garner

State Public Policy Chair, American Association of University Women of OR

Member, National AAUW Public Policy Committee

503-407-2341, garner37@mac.com