

For June 11, 2019 Hearing

To: Rules Committee

From: Lee Mercer, Silverton, OR

RE: Support of HB 2005

Chair Holvey, Vice-Chair Williamson and Members of the Committee,

As former President of Health Care for All Oregon-Action, Mobilization Chair of Health Care for All Oregon, a member of the Executive Team of Main Street Alliance of Oregon and a retired business owner, I would like to express my support for HB 2005.

For 30 years in the theater business the only benefits we had to offer for our employees were free movies and free popcorn. I owned and operated small independent motion picture theaters in California and Nevada. Turning a profit in that highly competitive industry was challenging.

In later years I was happy to see California moved to create paid family medical leave and my wife's business, a dog boarding and grooming facility, and businesses like the theaters I owned and managed, now were able to allow their employees to take paid time to care for an ailing parent or a child home sick from school.

All the rest of the industrialized nations have figured out how to provide these kinds of benefits for their workers, as well as universal health care, with better health outcomes, and for less cost.

Please allow Oregon to continue pioneering in the U.S. by stepping up to provide benefits like those provided under HB 2005. The cost for this benefit will go far towards creating a happier, more stable workforce and healthier families and communities.

Please vote to move HB 2005 forward.

Thanks for your time and consideration in this matter.

Lee Mercer, Silverton, Oregon

Also note:

Health Care for All Oregon, with over 33,000 supporters statewide, and over 120 member organizations supports paid family medical leave.

Main Street Alliance of Oregon, representing small business owners throughout Oregon, also supports this bill, and found that a majority of Oregon small business owners polled recently support paid family medical leave.