



STEPHENSON LAW, LLC

Christina Stephenson
Attorney at Law

2501 SW First Ave.
Suite 230
Portland, Oregon 97201

Civil Rights & Employment Law
Representing Employees

P: (503) 610-9225
F: (503) 512-5022
E: christina@stephensonlawpdx.com

February 20, 2018

Via Email
Senate Workforce Committee

Re: Testimony in Support of House Bill 4160
On behalf of the Oregon Trial Lawyers Association

Chair Taylor and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of paid family and medical leave insurance (HB 4160), a bill to provide stronger workplaces for Oregonians. Oregon Trial Lawyers Association members fight for workers who face on-the-job discrimination for reasons such as their race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or religion. OTLA members also fight for workers who have been discriminated against because of their caregiving responsibilities.

OTLA members report that they expect paid family and medical leave insurance (PMFL) will make a positive impact in Oregon's work environments. To the extent that PMFL takes the employer out of managing employee leaves, this will also be beneficial to both employers and employees. Having family and medical issues is a normal part of life; and being allowed to take family or medical leave should be a normal part of working. When employers and employees work together to meet business and community needs, we all benefit.

With regard to specific proposals for PMFL, we urge the committee to support employment protections for ALL employees, regardless of employer size; 2) defining family member to include family members related "by blood or affinity"; and 3) an equal contribution to the program from employers and employees.

OTLA members are hopeful that PMFL help to de-stigmatize worker caregiving responsibilities and help to end discrimination on this basis. OTLA supports the effort to create more equitable workplaces and urges a yes vote on PMFL.

Sincerely,
Christina Stephenson