

March 25, 2019

To: The House Business and Labor Committee and the Senate Workforce Committee  
From: Debbie Cabrales  
Re: Support of HB 3031

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Debbie Cabrales and I am submitting testimony tonight as a community member and a parent. I work at Latino Network, but am not representing them here tonight. I am from, and currently reside in Woodburn, Oregon. I am a Latina single mother, that has struggled, and has had to learn how to manage work, and a mother. I am writing to support the passage of HB 3031.

I am writing to you today because I have a 1-year-old son named Kaique, who I love and cherish. It has been very rewarding experience to be a first time parent. What has been very challenging is juggling the responsibilities of childcare, work, and spending time with my son. I know that many people like me in the Latino community face similar barriers. My son was born prematurely, and prior to his birth, I had to be hospitalized for our safety. After he was born, he was in the NICU for 2 weeks, and having more time with him, in the condition we were both in would have been something that we would of both loved. After my son got released from the hospital, I only had about 2 months left to be able to take care of myself, my son, as well as building a relationship with him. Being rushed back to work, did not give me enough time to look for a daycare, or being able to have some quality time with him.

In my work I provide family supports for low-income people. I have seen examples of people who could have greatly benefited from having paid time off to care for their sick relatives; a lot of people, who are ill, cannot afford to take time off work due not having enough income coming in, to be able to take care of rent, and household expenses. When people don't have the ability to take paid time off, they have a higher risk, of ignoring symptoms, which something that could have been prevented, ends up being an illness that may take longer to overcome. As a parent myself, I have to think about rent, putting food on the table, having to pay for child care, that if I were to get sick, I would not be able to afford a hospital bill, let alone face the fact that my family could end up homeless. The truth is, that a lot of people in our community have to decide between their health, the health of a loved one, and having to pay their rent.

I would like to urge you to support HB 3031 and help many people in the state, like me and members of my community, have the support they require in their times of need.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Debbie Cabrales