

March 25, 2019

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

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Rebeca Velazquez and I live in NE Salem. I would like to offer testimony on the situation that many working families have to struggle with. We are in a gray area in a system that only deals with black and white, rich or poor. What about the working class that still can't afford some basic needs such as the need to bond with a new child. You are told time and time again thought your pregnancy about how important it is to bond with your baby but there are no systems in place to support this bond realistically for working families.

My husband and I struggled after the birth of our last child. We have two older children and therefore many other expenses to cover and consider. I needed to go back to work because we could not afford for me to continue to stay at home. We found ourselves in a difficult situation and I went back to work after 2 weeks of having delivered our baby via cesarean. My employer a small nonprofit was not able to offer paid leave and I had used up all of my vacation and sick leave. I could have stayed home without the risk of losing my job but we could not afford it.

So, I went back to work and was allowed to take my baby to work with me, in an office environment this was possible. This allowed me to continue to work which was a blessing, but at times created some difficulties. I do not regret having taken my son to work, it allowed me to see be with him and bond. He was a quiet baby and I had a supportive work group. At the same time, it was not easy nor was it ideal for me to have had to bond and be with my child at work, before the wound of my caesarian had even healed.

Parents need time to bond with a new family member and women we need to be able to take the necessary time to recover from delivering life into this world. I am sure that we can all relate but not all have the power to make a change like you do. So I ask that you please change this for all families that deserve the opportunity to bond as a family without having to worry about other basic needs. Oregon needs paid family medical leave please pass HB3031.

Sincerely,
Rebeca Velazquez