


FAIRSHOT FOR ALL

*From the desk
of Karin Pauer*


June 20, 2019

The Fair Shot for All Coalition strongly urges you to vote YES on HB 2005-B to create a statewide paid family and medical leave insurance program. At some point in their lives, every Oregonian will need to take time away from work for a serious personal or family illness, or to care for a new child. That is why Oregonians of all backgrounds and ideologies overwhelmingly support Paid Family & Medical Leave.

While the experience of needing time off may be universal – the impact of losing a paycheck is not the same for everyone. Due to historic and ongoing racism and gender-based discrimination, many people of color, women, LGBTQ Oregonians, and immigrants and refugees have not accumulated a level of wealth that allows them to take unpaid time off of work without repercussions. When an unexpected illness or injury happens, lost income can lead to housing instability and other crises.

HB 2005-B is equitable and inclusive because it covers nearly all workers and all families. This legislation includes protections that address the economic inequality that Oregon workers – especially women and people of color – face when they need to take time off of work to welcome a new child or manage a serious illness. HB 2005-B creates a statewide paid family and medical leave insurance program that:

- Covers all workers — whether they're full-time, part-time, or self-employed — and their employers will make a small contribution into a state-managed insurance fund.
- Allows workers to access the paid family and medical leave insurance program across income levels, because the benefits have a sliding scale to provide low-income workers with a higher percentage of wage replacement while placing an appropriate cap on the level of benefit any worker can receive from.
- Is funded through contributions from employers and employees made through a payroll deduction at a level sufficient to ensure a fiscally solvent and self-sustaining program.
- Reduces the administrative burden on employers and makes it possible for them to offer this benefit to their employees that they otherwise could not afford, because workers apply for benefits through the state fund.
- Uses an updated definition of "family member" to recognize those excluded by the current definition (siblings, extended family members, chosen family members, and others), as well as to recognize diverse types of care responsibilities.
- Provides workers using the paid family and medical leave benefit protections against any discrimination, retaliation, or other work-related consequences for using it.
- We strongly urge your yes vote on HB 2005-B to ensure that no Oregonian has to choose between caring for themselves or their family and putting food on the table.

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