



Chair Talyor and members of the committee, my name is Joe Baessler and I am the Associate Director for Oregon AFSCME. Over the last few years we have been hearing from members that have been injured on the job and are losing their earned time off as a result. The workers compensation system is designed to be a no fault system where neither side should take an undue burden from an injury that happens on the job. Many times workers who have been injured on the job and who are still undergoing treatment have been draining their sick time, personal leave, or vacation time to attend medical appointments related to their claim.

We wanted to focus on workers who have their claims approved and have gone back to work and are forced to use their earned sick time to receive continued treatment. Right now a worker takes over 4 hours then they are entitled to 66 and $\frac{2}{3}$ of their pay for that time. If it is under 4 hours you are not covered. Most physical therapy sessions, for example, only take an hour and it is not and that is too significant a loss of wages for workers to take a half day or a whole day to have it covered by workers comp. So either workers take their own leave or more likely they skip their physical therapy altogether. By passing SB 418, workers would be able to attend their ongoing appointments related to their claim without having to use their earned sick time off.

For too long, workers have skipped their appointments because they cannot afford to miss work in order to receive the care they need. This extends the time workers need to recover from work related injuries and affects both their work and personal life. We need to make sure our workers are receiving the adequate care they need in order to recover from an injury.

We urge your support for SB 418 — all workers deserve access to the medical care necessary to continue to be healthy and safe, both on and off the job.

Respectfully submitted;

Joe Baessler