

Written Testimony for SB 851 and amendment(s) for Public Hearing March 14, 2023, Tuesday 8 am in Hearing Room B

Submitter: Micheline Mosher

On Behalf Of: Oregonians (see below)

Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business

Measure: SB851 and amendment(s)

I am currently a retired Oregon state employee but I will be addressing the committee in a dual role, a taxpayer and an affiliate of Workplace Bullying Institute. In retirement I will continue to work on the grassroots movement to eradicate Workplace Bullying in the United States, not only in Oregon.

As read in the written testimony of Dr. David Yamada, "I write in general support of the amendments proposed by Senator Manning, while strongly recommending one clarifying change and one substantive change..." as presented in Dr. Yamada's written testimony below:

1. The clarifying change is to use the term "abusive work environment" instead of "hostile work environment." The latter is commonly associated with harassment on the basis of protected class status, such as sexual harassment, which is prohibited by federal and state employment discrimination statutes. Use of the term in this bill risks confusing the public and legal stakeholders about which statute is being invoked in a given proceeding. In my draft of the Healthy Workplace Bill, I have consistently used abusive work environment as a proxy for workplace bullying to help ensure that distinction.

2. The substantive change is to include physical harm along with the already included psychological harm as part of legally actionable conduct, as workplace bullying can cause significant physical ailments in addition to psychological impairments.

During my working decades in Oregon, I was an active SEIU 503 member and steward in my sub-local. My frontline experiences with co-workers and bargaining represented employees from other locals and other union members has driven me to continue this work into my retirement years which I will perform from the knowledge base I have received as an affiliate of Workplace Bullying Institute.

I have seen firsthand the damage caused to targets of Workplace Bullying, it can and does incorporate both physical harm and psychological harm to the target(s) and also strongly impacts the co-workers that witness the abusive conduct. We need strong laws to combat the growing epidemic in the United States.

I urge the Committee members to support the targeted employees and with carefully considered legislation give protections from abuse to employees in Oregon. Thank you.