

Submitter: k davis

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business

Measure: SB907

I am writing in support of SB 907. While state rules allow workers to refuse unsafe work in theory, right now it is very difficult to exercise this right, and doing so often results in retaliation. Workplace hazards kill approximately 125,000 workers each year in the U.S.—4,764 from traumatic injuries and another 120,000 from occupational diseases. This averages out to 340 workers deaths each day from hazardous working conditions. Increasing extreme weather events are only exacerbating these problems for many workers.

Outdoor workers account for 20% of heat-related deaths. Here in Oregon, people working on the frontlines--including in smoke and extreme heat--are at a high risk of illness and death. There were at least 254 complaints submitted to OSHA during the heat waves in 2020 and at least 3 deaths during the 3 day period of the heat-dome alone.

SB 907 would allow workers to reasonably refuse to do work that can cause them death, serious impairment, or serious injury— such as extreme heat or unsafe equipment. In response, an employer can either fix the dangerous condition, or move workers to other jobs that are not hazardous. Additionally, it would give workers the right to use PTO time to leave or refuse to report to a worksite due to extreme natural disasters, active evacuations, and acts of criminal violence such as mass shootings.

Please vote 'Yes' on SB 907. We need to give workers the option to protect themselves in dangerous workplace situations and not be subjected to inhumane working conditions or face loss of employment when protecting their health and well-being.