

Submitter: Kelsey Perez Lopez
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB916

I urge lawmakers to pass Senate Bill 916 to support striking workers in Oregon.

I had to borrow money to be able to pay my bills after being on strike. This affected my finances for months. I have small children and it affected my ability to purchase things they needed. No one should have to go through this considering my employer chose to not bargain in good faith and refused to pay us a fair wage. I'm an essential worker in healthcare and shouldn't have to decide between going on strike to improve my working conditions and pay or be stuck with low wages that don't allow me to get ahead and have a brighter future.

Workers strike only after every other option has been exhausted. In many cases, they continue working under expired contracts for months or years, making sacrifices because they care about their jobs. SB 916 is a simple, fair measure to ensure that when workers must strike, they don't face total financial devastation.

Employers often use healthcare benefits as a weapon in labor disputes. Cutting off healthcare during a strike puts workers and their families in an impossible situation. Unemployment benefits are a reasonable safeguard that will prevent workers from falling into crisis while they stand up for fair wages and conditions.

This bill is low-cost, does not significantly impact employers, and would result in shorter strikes and fairer contracts. Oregon should pass SB 916 and support its workers.