

**TO:** Chair Dembrow, members of the Senate Workforce Committee  
**From:** Senator Diane Rosenbaum  
**Date:** February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
**RE:** Testimony in support of Senate Bill 454

Chair Dembrow, members of the Senate Workforce Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today to testify in support of House Bill 2005. For the record, I am Senator Diane Rosenbaum from Senate District 21 which covers inner Southeast Portland, Milwaukie and Oak Grove.

Every day, Oregonians get up early so that they can go to work and earn enough to help their family get by. But when working people get sick, too many of them face an impossible dilemma: Go to work sick to keep food on the table, or stay home and risk losing their job or facing discipline from the boss. Oregonians work hard just to get by. But they need to be able to keep their jobs, support their families, and care for themselves when they get sick or for a loved one when they fall ill.

Unfortunately, there are way too many Oregonians who do not have access to a single minute, let alone an entire hour, of paid sick leave from their job. They can't afford to miss out on part of a shift to see a doctor, or to stay at home to recover from the flu. When their kids can't go to school because they're home sick, these Oregonians are forced to choose between providing for their family and caring for their family.

No one should have to decide between their own health and being able to feed their family. As a legislator, I know that for these families, every penny counts. A few days of lost pay can make up the difference in being able to buy groceries for the month or being able to pay the family health care premium.

Eighty percent of the lowest wage earners have no paid sick leave. These workers are much more likely than wealthier Oregonians to provide hours and hours of unpaid care to elderly family members. This makes the choice between a family's health and a job even more difficult. House Bill 2005 will help to make sure working people don't have to choose between their work and their family's well-being. By providing paid sick leave for employees, we can help more Oregonians get just a small amount of time to make

a huge difference for families who are struggling, and many of whom are frankly on the brink of poverty.

This is fundamentally an equity issue. Providing paid sick leave will help the family budget, but it will also greatly impact our ability to prevent poverty and help more families get off the safety net. Chair Dembrow, members of the committee, Thank you again for hearing this bill today. I strongly encourage your continued support for this important policy. I urge your support for Senate Bill 454.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Rosenbaum". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Diane" and last name "Rosenbaum" clearly legible.

Senator Diane Rosenbaum  
Senate Majority Leader  
Senate District 21