

WFA: The Workplace Fairness Act Written Testimony Template

Date: February 11, 2019

To: Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Knopp, Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce

From: Anonymous Victim 7

RE: Anonymous Victim 7 Support for SB 726, The Oregon Workplace Fairness Act

Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Knopp and members of the Senate Workforce Committee:

I support SB 726 which would better protect workers that have faced discrimination in the workplace. I know that current laws don't go far enough to protect harassment victims at work and I support SB 726.

I am now 62. I faced sexual harassment, at times nearly constant, from the time I started work until I was in my 40s. After that I probably looked formidable enough so I wasn't harassed anymore. It was at its worst when I was in my 20s. There are too many tales to relate, but I can tell you than there wasn't a damned thing I could do about it except quit and work somewhere else and, of course, there it was again. The devil you know versus the devil you don't.

Sadly, in my experience women did not band together at that time. We all knew it was happening but it was up each of us to face it alone and there wouldn't have been any support anyway due to various threats, not least being the loss of income to keep a roof over your head. And then there's all the sexual discrimination I endured. I don't like men very much to this day. Logic tells me that they cannot all be that way, but anyone who has followed the news and lives in the real world can certainly see that this is a monster problem.

Workplace harassment affected every aspect of my life because I was relying on this job to support myself (and my family). When you have to go to work and face abuse, it takes away the dignity and respect that we all have the right to feel in the workplace but also takes away the dignity in supporting yourself. I simply wanted to go to work and not face harassment, so that I could put food on the table and live my life without fear.

I respectfully request the committee support SB 726 and commends Sen. Taylor and the committee for giving this legislation due consideration in service to your constituencies and Oregonians from across the state. Furthermore, I commend Vice Chair Knopp for his leadership on this issue. This bill is critical to the workplace safety of all Oregonians.