

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mara Zusman, I'm a social worker in Portland Oregon and I have two children. I'm writing in support of HB 3031, the FAMILI Equity Act.

The reason I support HB 3031 is because families need to have paid leave when caring for a newborn or ill family member. It is a basic human dignity that people should have the right to care for their newborn babies or sick family members without risking losing their homes or being able to afford food or other necessities.

When I gave birth to my first daughter in 2010, my partner and I were living paycheck to paycheck. As a result of needing to go back to work to pay the bills and not being able to afford daycare, we had to work opposite shifts and care for the baby when we were off. My partner really struggled because he worked at night and cared for our baby during the day. Our whole family was under so much stress during those early periods, and that stress led to alcohol use and violence. Our daughter suffered the worst because we couldn't care for her the way she deserved during the time she was most vulnerable. If we had time to take care of her and ourselves and build more informal supports in our community, we would've had a different outcome.

Sincerely,

Mara Zusman

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