

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maggie Hodder, and I live in Portland, Oregon. I'm writing to support a paid family leave law (HB 3031, the FAMLl Equity Act).

Simply put, I am in favor of this bill because no one should suffer like my family did. We had no paid leave after my son was born, and my husband had to go back to work one week after I could have died from hemorrhage. I experienced physical injuries that did not heal properly because I was not given the time or space to heal. My son's first months in this world were marred by my postpartum depression. No child should ever have to experience that. Our family should have had the comfort of knowing we could pay our rent and keep our health insurance in our time of need. We should have had paid family leave.

We have an entire generation of children growing up who were denied the time to establish a strong newborn bond with their parents. I think we're already seeing the negative consequences in terms of increasing rates of child mental illness and poor school readiness.

Paid leave saves more money than it costs. Think about avoidable health care expenses, increased breastfeeding, reduced daycare expenditures, reduced reliance on public benefits/Medicaid, and most importantly people stay employed in their jobs - and paying taxes. Middle class Oregonians need help, and the FAMLl Equity Act would go a long way in finally delivering some relief. Thank you for your time.

Margaret Hodder