

March 25, 2019

**To:** The House Business and Labor Committee and the Senate Workforce Committee

**From:** Laurie Trieger

**Re:** Support of HB 3031

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Laurie Trieger, I'm a volunteer with NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon and I live in Eugene.

When writing my remarks for tonight I considered sharing with you about the financial hardship my family endured when I had to take unpaid time off to care for my mother, on and off, over a period of three years, through her surgeries and eventual death of metastatic breast cancer. Or about how, ten years later, I again had to temporarily work reduced hours and worry for my job security while experiencing the stress of situating my father in long term care when his dementia became more than we could manage ourselves at home. I could go back even further to share about the thousands of dollars and years of career advancement I lost due to the births of-- and while caring for-- my two (now adult) children.

But what I'd most like to tell you about tonight is the time when I suffered injuries myself; injuries that included a massive, debilitating concussion. It was September 2014 on a clear, sunny day. I was a pedestrian, using a marked crosswalk at a 4-way stop intersection, when I was hit by a large pick-up truck. The impact sent me flying into the air; I landed eight feet away from the crosswalk, head first on the asphalt.

It took a full month for me to recover enough to return to my most basic, essential functions and responsibilities at home and at work. After the initial month, I was able to return to work on a reduced schedule for another month and a half; so all in all I was either absent or at reduced capacity for a total of a little over two months; the same amount of time most employers take to post a position, recruit and review applicants, and complete the hiring process for a replacement worker.

Accidents happen and people get sick. This is a fundamental truth. No one is immune. Oregon workers need time to heal, they should not be forced to choose their health over their financial security, go into debt, or lose everything when faced with an unexpected healthcare crisis.

Paid Family and Medical Leave is not just about welcoming a new baby or providing care to family—Sometimes we need to take care of ourselves, in order to care for everyone else in our lives.

Thank you for your consideration of HB3031. A statewide Paid Family and Medical Leave insurance program would be good for individuals, families and their communities, for businesses of all sizes, and for Oregon's economy; and it's the kind and right thing to do.