

March 25, 2019

To: Senate Workforce and House Business and Labor Committees

From: Renee Spears

Re: Support of HB 3031

Dear Chair Taylor, Chair Barker, and members of the Committees,

My name is Renee Spears and for many years I was the President of Rose City Mortgage. Rose City Mortgage has been in business in Portland since 1999 and has won numerous awards over the years, including being named the #1 Small Business to Work for in Oregon and the #1 Green Business in Oregon by Oregon Business Magazine. I am submitting this testimony to voice my support of the FAMLI Equity Act.

Oregon can't be a national leader in sustainability without addressing the treatment of its people. It is not in the state's best interests to have people who can't afford to stay home and bond with a new baby or take time off work to be with a dying parent. Nor is it in the state's best interest to have people quit or lose their jobs during times of family crisis.

At my company, I felt it was important for employees to be able to have the time they needed to care for themselves or their families even if it meant taking substantial amounts of time off. New parents in my company took as much as 24 weeks paid family leave. Everyone on our staff supported their colleagues during these times because they knew that it made our team and our business stronger in the long run. It is far less expensive to pay for family and medical leave than it is to lose and have to replace staff.

While I was able to offer paid family leave to my employees, I know that this is difficult for many small businesses. Not to mention that clearly most businesses don't offer paid family leave currently, and won't on their own. A statewide paid family and medical leave insurance fund would help everyone -- workers and their families, business owners, and the state as a whole.

I think we all value workers, and we all value family. And that is really what this boils down to: supporting families in Oregon while keeping people working and our economy strong. It's time to pass paid family and medical leave. Do not make us wait any longer. Please pass the FAMLI Equity Act this year.

Thank you for your consideration!

Renee Spears  
Portland