



To:

House Committee on Business and Labor
hbl.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

March 25, 2019

Dear Chair Barker, Vice-Chair Barreto, Vice-Chair Bynum, and Members of the House Business and Labor Committee:

I am speaking on behalf of the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) to express our **support for House Bill 3031, the FAMILI Equity Act**. As a statewide, grassroots organization, we use our collective strengths to advance equity through empowering, organizing and advocating with our communities. We are driven by a commitment to secure the rights, recognition and resources that all our families need to thrive.

Asians and Pacific Islanders have become two of the fastest growing racial groups in Oregon, yet inequities persist in higher poverty rates, lower incomes, and lower earnings per capita. Nearly half of Pacific Islanders are low-income and nearly one-quarter live in poverty. Cambodian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Vietnamese Americans have the highest proportions of low-income earners, and 23% of Korean and Chinese American seniors live in poverty.¹ Many of our community members cannot afford to give up a paycheck to take necessary family and medical leave, a reality with long-term impacts.

One such member, named Wen Ping Chen, is the primary caregiver for her three kids and elderly mother-in-law. Her husband works full-time, and Wen works part-time to support their family. She has to choose between losing an essential paycheck or caring for her kids and her 90-year-old mother-in-law, who gets sick often. Wen should not have to choose between her family's economic security and her family's health.

This is not a unique story. Many of the immigrant families we work with are multi-generational and exist outside of the "nuclear family model." Many of our Asian and Pacific Islander families have never fit that mold. One in three Asian or Pacific Islander households in the US is intergenerational, and our members care for their children, grandparents, extended family, and cousins. Policies that narrowly define "family" exclude our communities from laws, programs, and benefits, which is why an inclusive family definition for paid family and medical leave is an important step to ensure that all of our families are able to access this critical insurance program.

¹ "A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders in the West." Asian Americans Advancing Justice, 2015. Page 54.



APANO is a supporter of HB 3031, which creates a paid family and medical leave program in Oregon, because we know that all Oregonians need time to care for our families, no matter where we work or what our families look like. The health, stability and well-being of all families, and thus our state, will follow.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge the House Business and Labor Committee to vote in support of HB 3031.

Sincerely,

Ava Kamb
Field Organizer
APANO