



Testimony in support of House Bill 3031

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Chair Barker and Members of the Committee,

As a family nurse practitioner, I can say first hand that it's past time for Paid Family and Medical Leave in Oregon. Patients across the state have waited long enough and, one patient story stands out in particular.

I first met "Baby P" in my primary care clinic when he was barely one month old and had spent the first 24 days of his life in the neonatal intensive care unit. His condition meant that he would not be able to sit up, stand or even swallow food on his own without problems and would need to see a variety of speech and feeding specialists. As a toddler, he would need a tube placed in his stomach to allow him to eat so that the food wouldn't go to his lungs.

All of these serious conditions and medical appointments would require parents to have the ability to take time away their jobs.

Baby P's parents are both hard working people. His dad works as a cashier, and his mom manages a small store. Both could take some unpaid time away from work and federal laws protect their job security, but neither has access to *paid* time to take care of a loved one. While their baby was in the hospital, they still needed to pay their rent and bills. His mom had to go back to work before baby P was even a month old, in order to make ends meet. The ten-minute breaks allowed by her employer weren't enough time to adequately pump enough breast milk that baby P needed to grow and get stronger, which prevented her from maintaining breastfeeding for very long, something that every pediatric medical organization in the world recommends doing for as long as possible.

It's hard enough for new parents to recover and adjust to the birth of a healthy child, but to have a child born with medical problems presents even more challenges for working families. Having an insurance system that both employees and employers pay into that allows for these unexpected periods would have made a world of difference for baby P's family, and many other families in Oregon.

I hope that Oregon can join several other states, any many countries throughout the world, by passing House Bill 3031, a comprehensive paid family medical leave insurance program, this session.