

March 25, 2019

To: The House Business and Labor Committee and the Senate Workforce Committee  
From: Mikayla Goodrich  
Re: Support of HB 3031

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mikayla Goodrich and I'm writing you along with Basic Rights Oregon, I live in the Gateway District of Portland. Thank you for taking the time to consider this testimony. Seventeen years ago, I moved to Portland from the Metropolitan Detroit Area seeking to make a better life for myself here than was possible there. In those Seventeen years I have been very successful in this regard. HB 3031 provides a necessary benefit that covers a crack I have fallen through despite that success.

While I am still close with my relatives, they are a little over 2000 miles away and do not have the means to travel, much less take unpaid time from their lives to come help me if help was needed, especially from a state that does less than Oregon to support families in this way. Also, while my pool of paid time off is generous to the point of luxurious after 10 years with my current employer, they do not offer a short-term disability benefit. With that preface, I am currently facing having to take as many as 8 weeks off for a gender affirming vaginoplasty procedure.

The initial recovery from this procedure is arduous. It will involve 5 days of being strictly bedbound in the hospital followed by several of disability severe enough that it is advised to have live in assistance of some sort during this time that is comfortable with, and able to, assist in the shower and on the toilet. For several weeks after that period I will still be unable to do basic things like clean my cat's litter, empty the garbage, cook, do dishes, or clean my own laundry. I will need a large amount of assistance.

This hardship will place a significant burden upon myself, my family, and my circle of chosen family and friends here in Oregon. HB 3031 addresses this burden directly. No leave pool, no matter how luxurious, can withstand that sort of hit. In addition, the chosen family and friends near at hand would be able to lend what aid they are able to without having to choose between basic compassion and their ability to care for their dependents and other loved ones. Oregon is a state full of transplants and a rare and precious haven for queer folk of all sorts. This law makes Oregon a better, and safer, place for all of us past, present, and future. Again, thank you for your time and have an excellent day.

Sincerely,

Mikayla Goodrich