



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

March 25, 2019

I am writing today to express my concerns about the impacts of HB 3031 and SB 947. These proposed bills are the most aggressive family leave taxes under consideration in the country and will harm Oregon businesses.

The North Clackamas Chamber represents approximately 500 businesses who are already committed to growing business opportunities and providing living-wage jobs for families in our community. HB 3031 & SB 947 would create a costly new government-run, mandatory leave program that would be funded by all public- and private-sector employers and employees through a new payroll tax. The tax would be levied on all employers, regardless of whether or not they already provide employees with a family leave benefit.

This bill would require up to 32 weeks of paid leave each year. That could equate to over 60% of the employee's scheduled work days for the entire year. During this time, an Oregon employer would be required to maintain the position for the full duration of a worker's leave while finding temporary, skilled workers to replace those on leave. IF, they can even afford to fund a temporary replacement! This is an added cost to businesses and a huge loss in production to maintain day to day business operations.

HB 3031 & SB 947 also do not require leave to be taken concurrently with OFLA, which means that employees still could qualify for unpaid leave after using up the 32 weeks of paid leave. This increases the uncertainty and risk for all businesses

Requiring an employer to maintain a job for an employee who is absent up to 32 weeks (or longer) each year also requires the employer to maintain that absent employee's non-wage benefits. Failing to do so could be deemed discriminatory. This puts tremendous pressure on employers of all sizes. For many Oregon businesses, it will be impossible to do what HB 3031 or SB 947 asks of them, and failure to do so would trigger substantial penalties.

Oregon businesses are still working to comply with the state's paid sick leave law, minimum wage increases, predictive scheduling law, overtime mandate, and the new and complex equal pay law. Now is not the time to pass an aggressive family and medical leave mandate that would further burden local businesses and disincentivize growth in Oregon communities.

Please oppose HB 3031 and SB 947.

Sincerely,

*Laura Edmonds*

Laura Edmonds, CEO