

Several trade organizations I belong to have requested I email you my thoughts on the Oregon Paid Family Leave Act of 2019.

To the Committee Chairs overseeing both HB3031 and SB 947. These House and Senate bills respectively that will increase the risk to both public and private employers in Oregon with a paid family leave requirement.

Please remember you are building in expense.

You are creating an unavoidable cost associated with hiring one employee. It also is complicated and conflicts with Federal law.

If you increase the cost of hiring people, you reduce the number of people hired.

I cannot speak for industries outside of mine, but I have noticed that since the Oregon Legislature has taken up higher minimum wages my industry (the petroleum distribution and retail gas business) is seeing retail gas stations close due to the baseline cost of running a small business. We are also seeing that with small restaurants and national fastfood chains as well.

In fact the issue is becoming so significant in rural Oregon you are now allowing self-serve gasoline in rural Oregon (which I never thought in my lifetime would happen).

By raising costs to employ people you are reducing the employment in Oregon. Sure the economy is great now, but that is not forever and Oregon typically sees a lower low than other parts of the United States. Even with a good economy teen employment and rural employment is still way higher than it needs to be. Don't contribute to rural poverty with these bills. Furthermore you are reducing the opportunity for rural services to exist as local economies cannot afford the base line cost you are building into our economy with laws like these.

Please consider your unintended consequences. Imagine you want to start a business and have to consider that huge first jump in hiring someone for the first time. Imagine how big a risk this would place on you.

For every person granted family leave you are probably denying a few others their first job. For every person who is saved by this family medical leave concept a few dozen see their pay, upward mobility, and hours available impacted. By raising costs in one area you are lowering standards of living throughout Oregon.

Please consider that impact and pass on this well meaning but very flawed policy concept.

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