

Dear Chair Barker,

I am strongly opposed to HB 3031 which creates a new government-run, one-size-fits-all mandatory leave program that would be funded by all employers and employees through a new payroll tax. We are a family farm that cannot afford to hold a position open for 32 weeks after only 90 days of employment. The minimum amount of time worked should be at least a year before employees could qualify for this benefit. With 32 weeks of paid leave, HB 3031 is one of the most aggressive family leave taxes under consideration in the country! A program of this size will likely over burden Oregon's farm families. HB 3031 applies to employers with even just ONE employee! The bill offers no exemptions or accommodations for small or seasonal businesses. It's impractical for many of our small and family run farms like mine. If an employee leaves, every employer will be required to maintain the position for the full duration of a worker's leave. Even while trying to find temporary, skilled workers to replace those on leave. This will be especially difficult and an added cost for farmers during harvest time. HB 3031 goes beyond that and requires that the employer pay 50 percent of the cost! The majority of states with a family leave program require the program to be funded only through employee contributions. Many small businesses and family farms cannot afford this.

We are still scrambling to comply with the state's paid sick leave law, minimum wage increases, retirement savings requirement, and the new and complex equal pay law. Now is NOT the time to pass an aggressive family and medical leave requirement that would further burden us. This is a very involved bill with many different amounts of leave applied to it and is hard to define each amount of leave.

It practically takes a full time person to keep up with all the new rules and regulations to stay in compliance.

Please vote 'NO' on HB 3031. It's a cost that many farmers like us will be unable to afford.

Sincerely,

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