Dear Chair Barker,

HB 3031 creates a new costly government-run, one-size-fits-all mandatory leave program that would be funded by all public- and private-sector employers and employees through a new payroll tax.

HB 3031 is one of the most aggressive family leave taxes under consideration in the country! It would provide 32 weeks of paid leave, well above the 6 and 12 weeks adopted by other states. State agencies can't afford this anymore than small or even large private companies can!

A national think tank found that a benefit of this size would cost Oregonians more than $1.5 billion in new paycheck taxes each biennium!

Currently, only six other states and D.C. have enacted family and medical leave programs. Although the majority of these states require the program to be funded only through employee contributions, HB 3031 requires that the employer pay 50 percent of cost. Public employers certainly don't have this accounted for in their employment contracts anymore than small businesses have this in their budgets! This is sure to impact the costs of goods and services in the state, for businesses that can stay open anyhow, which increases inflation for people now paying higher taxes, so it's lose/lose for all involved!

Unlike the Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA), which governs workplaces of 25 or more, HB 3031 applies to employers with just ONE employee! This will harm our smallest employers and people trying to start a new branch/location or business in Oregon.

HB 3031 will be mandatory for employers of ALL sizes. The bill offers no exemptions for small businesses NOR for employers that already offer more generous leave programs.

Every employer will 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. That's an added cost that isn't acknowledged in HB 3031.

SB 947 is an attempt to circumvent Oregon's constitutional requirement for a 3/5 vote to raise revenue. We see what you're doing and we don't like it!

SB 947 makes sweeping changes to Oregon's existing family leave laws-expanding OFLA coverage to employers with as few as ONE employee.

Like paid sick leave, SB 947 requires employers to pay full wages while the employee is on leave. Unlike sick leave, the proposed paid family and medical leave benefit would last up to 48 weeks each year, and Oregon businesses, large and small, would be on the hook for 100% of the cost. You do realize there are only 52 weeks in a year, right? That means the employee could be off work for nearly a year! That impacts any public or private sector employer in huge ways!!

Expanding OFLA coverage to any individual that the employee has a close association with will result in higher use of paid leave. The cost will be enormous to businesses located in Oregon. "Any association" could be my sister's husband's parents, who I've met only a handful of times! That's ridiculous!

With a total 48 weeks of leave, these bills would quadruple the amount of time employers would have to find coverage for the absent employee. That's a cost that most businesses will be unable to afford, including public sector employers!

SB 947 will create a costly, state-mandated program that will be impossible for employers to comply with.

Oregon businesses are still scrambling 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 aggressive family and medical leave mandates that would further burden local businesses.

Please vote 'NO' on HB 3031 and SB 947.

Sincerely,

Susan Dunfee
5169 Joan Dr N
Keizer, OR 97303
sdlinfield@yahoo.com