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TO: Chair Holvey
Vice-Chair Williamson
Vice-Chair Wilson
Members of the House Committee on Rules

FR: Jess Giannettino Villatoro, Political Director, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: Support for HB 3022 with the Forthcoming Amendment, Workers Compensation Updates for Injured Workers

April 22, 2019

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across the state and is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 3022 workers compensation updates for injured workers.

The federation of labor has long weighed in on issues related to the workers compensation system to ensure that workers can access the system when they are injured. HB 3022 makes small, but important changes to enable workers whose original injury was misdiagnosed to get the treatment they need.

Right now, if a worker's injury was misdiagnosed the worker is solely responsible for the cost of an additional diagnosis. This extra cost can be prohibitive for low wage workers whose wages often won't cover medical expenses, let alone when they've been on time loss and only receiving two-thirds of their wage.

HB 3022 also lessens the burden on a worker whose ailment is caused by both a pre-existing condition and an on-the-job injury. The benefit to a worker is accomplished by requiring the insurer to demonstrate that the pre-existing condition is more of a cause for the need for treatment than the on-the-job injury when a claim is filed.

The Oregon AFL-CIO respectfully requests your support for HB 3022 with the forthcoming amendment to ensure injured workers across the state can access workers compensation benefits should they need them.