



March 22, 2019

Chair Barker and Members of the Committee,

I write to you today on behalf of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Union Local 555, in support of House Bill 3031, the FAMILI Equity Act. We represent over 25,000 workers in Oregon and Southwest Washington in several industries, including retail, meatpacking, healthcare, and more. UFCW workers are a diverse group that have grown into the largest private sector labor union in Oregon, and we are proud to be a strong collective voice for working people. As union members, we value family, and believe that when we come together to support each other, we can ensure that everyone's needs are met. That is what Paid Family and Medical Leave will do here in Oregon.

Data shows that currently only 13% of Oregon's workforce is eligible for paid family leave, and only 60% is eligible for unpaid leave. This is unacceptable. It is a far too frequent occurrence that workers in Oregon, especially those in the retail, food service, and hospitality industries are forced to choose between caring for themselves or a loved one and paying rent or putting food on the table. As a state, we can do so much better.

We believe that regardless of a worker's status as full or part-time, how long ago they started their job, or how much they make in wages, they should never be forced to make a choice between their loved ones or their income. We stand in strong support of covering all workers under the FAMILI Equity Act, and urge legislators to ensure that lower wage earners receive full wage-replacement, allowing them to truly utilize this critical benefit when they need it most.

As a member of the Fair Shot Coalition, UFCW Local 555 stands behind the vision that every Oregonian deserves to be treated with dignity and respect and that every family deserves financial stability and the opportunity to thrive. That is why we respectfully urge a yes vote on House Bill 3031.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin Billman
Director of Legislative and Community Action
UFCW Local 555