



RE: SB 716 – Scheduling Law Bill – Now is not the time!

Dear Senators,

Oregon passed one of the first statewide Scheduling laws in 2017. After a great deal of negotiation during the 2017 session, employer and labor representatives reached agreement on a bill providing employees with certainty while still allowing businesses to accommodate customer demands. It was an historic piece of legislation, and since that time, other states still are struggling to try and reach the kind of compromise Oregon was able to achieve.

The primary reason workers needed predictable schedules was so they could plan their childcare needs around their work schedules. The global pandemic has wreaked havoc on the entire retail community and the supply chain, not only across the country, but also globally. Now, at a time when retail employers are still struggling with implementation of the Scheduling laws, there have been government mandated closures, work from home orders, and other disruptions to employment.

A key element of the agreement was the provision that an employee could *request* schedule changes, but employers were not required to grant those changes. SB 716 upends that agreement and requires employers to grant certain schedule change requests.

Employers are striving to get employees back to work post-pandemic and rebuild the economy. Now is not the time to make significant changes to a bill that involved a considerable amount of work by many different interests, both from the employee and employer communities. Various needs should be taken into account when establishing work schedules, but sudden and unpredictable changes are very difficult to manage, especially in the midst of a global pandemic.

This concept is particularly challenging in our current atmosphere when customer demands, and government shutdowns, fluctuate so frequently. Supply chains all over the world are still uncertain. We simply cannot add another layer of challenges to work scheduling on businesses, some of which are struggling on the very brink already.

This bill upends a crucial element of the 2017 agreement and will impose costs on businesses even when they are doing the very thing we were asked to do – give consistency in schedules. Now is not the time to make changes to this issue, one that few states have been able to tackle like Oregon did such a short time ago.