

Testimony in Support of SB 588

Amber Ivy

February 4, 2021

Chair Riley and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 588. My name is Amber Ivy and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of IBEW Local 280 which I have been a member of since 2011.

In March of 2020 I was working on the Hayward Field project in Eugene, OR. There were hundreds of people on this jobsite. Some of those people were commuting down from Washington State, the first COVID hotspot in the United States. One of my coworkers and I became really sick a day apart from each other. I spent nine days in bed with chills and the worst headache I've ever experienced. There were no tests in March, so my coworker and I have no idea if we had COVID or not. What I do know is that I not only lost wages for the nine days I was sick, but I also lost wages for the 14 days I was in quarantine after that. I received my first unemployment check May 7th and I didn't receive my second unemployment check until November 24th. A week of sick pay would have helped me so much during this incredibly stressful time.

My 76-year-old mother lives with me. I have been terrified that I would give this horrible disease to her during the time I was sick and now possibly bringing something home due to people on our job sites not being able to take time off when they are sick. Especially during this time of pandemic, all tradesmen deserve to have the ability to take time off, so we don't spread disease to others. We work in your offices making sure your internet connections are secure. Please don't make us come to work sick.

IBEW members are the unheralded essential workers during this pandemic. This Zoom conference we are using right now to communicate and keep our State functioning is due to myself and my Union brothers and sisters laying the infrastructures that support this platform. The distance learning that our children have been depending on is being supported by the years of our work putting in miles of fiber optic and data cabling. The access control of our buildings that keep all of us safe from intruders has been put in place by IBEW members. We put a new WIFI system into the Corvallis hospital so that health care professionals have a dependable system to communicate with their patients and their families. Work from home would not be happening without us and that is a fact.

We are not asking for more than what the State has already granted to what currently applies to most all sectors in this State. We are asking to be put on a level playing field with them. That is not too much to ask of our State.

Thank you for your time today. It means a lot to me and IBEW Local 280 to have this opportunity to be heard.