

Senate Labor Committee SB 588, Dash-1 Amendment Testimony
Dawn Des Brisay, ILWU Local 40 President

Good afternoon, Chair and Members of the Committee. My name is Dawn Des Brisay. I am President of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 40, in Portland Oregon. I have worked as a rank-and-file member of the ILWU for over 35 years.

I am here to urge you to adopt the Dash-1 amendment excluding ILWU Longshore Workers in Oregon from SB-588.

The ILWU-PMA contract is a multi-state, multi-employer collective bargaining agreement that provides outstanding leave for our workforce. The ILWU has agreed to provide a workforce 24/7, 360 days a year. Because of the fluctuating nature of the maritime industry, our workers do not have a set work schedule. We work for different employers even within a single port, at different terminals throughout the week. The number of hours we can work and earn money fluctuates every week, based on the arrival of ships, trains, and other factors beyond our control. The workweek starts on Saturday and ends on Friday. Section 6.1 of our contract guarantees our members 48 hours off each week, and it can be any day we choose. The members don't have to schedule our days off, or ask permission from the employer; it can be any day of the week. This flexibility is very good for members who have families.

The ILWU and our employer, the Pacific Maritime Association, or PMA, have negotiated a vacation/PTO plan that is paid up front on the second Friday in February. Our members each receive a check based on our years in the industry. The check is equal to 40 hours for each vacation week earned, up to 6 weeks of vacation pay. The schedule to qualify for additional vacation weeks is outlined in section 7 of the contract.

Besides receiving a vacation check each year, the ILWU and PMA have negotiated a COVID relief package. To protect our members who have been infected, exposed, or need to care for a loved one due to the pandemic. I was working at Terminal 6 in Portland when I received a call that I had been exposed. I immediately reported the information to my employer. Within minutes, I was sent home. I was required to quarantine. Once sufficient time had passed and I received a negative COVID test, I returned to work. My next paycheck included COVID relief pay.

The ILWU and PMA take the pandemic seriously. Not only have the two parties negotiated pay for missing work, but our members' healthcare and pension will not be disturbed, if a member is off work for an extended period of time. Besides the vacation check, and the COVID relief program, the ILWU also provides a self-funded worker indemnity plan for members who need to be excused from work for an extended period of time, that is not related to COVID-19.

Our collective bargaining agreement provides our members superior protections relating to personal time off. I understand that SB-588 is important to some workers in Oregon, but because of our hiring system and our unusual work week, SB-588 will not benefit our workers and could actually reduce the negotiated benefits for the men and women working under the ILWU collective bargaining agreement -- not to mention creating a difficult situation with our multi-state employer that needs to have consistency among the benefits of members in three states.

Our ask is simple: Please adopt the amendment to SB 588 excluding the Longshore Workers from SB-588. Thank you.

