

TO: Chair Holvey
Vice-Chairs Grayber and Bonham
Members of the House Business and Labor Committee

RE: HB 4086 Support, Workers Compensation Modernization

February 2, 2022

I am writing on behalf of the American Federation of Teachers Oregon, a state federation representing over 17,000 education workers across the state. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 4086. It is important to our membership that legislators act this year to improve Oregon's Workers Compensation system.

Making improvements to our system which supports working people after a workplace injury or exposure is timely and urgent. During the pandemic, education workers have been placed in unsafe work environments across the nation, and countless workers contracted COVID-19 in their roles as support staff, teachers, and researchers across Pre-K, K-12, and higher education. Our members and our communities need our Worker's Compensation system to be modernized.

HB 4086 updates language to be more inclusive while ensuring that a greater number of families can access death benefits. In addition, HB 4086 ensures that every worker has protection from retaliation and discrimination related to filing or inquiring about their rights under workers compensation – regardless of employer size.

HB 4086 modernizes our state's Worker's Compensation statute to better reflect our values and work as it is intended: to protect workers from discrimination and retaliation at work and to allow all workers and their families to receive these critical benefits if they are harmed on the job.

On behalf of our members and our communities, we encourage all to vote in favor of HB 4086.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Andrea Haverkamp". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Andrea Haverkamp, PhD
American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Oregon