



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

To: Chair Taylor
Vice-Chair Bonham
Members of the Senate Labor and Business Committee

FR: Catie Theisen, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: SB 418 Support, Workers Compensation Medical Time-off

February 8, 2023

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across Oregon and is proud to be a voice for all workers in the legislative process. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 418 to ensure that workers are able to receive treatment and get better when they've been hurt at work.

SB 418 addresses an ongoing issue within the workers' compensation system in a worker's ability to access medical care on their road to full recovery. Currently, when a workers' compensation claim has been settled, workers are entitled to receive pay for 66 and $\frac{2}{3}$ of the time they are away for any time over 4 hours. However, many workers have been cleared to return to work but have ongoing medical appointments to get to full recovery. Typically, this health care provider visit or physical therapy session is less than 4 hours at a time.

Consequently, under current law, the worker is unable to use their workers' compensation time to fully heal. This leads to workers' using their personal leave, sick time or other accrued paid time off just to go to medical appointments for their on-the-job injury. In far too many instances, workers are faced with the choice to fully drain their paid time off, or skip the appointment entirely because they cannot afford to miss work without compensation.

This delay in care can have devastating impacts to the worker, the company and the community and economy at large. It's critical that when a worker wants to work, they be able to do so at 100% capacity. And the workers' compensation system is intended to do just that: get injured workers back to work.

SB 418 allows workers to be compensated for their time away from work to attend their medical or physical therapy appointments without having to exceed the 4 hour threshold. This will allow workers to come back to work as they are recovering, and then fully heal. We encourage your support of SB 418.