

SB 850 Testimony

Chair Taylor, Co-Chair Bonham, Members of the Committee, my name is Erin Preston. I am a wife and mother of 3 children.

I am testifying against SB 850, as a wife and on behalf of our family that relies on Prevailing Wage work through Open Shop Employment. My Husband has been working on prevailing wage projects with Open Shop firms for 22 years.

I firmly believe the end game of SB 850 is to end Open Shop firms performing Public Works. This would have a devastating impact to me and my family.

The “off ramp” of “no cost health care”, is no off ramp at all, but a closed door to us. What exactly is “no cost health care”? Who has that? Friends and family, I know in the trades that are Union do not have that. They have regular insurance with deductibles and co-pays like everyone else. So why would SB 850 require this for those that don’t go the route of a PLA? What an unfair, unjust, unequal, and biased request of those businesses that support us.

Over the years, my husbands’ Fringe Benefit package has been exactly that. *A benefit!* All of it! He did not have deductions from his Fringe Benefit that were of no direct benefit to him. Instead, what was not spent on health insurance or went into his 401k, was paid to him as cash on his check. He was never required to pay into an additional health insurance plan while he was covered by the health plan of my employer. Having that extra cash on his check really bolstered our income and ultimately helped us buy our home.

I am grateful that he has received the full use of his entire Fringe Benefit package over the years.

Allowing us to choose to put extra in his 401k retirement plan or keep the extra cash on his check during rough times like COVID or the high inflation costs we are experiencing right now. Or good times like our daughters upcoming high school graduation celebration.

I see no benefit of this bill to working families or Oregon businesses. Instead, it harms working families. It would hurt mine. It makes me afraid for our future.

Please protect my family, my husband’s job and all the open shop prevailing wage workers in Oregon. Vote NO on SB 850 and its amendments-

Thank you,

Erin Preston