



Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Bonham and members of the committee,

My name is Odalis Aguilar and a political coordinator with Oregon AFSCME. Oregon AFSCME believes in economic and social justice for all Oregon workers and their families. One of our priorities is to empower and unite workers to create change in their workplaces and communities. Oregon AFSCME represents over 33,000 workers in the public sector. Our members work for the State of Oregon in addition to counties, municipalities and behavioral health nonprofits across Oregon as well as self-employed child care providers.

Today I am writing to extend our support for SB 907 which would allow workers to reasonably refuse to do work that can cause them death, serious impairment, or serious injury— such as extreme heat or unsafe equipment. Our members perform a wide variety of tasks that can range from working on a road crew to a pharmacy technician. We always strive to ensure that our workers feel empowered to speak up when they feel unsafe at their workplace. Workers regularly bring to their employers attention when something is not right but we have heard stories of employers being negligent to these requests which can cause serious injury or even death.

We have had our own members pass due to the carelessness of an employer even after repeatedly bringing to their attention how dangerous the worksite and equipment was. SB 907 takes an existing right that is hidden in an administrative rule, and clarifies it in statute. This bill is intended to provide workers with assurance that if and when they refuse to engage in dangerous work, that they are not retaliated against.

It would use Oregon's already-established rebuttable presumption to protect workers who exercise this right from retaliation. We urge your 'Yes' vote on SB 907. We need to give workers the option to protect themselves in dangerous workplace situations. Thank you for your time.

Odalis Aguilar Aguilar
Political Coordinator
Oregon AFSCME