



To: Senate Committee on Labor & Business
From: Family Forward Oregon and AFL-CIO
Date: April 4, 2023
RE: SB 999 -3

Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Bonham, Members of the Committee:

Family Forward is a statewide advocacy organization working to pass policies that support care and caregiving Oregon. AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across Oregon and is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. In addition to the first testimony that both organizations submitted in support of the SB 999 -3 amendment, we are submitting another testimony for the record, outlining future discussions we believe are necessary in order to further align Paid Leave Oregon and the Oregon Family Leave Act.

As you know, the -3 amendment to SB 999 comes to the committee after months of discussion and work between labor and business advocates and will provide alignment between Paid Leave Oregon and the Oregon Family Leave Act. During the workgroup meetings, both sides have identified areas where we would like to reconvene and hold more discussion during the interim in order to achieve even greater alignment.

The following are policy areas that we would like to revisit:

Changes to OFLA

- Amend eligibility requirements
 - Eliminate the requirement that an employee must work for an employer that has 25 or more employees in order for an employee to be eligible for benefits. This would align with Paid Leave Oregon, which requires an employee to have earned at least \$1,000 in the year before applying for benefits to be eligible.
 - Reduce the requirement for an employee to have worked 180 days down to 90 days in order to be eligible for OFLA benefits and job protection. In addition, eliminate the requirement for an employee to have worked an average of 25 hours per week. Again, this would align with the benefit eligibility requirement in Paid Leave Oregon, which requires an employee to have earned at least \$1,000 in the year before applying for benefits.
- Preserve leave buckets and associated job protections for buckets of leave that currently only exist in OFLA— such as sick child, bereavement, and military family leave. We would

like to discuss a feasible timeline with stakeholders to move those buckets of leave over to Paid Leave Oregon.

- Revisit the special rules for teachers provision in OFLA statute, which does not exist in Paid Leave Oregon statute. This was flagged by our hardworking teachers and the staff that make certain schools function as an important issue that has come up regarding access to leave.

Changes to Paid Leave Oregon

- Add sick child, bereavement, and military family leave as additional kinds of leave covered under the program. Currently, these leaves only exist in OFLA. Adding these additional buckets of leave will allow Oregonians to take paid, job protected leave for a wider range of critical life events. This policy change should be made once the program is up and running so we can have a better understanding of Paid Leave Oregon's solvency and if the fund is able to support additional buckets of leave.

Family Forward and AFL-CIO look forward to more discussions during the interim and in the 2024 legislative session to tackle these technical but important areas of alignment for both Paid Leave Oregon and OFLA. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Lisa Kwon
Policy Manager
Family Forward Oregon

