

Submitter: Celia Clause  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB916

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 916, which proposes allowing striking workers to collect unemployment benefits during a labor strike.

Unemployment insurance is meant to help people who lose their jobs through no fault of their own—such as layoffs or company closures. A strike, however, is a voluntary action. Choosing to walk off the job is not the same as being let go unexpectedly, and it should not qualify someone for taxpayer-funded assistance meant for people who truly have no other option.

This bill would set a troubling precedent. If passed, it could cost Oregon millions of dollars at a time when many families and small businesses are still struggling. It's not fair to ask regular taxpayers to subsidize private labor disputes—especially when unions already have strike funds in place to support their members during work stoppages. If those funds are not being used for that purpose, perhaps those unions should rethink how they use member dues before turning to the public for help.

Paying unemployment benefits to striking workers opens the door to abuse, increases the financial burden on the state, and blurs the line between necessary social safety nets and politically motivated decisions. Oregon's unemployment system should stay focused on helping those who are involuntarily unemployed and in urgent need.

Thank you for considering my perspective. I urge you to vote no on SB 916.