

OREGON WORKING FAMILIES PARTY

Testimony in Support of HB 5016

TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on General Government

FROM: Annie Naranjo-Rivera, Oregon Working Families Party

May 3, 2025

Co-Chairs Gorsek and Smith and Members of the Committee,

My name is Annie Naranjo-Rivera, and I serve as the State Director of the Oregon Working Families Party. We are a grassroots political organization made up of community based organizations and unions who are committed to building a society that works for all of us, not just the wealthy and well-connected. We advocate for economic justice, racial equity, and a democracy that centers working people and their communities.

That is why I write to urge your strong support for legislative staff positions in your consideration of **HB 5016**, a bill that addresses the urgent need for adequate workplace staffing in the Oregon legislature. Currently, legislative offices must support the year-round demands of legislative work, and with growing staff workloads, increases in volume of critical constituent services, coupled with a part-time Legislative body of elected officials, we fear that legislative workers as well as constituents are falling through the cracks.

Before coming to the Oregon Working Families Party, I served in two different roles in the Oregon legislature, Chief of Staff and before that LA2. I have seen burnout and toxic stress impact staff in the legislature firsthand. This also has an impact on legislators who must constantly re-shuffle staff to attempt to meet growing demands and needs. I have seen numerous talented and qualified individuals leave public service for more stable work environments where they will not be faced with constant turnover and insurmountable workloads. Time and resources are invested every session to train a brand new set of staff members who will inevitably be forced to find new work months later, and as we lose these public servants from the

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workforce, we also lose with them institutional knowledge in districts across our state. As **HB 5016** moves forward, we have the opportunity to re-evaluate our current model and make smart investments to address staff workload.

This legislation comes at a moment of critical funding questions for our state, and while there are tough decisions to balance, Oregon must consider how we can best position ourselves to do the people's work efficiently, fairly, and practically.

We respectfully urge you to consider these things in your deliberations of **HB 5016**.

Sincerely,

Annie Naranjo-Rivera
State Director
Oregon Working Families Party