

March 25, 2019

To: The House Business and Labor Committee and the Senate Workforce Committee

From: Margarita Viveros

Re: Support of HB 3031

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maggie Viveros and I live in Salem. Just before my 16th birthday I began to feel ill so ill that I had to be hospitalized, I was diagnosed with a chronic illness that caused me to be in and out of the hospital for a year. The stress, fear, and uncertainty that this chronic illness brought in to a family was devastating. I am the oldest of my 3 siblings. So, my mother who is a farmworker single mother had to figure out how to take care of me and take care of our basic needs at home, at the same time. She works through different farm labor contractors through the year, contractors that offer no benefits and an hourly wage that can vary from contract to contract but for the most part only pays minimum wage. She easily used up the 40 hrs. of sick leave on my first visit to the hospital.

As a child with a chronic illness I have had my fair share of hospital stays, but the pain is not in the stay itself, it's in the thought that my mother, the one who keeps a roof over my head can lose her job and everything that she has worked for, while making sure I am able to recuperate. I have gazed into the eyes of the problem, and how that fear has consumed my mother, adding another weight to her shoulders.

When someone is sick all they should have to worry about is getting better. Mothers shouldn't have to worry about missing work when they are just trying to care for their family. Families with children that have a chronic illness like mine have suffered enough, the last thing we need is to be stressed even more. I hope you do care about the families like mine in Oregon and all the sick children who need family with them during such a scary time. I hope you can understand the impact that these situations have on hard working mothers like mine and I pray you do something about lifting the weight of their shoulders, please pass HB3031.

Sincerely,
Maggie Viveros