

Testimony in Support of the Oregon Corporate Accountability Act, SB 750
Senate Committee on Workforce
April 4, 2019

I am writing this letter anonymously out of the fear of repercussions from my former employer. I support SB 750, the Oregon Corporate Accountability Act, which would provide another way for workers to enforce their rights and hold companies accountable because workers need better protection. This letter details my experience working for a major restaurant chain.

When I worked there, I witnessed numerous violations of workers' rights. Examples include working for 8 hours or much longer without breaks, workers under the age of 18 operating machinery they weren't supposed to, and our boss discouraging and outright banning the employees to talk about their wages to each other.

Recently, I was injured at work and was left to navigate the system of Worker's Compensation without real help and I felt completely persecuted by my former boss. I was removed from the schedule without notice, told that filing a claim would be pointless, and finally asked to resign by my boss so they could put someone else in my position. The situation was terrifying. I had no idea who to turn to and how to protect myself. I wanted to get help, but I worried about facing further retaliation for doing so.

I finally asked for help from the Northwest Workers' Justice Project, only to find my options were limited because I had signed an arbitration contract at the beginning of my employment without having knowledge of the wide reaching consequences. I felt completely hopeless, what was the point in going to arbitration? There was no point! I knew that the odds would be grossly out of my favor should I attempt to do so. This contract also banned joining a collective action case, so any hope I might have had in getting some justice for how my coworkers and I were treated was gone. I gave up. I gave up and my former employer managed to deter yet another worker who had been mistreated from getting help. This is why I support SB 750, because it would make it possible for other workers who have experienced things like me to get the help they need and deserve. No worker should feel alone in their battle.

Thank you for taking the time to read this,

A Concerned Worker