



June 11, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

During the grind of legislative sessions, it's very easy to get caught up in the negativity and focus on the growing partisan divide that escalates as pressure mounts. Today, I want to celebrate a departure from that norm.

For over a year, Republicans and Democrats ... business leaders and consumer advocates ... have gathered around a table to negotiate a statewide bipartisan priority – Paid Family and Medical Leave. The workgroup provided an opportunity to discuss shared values, personal struggles as employers and caregivers, and learn from the implementation experiences in other states.

As Republicans we began this workgroup driving towards a policy that shared the following values;

- A program that was affordable for employers and workers, that required investment from both sides of the equation and that looked out for small businesses less able to afford new financial mandates.
- Protections for our small employers.
- Alignment with existing paid and medical leave programs. This was important so our employers weren't forced to track and manage multiple leave programs.
- Protection for employers when hiring temporary or replacement workers with their workers choose to take their leave.
- Reasonable benefit leave time that allowed workers, especially our expecting mothers and fathers the time to bond with their new babies and adopted family members.
- A statewide policy that ensures consistency and predictability for Oregon employers.
- Program flexibility that allows for employers to access or utilize existing market place insurance products.
- Accurate cost accountability for the State and the workers and employers paying into the system.

Today, I want to commend our Democratic counterparts for creating an environment for cooperative dialogue. HB 2005 is a night and day improvement over previous versions created by a shared passion and drive to do what is right.

When given the opportunity to come together and find commonality, legislation improves and all of Oregon wins. We might not like all of HB 2005 but it represents an earnest attempt to find compromise.

We look forward to the continued discussion with you on this bill.

Respectfully,

Daniel Bonham  
House District 59

Tim Knopp  
Senate District 27