



Oregon Alliance to End Violence Against Women

Close the Gap in Workplace Protections for Victims of Violence

HB 2903 – the Safe Leave Act

Background:

Oregon law protects victims of domestic violence and sexual violence from discrimination in the workplace, and provides the right to take reasonable time off if necessary to seek court or law enforcement protection, medical care, or other safety measures. These protections provide safety for victims as well as for the workplace as a whole.

Problem:

- 1) Under current law, part-time and new employees do not qualify for protection. This leaves employees who are victims vulnerable to safety threats, and poses a risk to the workplace as a whole.
- 2) Information about these laws is not included in the notices that employers must post in break rooms and other locations. Consequently, many victims do not know they have access to this important protection.

Solution: HB 2903

- 1) Remove the exemption from protection for part-time and new employees who are victims in need of reasonable time off to seek court or law enforcement protection, medical care, or other safety measures.
- 2) Add information about these leave laws to the notices posted by employers in break rooms and other locations.

Facts:

- Victims are sometimes unable to seek the protection they need for fear of being fired for leaving work.
- Domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are serious public health and safety issues in Oregon. Such violence can be fatal.
- Domestic and sexual violence have a significant impact on victims' economic security, thus making it more difficult for victims to achieve safety for themselves and their children.
- Economic independence is a primary indicator of whether a victim will be able to maintain safety from abuse.
- It is in the public interest to reduce domestic and sexual violence by enabling victims to seek safety and redress the effects of violence without jeopardizing their economic security.