



OREGON SENATE DEMOCRATS

Salem, Oregon
Oregon State Legislature

PRESS RELEASE

April 14, 2021

CONTACT: Amanda Kraus, 503-986-1074

Amanda.Kraus@oregonlegislature.gov

Senate Democrats Protect Workers Against Retaliation for Reporting Wrongful Conduct

SALEM – Senate Bill 483 passed the Oregon Senate today on a party line vote. The bill will provide protections for workers from retaliation from their employers when they report a safety violation to the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Agency (OSHA).

Currently, it is unlawful for an employer to retaliate against a worker for reporting or opposing a workplace health and safety violation, filing a complaint, or testifying in a proceeding related to the Oregon Safe Employment Act. However, the burden is on the employee to prove the employer's action was retaliatory.

Senate Bill 483 creates a rebuttable presumption if a worker is fired or another adverse action is taken against the worker within 60 days of a worker should they raise a health or safety concerns on the job. Under Senate Bill 483 if a worker brings a claim of retaliation against an employer, the burden of responsibility will shift from the worker to the employer to prove that the reason for the employer's action was not retaliatory or discriminatory.

"Oregon's workers have kept our communities safe and functional throughout this pandemic. Grocery store workers, farmworkers and healthcare professionals and every worker couldn't stay home," said Senator Kathleen Taylor (D-Portland) who introduced and championed Senate Bill 483. "These workers showed up day in and day out, and they deserve adequate protections from retaliation," Senator Taylor added.

The National Employment Law Project [estimates that at least 1.9 million workers in the U.S](#) avoid raising health and safety concerns out of fear of retaliation, which is of particular concern due to the risk of spreading COVID-19.

"Too many workers are afraid to bring concerns over their health and safety, even though in 2020 complaints to OSHA increased tenfold. These are workers we rely on. Senate Bill 483 will remove some of the fear of reporting a health or safety violation, and ensure a more level playing field should they experience retaliation," added Senator Taylor.

Senate Bill 483 now moves to the House of Representatives for consideration.

###