



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Safety of domestic violence victims protected with Senate legislation *SB 928 requires employers to make reasonable accommodation for victims*

SALEM – The Senate voted in support of legislation this morning to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Senate Bill 928 requires employers to make reasonable safety accommodations, such as changing work shift times, moving the location of an employee's desk, or changing an employee's telephone number at work to protect their safety.

“Simple workplace accommodations can make a significant difference in the safety of a victim,” said Senator Suzanne Bonamici, who carried the bill on the floor. “Without causing undue hardship on an employer, this bill will help victims work with less fear of violence.”

Senator Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland), a chief sponsor of the bill, explained that SB 928 also prohibits an employer from refusing to hire or retaliating against a victim of violence. According to the U.S. General Accounting Office, between 25 to 50 percent of victims fear losing their job because of domestic violence.

“Victims deserve reasonable protection while on the job,” said Rosenbaum. “They shouldn't have to compromise their safety for fear of getting fired. They've already been victimized once and this legislation will help prevent that from happening a second time while they're on the job.”

SB 928 was introduced as a priority of the Oregon Women's Health and Wellness Alliance, a group of advocates and legislators who sponsor and promote legislation that addresses issues facing Oregon women.

“This is meaningful legislation for women in Oregon who fear for their safety and, in some cases, for their life,” said Senate Majority Leader Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin), also a chief sponsor of the bill. “Each year between 18 and 27 Oregonians are killed as a result of domestic violence. We need to do whatever we can to diminish this disturbing statistic.”

The bill will now go to the House for consideration.

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