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June 27, 2017

The Honorable Michael Baumgartner, Chairman
Senate Commerce, Labor & Sports Committee
404 Legislative Building
PO Box 40406
Olympia, WA 98504-0466

Via email

RE: Small Business Concerns on SB 5032, Family & Medical Leave Insurance

Dear Senator Baumgartner,

My husband and I started America's Phone Guys in 2001 and are operating it from our home in Vancouver, WA; we are a small business with less than \$1 million in annual revenues. We became aware of the Paid Family Leave initiative through our affiliation with the NFIB. We are deeply concerned about the creation of another government program that won't serve our employees well and will be just another cost to them, and in the long run, our business as well.

We offer a platinum medical plan, top of the line dental plan, 401K plan to which we contribute up to 3% of their earnings, holiday pay, and a minimum of 2 weeks PTO per employee. We try very hard to do what is best for our employees and are always looking at ways to add more benefits, because those are the things we think it takes to help build a thriving business. We run our business from our home so that we can afford to offer these types of benefits.

We have had Aflac come in several times to offer both short & long-term disability plans. The last time they were in a short-term plan was offered that would cost employees about \$5 per pay period (we pay on the 1st & 15th). Not one employee was interested in the offering. We even asked if they would be interested if we split the cost with them, and there were still no takers. This is another part of why we are opposed to forcing this plan on them now.

I'm also extremely opposed to setting up an advisory committee without any representation for small business. The NFIB most certainly deserves a place at the table, if not two, if this passes as we will most certainly be effected by it. Large businesses and unions being exempted from participation should exempt them from a say in how it operates.

Thank you for your dedication to doing what is best for all of us, including small business and our employees. Small businesses are now closing at higher rates than they are opening and that's not good for Washington state or our country.

Sincerely,

Lois C. Cook
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