January 26, 2021

To: Chairman Hansen and Members of the Business and Labor Committee

From: Aubrey Mancuso, Executive Director

Re: **Support for LB 260, Change Provisions related to good cause for leaving employment**

Voices for Children supports LB 260 to change unemployment law to ensure that those who are forced to leave employment due to caregiving are allowed to collect unemployment benefits. During a significant health crisis, families shouldn’t have to work about a secondary economic created by a lack of income from missed work.

The United States stands virtually alone among industrialized countries in denying families access to paid family and medical and leave, leaving many families with the untenable choice between the income they need and the family they love during significant life events. Although extending unemployment benefits to caregivers does not provide the comprehensive solution that paid family and medical leave does, it is a step toward addressing this significant gap in public policy.

When a child has a serious health condition, a parent is typically required both practically and legally to navigate needed treatment and support. Additional medical needs also typically come with increased medical expenses. Offering unemployment insurance helps ensure that a health crisis is less likely to create an economic crisis for families in this challenging position.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how vulnerable the economic position of families can be when faced with a global health pandemic. LB 260 is a step forward in addressing this gap in public policy and we respectfully urge the committee to advance the bill.



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