



May 12, 2023

Senator Mann, Representative Richardson and Members of the Paid Family Medical Leave Conference Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on behalf of the Minnesota Business Partnership (MBP) regarding SF/HF 2, paid family and medical leave (PFML). The Minnesota Business Partnership is a membership organization consisting of business leaders from Minnesota's largest employers, employing almost half a million workers across the state.

First, we would like to thank the Senate and Senator Mann for amending SF 2 on the Senate floor. The amendment helped to improve SF 2 and make it more workable for both employees and employers in Minnesota. We especially appreciated the inclusion of the following provisions:

- Change to the definition of "benefit year"
- Changes to the definition of "covered employment"
- Limiting intermittent leave to 480 hours in a 12-month period
- Improvement to reinstatement language

In order to ensure that our member employees continue receiving nation leading benefits, we would ask that further consideration be given to address the total duration of leave, bring the definition of family in line with the state of Washington's paid family leave law, include language that would allow an employer to opt out if their private plan equaled the dollar amount of the state's plan.

Other states that have most recently implemented PFML, and states that Minnesota is attempting to model their plan after, offer a generous duration of leave. If Minnesota adopted a similar duration of leave, it would still make our state a leader for paid leave benefits, without making us an outlier. We would ask that you allow 12 weeks for medical leave, 12 weeks for family, bonding, and safety leave, but cap the total amount at either 12 or 14 weeks, and allow an additional few weeks for complications from pregnancy.

- Colorado – (2024) 12 weeks or 16 weeks for complications during pregnancy.
- Connecticut – (2022) 12 weeks or 14 weeks for complications during pregnancy.
- Oregon – (2023) 12 weeks or 14 weeks for complications during pregnancy.
- Washington – (2020) 16 weeks or 18 weeks for complications during pregnancy.

Our membership already provides very generous paid leave benefits to their employees. Many offer a more generous leave than what this bill prescribes. However, the bill before you today would make it extremely difficult for these businesses -- who already offer paid leave -- the ability to opt out of the state program.

Paid Family and Medical leave should be a benefit to the employee – and from an employee standpoint, having to contact a bureaucrat in a state agency to answer questions and access paid leave benefits instead of being able to contact your trusted colleague in human resources where you work is burdensome and unfair to the employee.

We respectfully ask the committee to consider that a benefit program like paid leave should be as easy as possible to administer and shouldn't punish employees who already have comparable benefits at their companies. We are prepared to work with you to find a path that provides some level of PFML benefits to those employees who don't currently have access to those benefits but doesn't punish employees who do.

Thank you,

Gavin Hanson
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Minnesota Business Partnership