



AFFILIATES

AFSCME Council 5 West
Metro Retiree Council

ATU Local 1005

Boilermakers 647

Cement Masons and
Plasterers Local 633

CWA Local 7200 Retired
Members Club

IAMAW (Machinists)
Local 737 Retirees

IAM (Machinists) State
Council Retirees

Minnesota Association of
Professional Employee
Retirees (MAPE)

North Central States
Retirees - Carpenters

Pipefitters Local 539

Retired Teachers Chapter
59

Roofers Local 96

Save our Pensions MN

SEIU Local 284

United Association of
Plumbers Local 15

Minnesota House of Representatives, Tax Committee

RE: Family and Medical Leave

April 20, 2023

Chairwoman Gomez and members of the Committee:

My name is Leif Grina. I am the President of the Minneapolis Regional Retirees Council, a constituent body of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation.

Minnesota's population is rapidly aging along with the rest of the country. The elderly are the fastest growing demographic in the state, now outnumbering school age children. It is expected that sometime this year the population over 65 will reach one million. Our rural communities are aging more rapidly than the metropolitan area.

I am 70 years old; have arthritis in both hands and have had two surgeries in the past nine months. I am well acquainted with the meaning of the saying 'Aging ain't for the feint of heart'. But even the bravest among us needs a supportive community. Family members are vital members of that community.

But, according to the Minnesota Board of Aging we can expect a near future in which:

Fewer family members will be able to provide support, especially intensive personal care to loved ones

A deepening workforce shortage will continue to strain the formal LTSS (Long term services and supports) system.

Minneapolis Regional Retiree Council, AFL-CIO

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An article in the Minneapolis paper on March 14 headlined ‘Hunger stalked Elderly in Pandemic’ reported on a study by the Mayo Clinic that found that:

”Staffing shortages in home care agencies and nursing homes have worsened and could be extending the problem even in the absence of pandemic restrictions.”

Therein lies a compelling reason that Minnesota desperately needs to pass the Paid Family and Medical Leave act. It’s passage will facilitate the ability of family members to act as caregivers for their elderly loved ones; a much needed resource given the current crisis of staffing shortages in institutional settings and in-home caregivers.

Some have called the aging of our population a ‘Silver Tsunami’. A Tsunami overwhelms a people not prepared; and we are not prepared as we face a vastly increased need for caregiving and support - family members are a critical resource to meet this need.

There are no doubt several reasons you might vote ‘no’; there are millions of reasons to vote ‘yes’ - our parents and grandparents, children and grand children. We urge you to support Family and Medical care for our people.