



February 23, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Hon. Andrew Carlson
Minnesota House of Representatives
557 State Office Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

RE: Minnesota Catholic Conference support for House File 39 (Carlson) (Right to Recall)

Dear Rep. Carlson:

Peace be with you; I hope you are well. I write to let you know that the Minnesota Catholic Conference, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Minnesota, supports H.F. 39 (Right to Recall). The bill is a common-sense piece of legislation that protects displaced workers and allows them the opportunity to get their jobs back when hospitality-related businesses rebound. We understand that employers appreciate as much flexibility as possible, but the bill should be unobjectionable. Employees affected by COVID-19 restrictions should have first right of refusal when businesses bring back employees.

The employer/employee relationship is a reciprocal one that carries with it rights and duties on the part of both actors. An employee is responsible for fulfilling his or her commitments to an employer by providing honest labor that produces good goods and good services. The employer is responsible for treating his or her employees justly and providing good work and fair pay that is consistent with each person's dignity and personal obligations to family. (Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* §§ 2427-36.)

Many employers, including large businesses, make a commitment to their employees and seek to help them flourish. Unfortunately, other employers use any excuse possible to shed older employees and those higher on the pay scale to hire cheaper labor at entry-level wages. "At-will" employment arrangements can be abused irrespective of business size.

The hospitality industry has a large percentage of people of color among its workforce. Helping to create pathways back into employment limits the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on vulnerable communities. Further, many who work in the hospitality industry do not have college degrees or even high-school diplomas. The lack of education credentials makes it more difficult to transition to a different job or line of work. The hospitality, travel, and entertainment industries will take a while to recover and may never return to pre-COVID levels. That job scarcity underscores the importance of giving displaced workers the opportunity to get their jobs back.

Businesses re-opening after the pandemic interruption should recall the career employees whose labor helped them build a successful enterprise in the first place. When that does not happen, this bill is a reasonable mandate. Thank you for authoring the legislation and for your service to all Minnesotans.

Respectfully yours,

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CC: Rep. Ryan Winkler, Majority Leader

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