

# Work Shouldn't Hurt

HF 2774 would help give warehouse workers the transparency they need to be safe and successful.

## The Problem – The practices in Amazon's warehouses are hurting Minnesota workers.

- A 2021 National Employment Law Project report shows that Amazon warehouse workers in Minnesota suffer injuries at **double the rate** of non-Amazon warehouse workers and almost **four times the rate** of all private sector workers in Minnesota.<sup>1</sup> These can be musculoskeletal injuries that stay with workers for the rest of their lives, leading to chronic pain and a risk of long-term disability.
- “They just kept me working. **They didn't care if I was injured or not.** They want me to hit this [performance] goal.” -*Amazon warehouse worker in MN*<sup>2</sup>

## The Cause – Workers are pushing themselves to meet quotas that Amazon often changes and sometimes doesn't disclose to workers.<sup>1</sup>

- “Managers are always vague about what will get you fired, which creates this paranoia. [Employees ask] what exactly will get them fired, and the responses are so vague that you basically know that **if you're not constantly moving, you're probably gone.**” -*Amazon warehouse worker*<sup>1</sup>
- Under this system, workers feel they are **under intense surveillance and constant threat** of discipline or firing. Since **they can't always tell** how well they're doing, they report sometimes skipping breaks and not having time to address safety concerns for **fear of falling behind.**
- “You may need to walk a quarter mile to get to a bathroom. And you get an eight-minute break to go to the bathroom, so you're rushed. Maybe you can do it in eight minutes if you don't wash your hands. If you have a stomach upset or anything there's not enough time.” -*Amazon warehouse worker in MN*<sup>1</sup>
- Current laws **aren't enough** to address the types of systems that Amazon uses, which could soon spread to other employers.

## The Solution – HF 2774 is about common-sense transparency, making sure that workers:

- Are **informed of the quotas and performance standards** they are being held to and are notified when standards are being changed;
- Have access to their basic workplace rights such as **meal and restroom breaks**; and
- Have some **access to the data that Amazon is collecting about them**, so that they know how fast they are working and how well they are performing at work.

<sup>1</sup> [www.nelp.org/publication/injuries-dead-end-jobs-and-racial-inequity-in-amazons-minnesota-operations](https://www.nelp.org/publication/injuries-dead-end-jobs-and-racial-inequity-in-amazons-minnesota-operations)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/06/01/amazon-osa-injury-rate/>

## If enacted, HF 2774 would:

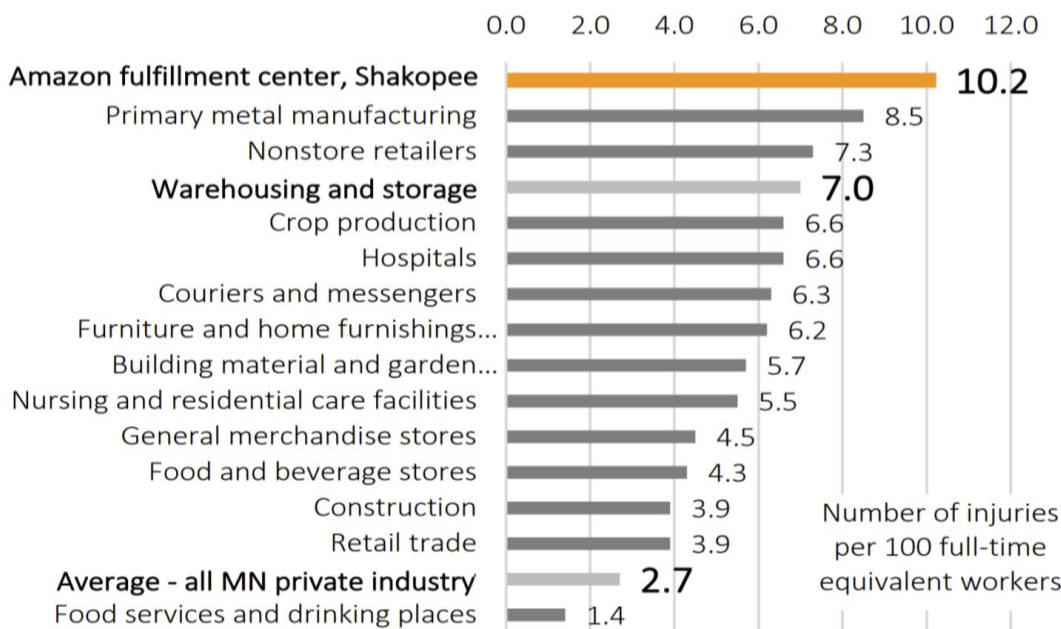
- **Strengthen Our Supply Chain** – Annual turnover at the Amazon warehouses in Shakopee is **170 percent**, almost three times higher than at non-Amazon warehouses in MN.<sup>1</sup> To avoid disruptions caused by turnover, we need all warehouses to provide good and safe jobs where employees can build lasting careers.
- **Protect Small Businesses** - Amazon’s practices are driving down standards for warehousing jobs across the state at the same time as Amazon is expanding its footprint in Minnesota **at the expense of small businesses** and other high-road employers.<sup>1</sup>
- **Reduce Costs for Minnesotans** - Excessive worker injuries increase costs for our healthcare system and Minnesota taxpayers, while causing incalculable suffering for workers.

## HF 2774 would not:

- Require any business to use quotas, performance standards, or tracking of any kind. The many successful companies that do not use these systems **are free to continue as before**.

## HF 2774 is supported by:

- Main Street Alliance
- Minnesota AFL-CIO
- Teamsters Joint Council 32
- The Awood Center (contact: [info@awoodcenter.org](mailto:info@awoodcenter.org))



## Worker Injury Rates by Sector in MN

(Source: National Employment Law Project Report - Occupational Health and Safety Administration, Establishment Specific Injury and Illness Data, 2020. Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry Research and Statistics Unit, Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, Minnesota, 2020)