

# METRONORTH

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

March 12, 2025

Dear House Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee:

The MetroNorth Chamber of Commerce represents over 700 businesses throughout the north metro. We are writing today to share our thoughts regarding HF 11, which would delay the implementation of the Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) mandate by one year, as well as HF 1976, which would allow for several modifications of PFML.

Many of our members have shared sincere concerns over the complexity of the program as well as how their small businesses may struggle under this mandate. By way of comparison, in January 2025 I participated in a webinar hosted by the Department of Labor and Industry on Earned Safe and Sick Time. There were over six hundred people on the call, many asking clarification questions on this law which went into effect over a year ago. One employer noted that they had paid two different attorneys and had received two different answers to their question. The point of this example is that employers want to abide by the law, but it has been difficult to find clarity and that is to the benefit of no one. Also please note that many small businesses do not have HR or legal departments, so the expense of hiring an attorney (not to mention two) to understand all of the new mandates which have been placed upon them is a burden that is tough for many to bear.

As you may imagine, then, there is much trepidation given that PFML will be much larger in size and scope, impacting every employer and employee in the state. I have also heard from some employers who are already short-staffed and are unsure how they would find replacement workers, especially those in industries needing certifications.

We therefore respectfully ask that you consider giving this new and highly complex program more time to be fully prepared and properly rolled out. With that, we also encourage you to consider the policy changes laid out in HF 1976 and supported by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, including program scoping modifications and integrity measures, private plan viability and functionality issues, seasonal employee definition fix and to cover all industries, and fixing intermittent leave issues. These recommendations would be greatly beneficial to our shared business community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Lori Higgins*

Lori Higgins, President