



Thursday, February 13th, 2025

Chairman Baker and Members of the House Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee,

My name is Cale Dunwoody, and I have the distinct pleasure of serving as the Vice President of Public Policy for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce (FMWF Chamber). On behalf of our over 1,700 members, I respectfully offer testimony in support of H.F. 11.

At the FMWF Chamber, our mission is to protect and promote business, inspire individuals, cultivate communities, and influence action. With this mission in mind, we support the delayed implementation of Paid Family and Medical Leave. Minnesota is amid an economic crisis – experiencing severe workforce shortages, dwindling state revenue projections, a looming deficit, and businesses of all sizes being burdened with harsh regulations hindering their ability to thrive. The current implementation date of the Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) act will only worsen these conditions and propel Minnesota down a path of economic hardship. We support delaying this program until parameters and impact can be identified, and questions on implementation can be answered, as it has severe consequences for our communities.

PFML will disproportionately negatively impact border communities like our region. The proximity to North Dakota offers small -and medium sized businesses the opportunity to relocate out of Minnesota and avoid burdensome regulations. If this bill is implemented, we fear these businesses will seek a more business-friendly environment in North Dakota – reducing the Minnesota tax base.

The implementation process and true impact of PFML remains ambiguous to employers and employees. The FMWF Chamber hosted an informational event for businesses in August of 2024 with representatives from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development to gain clarification on the impact of this program. Over 60 community members from the region attended as well as local representatives and government officials. Though we were thankful for their time, the information provided at this event failed to address many of the concerns the community had, further demonstrating there are still questions that need to be answered before implementation can occur. Questions about qualification, impact on union workers, out of state workers, reporting, and compliance stayed at the top of mind for many. Allowing a policy so unclear and burdensome to be implemented is an affront to the business community and will only drive them from the state.

We stand in staunch support of H.F. 11 and delaying the implementation of this policy. Our region will be uniquely affected by this due to our geographic position as a border region, and there remains a level of uncertainty in the policy that we cannot support.

Thank you for your consideration on this critical matter and your support for Minnesota's business community.

Sincerely,

Cale Dunwoody



Vice President of Public Policy
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce