



Dear Senator Coleman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for your interest in creating a Paid Family and Medical Leave program in Minnesota. Main Street Alliance is an organization that brings small business owners and entrepreneurs together in Minnesota and beyond around small business and community investments as we work towards a more equitable and resilient small business economy. Paid family medical leave is a core issue that impacts our members and we have mobilized around a state-based paid family medical leave program since our inception in Minnesota in 2015.

While we are encouraged by your interest, we have some concerns with the current structure of the bill. Notably, SF3885 does not include medical leave, which makes up over half of all PFML use in states that have a program. This is exemplified through Tabota's story, one of our members who owns a plant-based emporium in South Minneapolis, who had to rely on fundraising after a medical emergency. Tabota is not alone, as many small business owners and solo entrepreneurs we organize across Minnesota have also needed time off after a medical procedure or emergency. Small business owners have had to close their business for the length of time it takes them to recover, or risk further health concerns (and potentially incur more medical bills) by going back to work earlier than they should to make up for the loss of income.

Finally, with the initial research we have done it appears that these private insurance plans would cost more for both the employer and employee when compared to other Paid Family and Medical Leave proposals currently under consideration here in Minnesota. The tax credit in SF3885 (\$3000) is not enough to help expand access to workers and small businesses that don't have access to paid family medical leave benefits currently.

We are a part of the Minnesotans for Paid Family & Medical Leave coalition - a coalition of 52 organizations (and growing) that support HF 1200 / SF 1205, a statewide paid family medical leave program that would expand access to paid family medical leave for both small business owners and employees while keeping costs low. This bill has been developed after years of research and based on the experience of nine other states that offer a statewide program. We need a statewide paid family medical leave program that works for everyone.

Thank you.

Main Street Alliance of Minnesota