

J S Clapper Testimony – SF3408
21 March 2022

To: Minnesota State Government Finance and Policy and Elections Committee

Chairperson Kiffmeyer and members of the Committee:

My name is Jim Clapper. I am a **parent** of a young man with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, who receives MA waived support for residential and employment services. I support SF3408 that will redirect the current Task Force which intends to eliminate subminimum wages in Minnesota. Thank you for taking my testimony.

My son, Bob, has been happily employed since 2008 in a number of positions, all made possible under the provisions of **section 14(c)** of the Fair Labor & Standards Act. He started his employment in a center based employment program, doing light assembly and packaging work in a Day Training and Habilitation program near our home. His wages at that time were about \$2.35/hr which were **commensurate with his level of productivity**. This is about 35% of what the minimum wage was at that time. Today, he works on a mobile work crew **in the community** at Kowalskis and earns \$9.40/hr which is above the federal minimum wage. He has more than **tripled** his productivity in this time and moved from a center based employment setting to a community based employment setting, and we are very proud of his progress. Bob is very proud of himself too, even though he does not have a firm grasp of money. His income helps support his food and living expenses, and **does reduce his support costs** from other State and Federal entitlements.

The 14(c) provisions were **vital** and provided Bob with **choices** and **opportunities** to start his employment and then **steadily develop his skills and work ethic** over the last 13 years. If not for the provisions of 14(c), he would have had only “life enrichment” activities in his Day Training & Habilitation program. In addition, customers that contract out this work would have moved away from Disability Employment programs in order to compete. Bob’s story represents about 6000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are **thriving** under the provisions of 14(c) **and will lose their employment** if the current Task Force to Eliminate Subminimum Wages carries out their mission.

I ask you to **support SF3408**. This bill will redirect the recently formed Task Force, putting in more objectivity and adding representation from parents and guardians of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities **who were specifically excluded from the original membership**.

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