



April 26, 2022

RE: SF 4394

Dear Chair Nelson and members of the Senate Taxes Committee:

ISAIAH is a statewide organization of congregations, mosques, childcare centers, and barber shops. Our mission is to build a democracy that respects every person's dignity and a caring economy where everyone can thrive. We are writing today in opposition to SF 4394.

No matter where they live or what they look like, every Minnesotan deserves to take the time they need to care for themselves in times of great need. Whether it is welcoming a new baby, caring for a dying family member, recovering from a serious injury or illness, or escaping from an unsafe relationship, we need a statewide paid family and medical leave program that meets people's needs.

Currently too many workers, especially hourly workers in some of the most essential jobs – such as child care, education, food service, and healthcare – lack access to adequate paid leave to tend to these life situations. Unfortunately, SF 4394 does too little to expand access to paid leave for Minnesotans who currently are excluded. The limited scope of this bill, along with the limited appropriation for it, will mean the majority of workers will continue to be excluded from paid leave. In addition, many families would not be able to afford a leave without timely economic support. Waiting several months or even a year for tax filing season is not a viable option, especially for low-income families.

ISAIAH has been proud to serve as organizational co-chair for the Minnesotans for Paid Family and Medical Leave Coalition since 2014. The bill supported by this coalition, SF1205, is backed by copious amounts of research and based on successful paid family and medical leave programs that have passed in eleven other states plus Washington, DC. Unfortunately, that bill has not been given a single hearing in the Senate in the past two legislative sessions.

We appreciate the author's attention to this issue. However, we urge you to pass real solutions that expand paid leave opportunities to all Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Lars Negstad
Policy Director, ISAIAH