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Goodhue County

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01/30/23

95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2105
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Klein,

I write to you today regarding concerns with SF 2 in its current form. The current form would drastically impact our HR functions, create additional financial burdens on the County, and negatively impact our employees. Even if this legislation is to pass we would respectfully request for an exemption to be made for public entities who already provide paid time off options.

At this moment local governments are facing labor shortages and having great difficulty recruiting new talent, especially here in Goodhue County. With this in mind, we have grave concerns about the impact of allowing brand new employees such an extended amount of leave on the operations of the business.

Goodhue County employees are friends and neighbors and there is nothing more idealistic than helping them during difficult times in their lives. This is why our County already offers a substantial leave package including sick, vacation, blood donation, doctor visits, jury duty, funeral leave, family emergencies, voting, along with a sick leave donation program. This is all in addition to our compliance with FMLA and the MN Parental Leave Act. Yet despite our efforts to already provide paid leave the legislation would force our participation and, according to an estimate from the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, tax the County \$182,000 annually.

Paid leave helps our employees immensely in difficult times, but the current form of this legislation would not aid those current employees. Instead, if a new employee were to take off extensive amounts of time it could result in additional workloads onto the plates of existing long-term employees. Plus, this legislation, in an estimate by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, would tax our employees a sum total of \$91,000 annually.

We do believe this legislation could still be amended to become friendlier to our operations and small businesses. One consideration would be to exempt public entities who already provide paid time off options. Additional amendments could be alike the provisions on eligibility that more closely resemble the federal FMLA law. Meaning the paid leave would only apply to employers with 50+ employees and applicants would be required to have worked for the employer for at least 12 months.

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In short, we need to find a paid leave solution that balances employee's needs with the needs of the employer. Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to reach out with any questions.



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