



May 09, 2023

Senator Ron Latz, Chair
Senate Judiciary and Public Safety
3015 Minnesota Senate Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Warren Limmer, Ranking Minority Member
Senate Judiciary and Public Safety
2221 Minnesota Senate Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Latz, Ranking Minority Member Limmer and Members of the Committee:

We urge the committee to carefully consider the impacts that SF2319 will have on the hospitality and tourism community. At Hospitality Minnesota, we are concerned that as drafted, SF2319 will have a disproportionately negative effect on the hospitality industry employees and patrons. As our industry is focused on recovery, we must put in place policies that nurture our growth instead of hinder our workforce or jeopardize tourism. Below, we've outlined our concerns:

Ride Pricing: As drafted, the price of rideshare would increase significantly – with some rideshare companies suggesting Minnesota would become the state with the highest price for rideshare the country. Many of our employees depend on rideshare services to get to and from work – especially with challenges to the public transportation system from safety and weather. Additionally, many patrons choose to use rideshare services for a variety of reasons and it is important that this option remains affordable as they frequent various hospitality businesses.

Impacts to Safety: Many of our businesses operate on an extended hours basis, where public transportation may not be available and rideshare use is essentially required. Many of our employees may not feel comfortable or have access to public transportation late at night, or they are facing unsafe situations like the Uptown transit station, which had to be subsequently closed. Our businesses are very concerned about the potential impact this may have on employees safely getting to and from work. Additionally, rideshare has provided a well documented reduction in driving under the influence, serving as a safe alternative mode of transportation for guests of many hospitality businesses.

Impacts to Tourism: Our visitors extensively rely on rideshare services to and from restaurants, hotels, entertainment venues and more. As we put increased investments in tourism to attract large scale meetings and events to Minnesota to help our hospitality and tourism businesses recover; the meeting and event planners evaluate the cost from a holistic perspective. We do not want to discourage visitors or events and meetings based on our market costs as they are a vital constituency to all of our businesses – rideshare drivers, restaurants and hotels alike.

We are happy to be a resource to the author and committee members and we look forward to working together while taking in consideration the entire ecosystem impacted. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Angie Whitcomb
President & CEO
Hospitality Minnesota

Jill Sims
Director of Government Relations
Hospitality Minnesota