

My name is Kevin Chapdelaine, and I am a City Council member for the City of Newport

I am here today to speak in support of the Safe & Skilled Workforce Act, Senate File 10.

I am speaking today as a representative of a community that is located adjacent to Marathon Petroleum's St. Paul Park refinery -- in fact, my house is just 6 blocks away.

In addition to representing the citizens of Newport, I also gained a working knowledge of all the area's refineries during my 37-year career as a Licensed Pipefitter.

Refineries are not like most other worksites. Every day, refinery workers face a multitude of possible dangers -- from hydrocarbons to toxic chemicals, in addition to similar hazards that are common to many other industrial work sites.

Each trade or crew member working in such an environment must be able to trust the other. You must rely on them, oftentimes blindly, for your safety. You expect that they have been professionally trained and they are working in a safe manner. And they expect the same from you.

As an elected representative, I continue to be concerned for the safety of my community. Any large-scale industrial work site using untrained trades workers is accepting an increased safety risk, to both the workforce and the people who live and work in the surrounding area. It's just that simple. My constituents have a right to safety and peace of mind.

I hope the State of MN will not wait to act until it is too late. Thank you for your consideration

Kevin Chapdelaine
Newport City Council