

January 16, 2023

Dear Chair McEwen and Members of the Senate Labor Committee:

My name is Noah Hobbs and I am an at-large member of the Duluth City Council. The Duluth City Council passed Earned Sick and Safe Time ordinance in 2018 and it went into effect in January of 2020. I'm writing to ask for your support for SF 34 (Pappas) to provide earned sick and safe time for all Minnesotans.

Earned sick and safe time has benefited the health and economic well being of Duluth residents and businesses. In Duluth we have had minimal violations reported for our business community not providing this benefit. I want to share a story that comes to mind from a woman who had just gotten out of a rough divorce and had relocated to Duluth to have a fresh start. Within the first three weeks of starting her new job, one of her children had fallen ill and it took several doctor appointments to diagnose what her kid had. She was living paycheck to paycheck and did not have a strong support network in Duluth. Had she not had ESST, and had her employer chose not to front load their ESST policy (providing hours all at once so as to not have to accrue over the course of the year), this woman would have been out of money or potentially employment through no fault of her own.

Statewide Earned Sick and Safe Time would provide the benefits of ESST to all Minnesotans - regardless of where they live. Nearly one quarter of private sector workers – and more than six in 10 of the lowest-income workers – don't have access to even a single paid sick day. People without paid sick days are more likely to report going to work with a contagious illness like the flu or a viral infection. Extending earned sick and safe time to all residents would protect and promote the overall public health of all Minnesota residents.

Thirty-eight jurisdictions nationwide have adopted paid sick days laws, including 14 states. It is time for Minnesota to join the nationwide movement for a policy that benefits businesses, families and our overall public health.

We are proud that Duluth has been a leader in earned sick and safe time, and we are ready to stand in support of this legislation statewide. Please support SF 34 (Pappas).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Noah Hobbs  
Council Member At-Large  
Duluth City Council