



February 28, 2023

Senate File 1018 (Maye Quade)

Dear Chair McEwen and Members of the Senate Labor Committee,

Our organizations represent tens of thousands of employers and workplaces across the state of Minnesota. These are businesses of all shapes and sizes, in all parts of the state, who provide good-paying jobs to hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans. Our members work hard to care for their employees and communities.

We write to express our concerns with Senate File 1018, which proposes to expand employment mandates and eliminate protections for small businesses. Several sections at issue in SF 1018 have been updated in recent years, sometimes more than once.

The continuous re-writing of complex labor regulations makes it harder for businesses and workers to understand the rules and erodes the long-standing balance between the interests of employers and workers. Ever evolving and expanding regulation often results in the opposite of the intended effect: less compliance, less safety, less benefit.

SF 1018 proposes several concerning updates to expand the reach of these statutes by eliminating provisions which received bipartisan agreement in previous legislative sessions. This includes removing exemptions for small employers and striking language that prevents unduly disrupting operations. It also removes the 12-month waiting period before an employee can exercise certain privileges and expands eligibility to part-time employees.

Further, the bill is set to take effect in the middle of the current calendar year on July 1, 2023. Employers would have just a few months to update policies, alter physical structures, notify employees, and obtain translation of documents they are required to provide. This is incredibly disruptive and costly, especially for the smallest employers who are newly subject to the requirements in Sections 181.939 to 181.944.

In addition, the timelines and certain provisions of the bill do not align with other proposals advancing this year at the Legislature. Lawmakers should work to synthesize these proposals to avoid duplication, confusion, and added burden.

We urge the committee to retain the bipartisan balance struck in previous years that protects the rights of employers and employees.