



Dear Chair Marty and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our perspective on SF 5430. As an organization representing children and families from Minnesota's black, indigenous and communities of color, as well as children living in the state's lowest income households, we have fought for the past decade for an inclusive paid family and medical leave program that ensures everyone who is paying into the program is able to use it to support themselves and their families in their time of need.

While we may disagree with how some aspects of the law passed last year have been interpreted, **we deeply appreciate Senator Mann's intentions in SF 5430 to bring forward a compromise that is consistent with our values** and does help ensure that Minnesota's children and families with the lowest incomes and less generous employer provided PTO are able to use the paid leave program benefit they have earned.

Minnesota's paid family and medical leave program holds great promise to address economic opportunity gaps and improve health outcomes in the state. An unpaid week for our lowest income workers and their families would significantly compromise those outcomes. While not perfect, **SF 5430 represents a good faith attempt to ensure those with the least are still able to access the program.**

We understand and appreciate the position of our labor partners on the PTO provisions included in SF 5430. As the process continues, we hope that those concerns can be addressed. But we feel it is imperative that the legislature pass provisions this session that ensure paid leave access for children and families from the state's lowest income households.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Debra Fitzpatrick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Debra Fitzpatrick
Policy and Research Director
Children's Defense Fund Minnesota