



February 26, 2024

Senate File 1760 (Kreun)

Dear Chair Latz and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee,

On behalf of Minnesotans for Lawsuit Reform (MnFLR), we write in support of Senate File 1760 – a common sense bill to increase the limit for conciliation court claims to \$20,000.

Conciliation court provides an accessible and cost-effective path to resolution for disputes involving relatively modest dollar amounts. Increasing access to conciliation court benefits small businesses, consumers, and others who may otherwise encounter obstacles in the pursuit of a small claim.

In addition to providing a generally swifter resolution, conciliation courts provide significant relief to overburdened district courts. From 2018 to 2022, conciliation courts handled roughly 30% of all civil cases filed in the state, according to data from the Minnesota Supreme Court.

Further, the Minnesota Supreme Court Civil Justice Reform Task Force noted in a 2011 report: “Conciliation court procedures are much better suited to disputes involving pro se parties, and can handle these cases in a more efficient and cost-effective basis.”

The Task Force also cited the difficulty in obtaining counsel for relatively low dollar claims and the propensity for all types of claimants to discount claims in order to access more affordable justice through conciliation court.

MnFLR believes the same arguments apply today. Respectfully, we urge the committee to support Senate File 1760.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Breiter, Government Affairs Director
Minnesotans for Lawsuit Reform