



April 8, 2024

Senator McEwen and members of the Senate Labor committee:

As the collective voice of Minnesota's unions, we deeply appreciate your work this session on legislation to improve the lives of working people. We are writing to express our support for the inclusion of several bills in the DE amendment to SF5266 to create the omnibus labor finance bill.

First, we support the provisions from SF3428 McEwen which clarify changes to PELRA passed last year to support the collective bargaining rights of public sector workers. These technical corrections are needed to ensure the law is interpreted as the Legislature intended.

We also want to express our strong support for SF4597 McEwen. These provisions remove barriers in PELRA that prevent U of M workers from exercising their fundamental right to organize unions and bargain collectively over wages, benefits, and working conditions. Testimony from all kinds of workers at the U has clearly demonstrated the urgent need for these common sense changes to bring this part of PELRA into alignment with widely accepted labor practices.

We thank you for including SF3787 Pappas, earned sick and safe time modifications, including the provision repealing the carveout of flight crews. We support the legal analysis of the Airline Pilots' Association showing that it is not preempted by federal law, despite the claims of airline executives who sought the carveout. And, of course, flight crew members need the protections of this law for the same reasons all other workers in Minnesota do.

Finally, we strongly support the inclusion of SF4444 Port, the HEAL Act. Hospital management is responsible for staffing levels that allow for safe patient care, and unsafe staffing levels are driving healthcare workers away from their profession. These provisions will protect healthcare workers from retaliation when they refuse an unsafe patient assignment, which nurses are required to do as a condition of their license, and put the responsibility for safe staffing levels where it belongs: on management. Thank you for listening to the organized, collective voices of healthcare workers in Minnesota.

Best regards,

Melissa Hysing
Legislative Director

