



March 9, 2025

Re: Letter of Support, SF 2149

Dear Chair McEwen and members of the Senate Labor Committee,

I am writing in support of SF 2149, the provision prohibiting the issuance of 14(c) certificates which authorizes payment of subminimum wage to people with disabilities.

This change is long overdue, as the payment of subminimum wages is not needed to ensure that people with disabilities can be part of the workforce. They are strong, capable, resilient *human beings* and deserve to have the benefit and privilege of the same wage protections the rest of society does. It is fundamental civil right in our country to earn a minimum wage for work completed. With the passing of this legislation, Minnesota can finally ensure that all people with disabilities are afforded this basic protection, and are paid the minimum wage or higher by 2028.

This legislation will greatly expand employment choices for people with disabilities, as we see them moving into jobs that match their skills, providing valuable and much needed labor to Minnesota's workforce. On average, Minnesotans with disabilities who work under 14(c) make just \$4.15 per hour, and some earn as little as 7 cents per hour. They work an average of 3-7 hours per week, making their total average earnings about \$20.00/week. People with disabilities have so much more to offer to the workforce. They want to and can work at minimum wages or higher. It's happening all over the state already and we need to ensure this fundamental right is afforded to *all people* with disabilities.

One only needs to look to communities across the state who are willingly ahead of the curve and local providers have stopped using a 14(c) certificate to pay people with disabilities. These communities and the people with disabilities who live and work there are thriving.

Thank you for your work to ensure labor protections in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Andrea L. Zuber

President

Skifte, LLC