



March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**RE: Opposition to HF1976**

To Chair Baker and members of the Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Committee,

AFSCME Council 65 represents 14,000 public and private sector workers across greater Minnesota. Our members work in cities, counties, schools, and hospitals providing the vital services that make our communities safe, vibrant, and healthy.

AFSCME Council 65 has worked on and supported Paid Family & Medical Leave for years. The historic legislation recognized that no Minnesotan should be forced to risk their job or their family's financial stability just to take time to care of themselves or their loved ones, and workers deserve an adequate Paid Leave program. Your union status or the employer you work for should not matter. That is why we strongly oppose HF1976, and all other legislation designed to delay, diminish, or destroy Minnesota's Paid Leave program.

Every time a bargaining unit goes into contract negotiations, we fight for every gain we can on behalf of our members OR the workers we represent. These negotiations are filled with tough decisions and tradeoffs. Without a statewide Paid Leave program, employers can again use paid time off as a bargaining chip. Often, the paid time off provisions ultimately negotiated in our finalized contracts are not sufficient to for our members, but it was the greatest we were able to get from the employer.

Our members celebrated the passage of the Paid Leave program in 2023 because it meant adequate time off for all of us. We are currently in several multi-year contract negotiations with the understanding that a 12-week state program *will* be in place in 2026 and have already negotiated contracts to include provisions which provide for the intersection of various contractual benefits with the state program. Excluding union workers from this program would be a devastating blow to our members across the state. Please stand with our workers and oppose HF1976.

Sincerely,

Shannon Douvier  
Executive Director

**American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO**

TEL (218) 885-3242 FAX (218) 885-3245 TOLL FREE (888) 474-3242 WEB [www.afscme65.org](http://www.afscme65.org)

3335 West St. Germain Street, Suite  
St. Cloud, MN 56301