



**House Industry Business and Labor Committee**

**02/05/25**

**Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 1608**

**Presented by Don Larson on behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)**

Chairperson Warrey and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Don Larson, and I am here on behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business to express our strong opposition to House Bill No. 1608.

NFIB represents more than two-thousand small and independent businesses across North Dakota. Our average member has three employees. One of the most significant challenges our members face is finding workers to fill open positions.

While we respect the intent behind this bill, we believe it will impose significant burdens on small businesses, particularly those with few employees. Small businesses have limited options at times to accommodate leave requests. Compliance with this bill will likely result in increased labor costs for small businesses. Employers may need to hire additional staff or pay overtime to cover

shifts, which can be financially burdensome for businesses already operating on thin margins.

While we understand the importance of accommodating employees' religious practices, House Bill No. 1608 places an undue burden on small businesses. We urge the committee to consider the unique challenges faced by small business owners and seek alternative solutions that balance the needs of employees with the operational realities of small businesses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Don Larson  
State Director  
NFIB