



North Dakota Senate

STATE CAPITOL
600 EAST BOULEVARD
BISMARCK, ND 58505-0360



Senator Josh Boschee

District 44
736 Elm Street North, Apt. 8
Fargo, ND 58102-3859
jboschee@ndlegis.gov

COMMITTEES:

Education
Workforce Development

SB 2198 Testimony Senate Workforce Development Committee January 24, 2025

Chair Wobbema and fellow Members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee,

I bring to you SB 2198, which is intended to remove a waiting period for newly hired public employees to be eligible for their 20 days of paid military leave. While the legislation has several changes, most of it is format and style clean up by Legislative Council. The substance of the bill is on page 1, line 23 where I am proposing we strike out the words "for ninety days".

It came to my attention this past summer that a state employee who was returning to work for the state following a break in his public service to work in the private sector was not eligible for paid military leave due to the language in 37-01-25. He serves in the ND National Guard and was preparing for his two weeks of annual training. His supervisor and agency are supportive of his Guard service, which aligns with our state's goal of being a military friendly state to work, live, learn and retire. However, the 90-day restriction in this section of the Century Code was a little bit of a surprise to them.

When I raised this concern with the National Guard, they were aware of another newly hired state employee that faced the same experience as they were being called up to assist with the wildfires in western North Dakota. With the support of the National Guard, I am introducing this legislation to continue our work of making North Dakota the most military friendly state for current and retired military members.

According to Legislative Council's research, this statute was originally enacted in 1935, and the 90-day requirement was added in 1945 by Senate Bill 176. However, their legislative history of testimony does not go back that far so I wasn't able to learn the rationale for the addition of the requirement.

I hope you'll provide SB 2198 your support and I'm happy to stand for any questions or comments you may have.