



November 9, 2021

FMWF Chamber Opposition to HB 1511

Chairman Weisz, Chairwoman Lee, and members of the Joint Technical Corrections Committee,

For the record, my name is Katherine Grindberg and I serve as the Vice President of Public Policy for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo (FMWF) Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber's mission is to be a catalyst for economic growth and prosperity for businesses, members, and the greater community. Today, on behalf of our over 1,900 members, I offer testimony in opposition to House Bill 1511 as written.

We realize there is an appetite to advance legislation related to COVID-19 vaccinations, among other topics, and strongly urge that business flexibility is prioritized and federal compliance is recognized.

A major concern with this bill is the lack of consistency with federal vaccine mandates. Section two details exemptions employers shall allow for in regards to vaccination requirements. These exemptions are not consistent with federal regulation which puts businesses in an unfair situation of being non-compliant with either the state or federal law. This is especially true for federal contractors where periodic COVID-19 testing is not a federally accepted exemption. Business exemption language regarding a federal law, rule, or guidance is necessary for section two.

Section two, subsection 2c outlines health, religious, philosophical, or moral exemptions. We oppose adding any exemptions beyond the medical and religious exemptions already required by federal law. This is an unnecessary duplication that adds to inconsistency, creating difficulties for businesses.

Finally, we believe that private business leaders can make the best decision for their individual businesses based upon their unique services, location, workforce, and needs. Section one, subsection two prohibits businesses from requiring customers to provide proof of vaccination or the presence of pathogens, antigens or antibodies in order to gain access or services from the business. This regulation is an overreach on private businesses and adds further barriers for commerce and tourism



as it would affect events where speakers or artists will not perform in venues without vaccine requirements.

The Chamber opposes any legislation that doesn't respect business flexibility or creates inconsistency with federal compliance. Thus, I respectfully ask this committee to recommend a DO NOT PASS to House Bill 1511 as written.

Thank you for your time and consideration, I will now stand for any questions from the committee.

Respectfully,

Katherine Grindberg

Vice President of Public Policy

FMWF Chamber of Commerce

kgrindberg@fmwfchamber.com | 701.516.2114