

HB 1398
Prohibiting Local Subdivisions from Requiring Paid Family Leave

Testimony
of
Dr. Stephan Podrygula
Before Senate IBL Committee
on
Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Chairman Klein and Members of the Committee,

I speak in opposition to HB 1398.

As a clinical and health psychologist, I frequently work with individuals who have a family member with significant physical and/or mental health issues and need time from work to take care of them. Illness is a major stressor for individuals and families, and paid family leave helps ease the burden.

As a small businessman, I have always made it a priority to provide fully paid family leave for my employees, despite the financial impact on my “bottom line”. Besides being the right thing to do, it engenders employee loyalty and lets my staff strike a reasonable balance between family obligations and work.

As a Minot City Councilman – although I speak for myself and not for the Council or the City – I want us to have the tools we need to develop our work force and help assure a decent standard of living for all of our residents. Requiring paid family leave is an option we need to have available to us.

As a citizen, I am not keen on Bismarck taking away local authority. We rightfully complain about Washington enforcing its will on the states; to be consistent, we also need to support the autonomy of our cities and counties.

Passage of this bill would undermine HB 1441, which has already passed the House, and calls for a legislative management study of the feasibility of a state-facilitated paid family leave program. Local subdivisions should not have to wait, until the next legislative session, for the outcome of that study and any resulting legislation.

Families are the bedrock of our society, and I feel we need to do everything we can to strengthen and support them. Please don't take away this tool from local governments, should they choose to use it.

Thank you for considering my views.

SP/d

