

**Testimony of Landis Larson, ND AFL-CIO President**

**In Opposition to SB 2170**

**February 16, 2023**

Chairperson Wobbema and members of the Workforce Development Committee:

My name is Landis Larson, President of the North Dakota AFL-CIO. The North Dakota AFL-CIO is the federation of labor unions in North Dakota, representing the interests of all working people in our state.

I am testifying on behalf of the North Dakota AFL-CIO in opposition to Senate Bill 2170.

Child labor should never be the answer to a workforce issue. Year after year, North Dakota ranks as one of the most dangerous states in which to work, with one of the highest fatality rates per 100,00 workers for more than a decade. Construction is a particularly dangerous industry. Minors do not belong on construction sites.

Every year on April 28th, labor councils around our state host worker memorial day commemorations, remembering the workers who died on the job in North Dakota. I've had the honor of participating in these commemorations, including reading the names and ages of those who died on the job in the last year. We get a list of names from OSHA every year, listing who they were, who they worked for and how they died. Many of these workers are already dying way too young in horrible and preventable accidents. Just last year a young man, barely an adult himself, was electrocuted while installing a 30 foot flagpole under a 28 foot power line in western North Dakota. It will only be a matter of time before we have to read a minor child's name at a workers memorial day if we pass this law.

I encourage you to give Senate Bill 2170 a DO NOT PASS.