

Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

02/11/2025 02:00 PM

SB25-074 Highly Specialized Empl Leave Protection Exemption

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

| Name, Position, Representing | Typed Text of Testimony |
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| Kelly Hegarty For herself | <p>Dear Members of the Colorado Senate Committee on State, Veterans, & Military Affairs,</p> <p>My name is Kelly Hegarty and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 25-074, in committee today. This bill provides a critical exemption from the employment protection requirements under the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act (FAMLI) for businesses employing a majority of highly specialized workers. It is a necessary and reasonable adjustment that will allow Colorado businesses with specialized workforces to continue operating efficiently without unnecessary government constraints.</p> <p>Businesses that rely on highly specialized employees—such as those in aerospace, medical research, advanced technology, and engineering—operate in industries where finding qualified replacements is uniquely challenging. Requiring these businesses to hold open positions for extended periods when an employee is on paid leave creates significant operational disruptions and hinders innovation. This bill provides a practical exemption that helps these businesses stay competitive while still supporting employees through paid family leave.</p> <p>Highly specialized roles often require years of training and expertise, making it difficult to replace employees temporarily. This exemption allows businesses to remain agile without unnecessary disruptions while also reducing regulatory burdens, helping Colorado remain an attractive place for businesses in advanced industries. By encouraging business flexibility, the bill supports job creation and economic stability. Furthermore, it respects both employer and employee rights by ensuring that employment agreements can be tailored to the needs of specific industries rather than applying a one-size-fits-all mandate.</p> <p>Importantly, this legislation does not eliminate family and medical leave; instead, it makes reasonable accommodations for businesses that cannot operate under rigid job-holding requirements, preserving the integrity of the FAMLI program while balancing the realities of highly specialized employment.</p> <p>SB 25-074 strikes a fair balance between protecting employee rights and recognizing the operational challenges of industries that rely on highly specialized workers. By</p> |

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| | <p>passing this bill, Colorado will ensure that businesses in key sectors can continue to thrive, innovate, and provide employment opportunities without undue regulatory burden.</p> <p>I urge the committee to vote YES on Senate Bill 25-074 and support policies that promote economic freedom and workforce flexibility. Thank you for your time and consideration, Kelly Hegarty, k.hegarty@me.com (970)749-5882, Durango, CO</p> |
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