



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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*Testimony of Representative Amy Roeder presenting*

### **LD 912, “An Act To Extend Family Medical Leave to Hourly School Employees”**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing*

Good morning Senator Hickman, Representative Sylvester and fellow members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing. My name is Amy Roeder, and I represent House District 125, which includes part of Bangor. I am here today to present **LD 912, An Act To Extend Family Medical Leave to Hourly School Employees.**

We have all faced illness, have taken care of loved ones faced with illness, or have experienced other major life events such as the birth or adoption of a child. Many of us have been able to take the time needed to care for ourselves and our loved ones. LD 912 ensures that hourly school employees have access to the protections of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) so they care for themselves and their loved ones, too. As the daughter of a former teacher’s aide (the Minnesota version of ed techs), I know that the dedication of hourly school employees is to be lauded. We should think twice about rewarding that dedication by turning our backs on them when they are in the most need.

Hourly school employees are often unable to access the provisions of the FMLA because the current state law requires an employee to work for 12 consecutive months to qualify. Most school employees are contracted to work for 180 days or less and are typically not employed for 12 consecutive months. The pandemic has highlighted the need to make sure employees have access to the leave they need to care for family members. LD 912 is a modest effort to make sure our hourly school employees have access to the FMLA protections when they need it.

Below, I offer an amendment to this bill to clarify that school employees who have worked 900 hours in the previous school year should qualify for the protections of the FMLA. The amendment also allows school employees to qualify for the protections of the federal FMLA, which are more generous to employees than the state’s protections. The federal FMLA provides

12 weeks of unpaid leave every year, where the state program only provides 10 weeks every two years. The federal program also provides protection for the health insurance premiums, whereby the state FMLA offers no such protections.

“An employee of a school administrative unit who has been employed by the school administrative unit and who has worked at least 900 hours in the previous twelve-month period shall be eligible for family and medical leave under the same terms and conditions provided to eligible employees under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.”

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.