



October 15, 2021

Dear Members of the Saint Paul Charter Commission:

I write today on behalf of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation (SPRLF) to encourage the Saint Paul Charter Commission to amend the City's charter to allow for administrative citations to be levied through a civil law process, instead of only imposing misdemeanor criminal penalties. The Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation is comprised of more than 100 affiliated unions and more than 50,000 union members living in the Twin Cities East Metro, including more than 15,000 union members who live in the City of Saint Paul.

The City of Saint Paul's Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) and Municipal Minimum Wage ordinances ensure basic standards for many workers in our city. As the pandemic caused by COVID-19 continues to impact our community, fair enforcement of the ordinance guaranteeing access to paid time off to care for themselves if they are exposed to COVID is particularly important to low-wage service workers who have been on the front lines. These workers deserve to be better protected and having administrative citations as a mechanism to better enforce the ESST ordinance could help accomplish that aim.

As a member of the City of Saint Paul's Labor Standards Advisory Committee, I know that City staff in the Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity Department work hard to educate employers and workers about the municipal ordinances, and that they work hard to make sure these ordinances are applied in as fair a manner as possible. The introduction of civil administrative citations would make their enforcement efforts more fair and more efficient for workers and employers and would allow the city to avoid burdening people with a criminal conviction.

Although all of the details about how an administrative citations system would operate have not been ironed out, our elected City Council should be given the opportunity to do just that. They have the public's trust and are directly accountable to their constituents. Please vote to advance the administrative citations proposal so that our elected City Council can vote on the proposal.

Sincerely,

Kera J. Peterson  
President, Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation

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