CO-SPONSORSHIP MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 18, 2023

TO: All Legislators

FROM: Senator Cory Tomczyk
Representative Clint Moses
Representative Amy Binsfeld

RE: Co-sponsorship of LRB - 3005/1 and relating to: permits authorizing the employment of minors

DEADLINE: Friday, August 25, 2023 at 5pm

LRB 3005/1 would eliminate the necessity for 14-15 year olds to acquire work permits or street trade permits from their schools before joining the workforce.

It’s important that young people have the opportunity to work without having to endure excessive government regulation. Under current law, if the school or other designated officer doesn’t sign off on a permit, then teenagers can’t work, even if their parents believe a job is in their best interest. By removing the requirement for schools and bureaucrats to issue work permits for young teens, we are reducing red tape and the number of hoops young people have to jump through in order to begin working.

A work permit isn’t required under federal law, and, in recent years, states like Indiana and Arkansas have eliminated state-level work permit requirements for teenagers. In all, 16 states don’t require work permits, including states like Florida, Kansas, and Oregon.

In 2017, Wisconsin rolled back permitting requirements for 16 and 17-year-olds without issue. This bill is the next step. Work permits are needless administrative barriers that slow down the hiring process, particularly for leisure and hospitality businesses where teenagers are likely to find a first job.

LRB 3005/1 balances freedom and public safety. It maintains workplace safety standards while allowing teenagers to find a job without the administrative headache of a permit. This bill doesn’t change the number of hours that teenagers may work or the type of work they may perform.

While this bill makes it easier for young people to find an after-school or summer job, it doesn’t remove commonsense safeguards. School attendance requirements are unaffected by this bill. This bill also maintains recordkeeping requirements for employers. Businesses must track important information such as a young person’s age and work hours.

Let’s continue to motivate Wisconsin’s youth to join the workforce and better prepare themselves for the future. We should empower families to make the best decisions for their children; not the government.
To be added as a co-sponsor, please reply to this email or contact Representative Moses’s office at (608) 237-9129 or Senator Tomczyk at (608) 266-2502 by **Friday, August 25 at 5:00pm**.

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**Analysis by Legislative Reference Bureau**

Subject to certain exceptions, current law prohibits a minor who is 14 or 15 years of age from being employed or permitted to work at any employment unless the minor’s employer obtains a written permit authorizing the employment of the minor. Subject to certain exceptions, current law also prohibits a minor from being permitted to work at any “street trade” unless 1) the minor's employer obtains a street trade permit; and 2) the minor obtains an identification card. Street trade permits must contain certain information but otherwise be in the same format as child labor permits. Such permits are issued by the Department of Workforce Development or by certain other permit officers designated by DWD.

This bill eliminates these requirements to obtain permits and other associated provisions.

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.