

April 15, 2015

To: Senate Workforce
From: Dana Visse
Re: Support of SB 888

Good afternoon, Chair Dembrow and Committee Members,

My name is Dana Visse. Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective about fair scheduling. This is an issue that's hidden, it's not talked about enough and yet affects families directly and with significant impact. Families like mine.

For six years, I worked for a planning firm. For the first three years, I worked full time, received excellent reviews, and steadily gained responsibility. But things changed once I became a mother.

After my first unpaid maternity leave, I asked to work an 80% schedule, with Fridays off. My work agreed and I kept this schedule for another 2 years. My performance reviews remained excellent. After getting pregnant with my second son, I asked to work 24/hrs. a week, or 60%, to care for my son while my husband worked. Again, they agreed.

But then, at the end of my unpaid maternity leave, I was laid off with no warning and no explanation other than there was no work for me. A few days later, I learned that another woman, not a mother, was hired full time and moved into the space I had vacated, doing very similar work.

I believe that my request to work a flexible schedule led to my termination. I believe I was penalized for asking for a flexible schedule and that if I had not made this request, my job would not have been terminated. I was not given the choice to continue working my old schedule. Instead, assumptions were made about my work commitment, regardless of performance, just because I had asked for a reduced schedule.

The loss of my job with no valid explanation was very difficult for me and has changed the course of my work life. The blow to my ability to earn a living and contribute to supporting my family was significant and, these days, losing one income in a household that depends on two can be financially devastating.

Please support legislative policies, like this proposal, that encourage and support fair scheduling so that mothers and others can earn a living and excel at both their family and work commitments.

Thank you.