

Submitter: Ariel Knox
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workforce Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4093

Testimony in Support of HB 4093

Chair Grayber, Vice Chair Muñoz, Vice Chair Scharf, & Members of the Committee,

My name is Ariel Knox, & I am submitting testimony in support of House Bill 4093.

I was injured on the job while working in Child Welfare. I live with a degenerative spinal disease that caused paralysis in my twenties. I had to relearn how to walk, & I have been under permanent lifting restrictions since. I cannot safely walk long distances, use stairs, or perform many physical tasks that are routinely listed in job postings but are not essential to the work.

I also live with chronic, disabling pain, a compromised immune system, serious heart conditions, & the long-term effects of a traumatic brain injury & stroke. I need accommodations like remote work, clear expectations, & gentle reminders because sometimes my brain simply does not retain information. That is not a character flaw. It is a medical reality.

Despite this, I have repeatedly been told that my needs are “too complicated,” dismissed with comments like “we all have struggles,” or expected to disclose deeply personal medical details just to be considered employable. Asking for accommodations often requires explaining intimate aspects of my body & brain to strangers in positions of power, without clear guidance, without support, & with real risk.

I have been offered jobs I could excel at if I were willing to humble & justify myself repeatedly. I have also been criticized for “not mentioning” limitations I had already disclosed, as if workers with disabilities are expected to carry a permanent warning label while also being resented for it.

HB 4093 matters because clarity matters. Knowing your rights matters. Being able to bring a support person into accommodation conversations matters. Job postings that accurately reflect essential functions matter. These are not special privileges. They are basic conditions for participation.

Federal guidance is not enough when people’s livelihoods are on the line. Clear state law provides stability, accountability, & dignity for workers & employers alike.

People like me are not sidelined because we cannot work. We are sidelined because the system was not built to recognize us as workers worth accommodating.

HB 4093 is a step toward changing that. I urge your support.

Thank you for your time & consideration.