

Submitter: A K
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2957

Testimony in Support of HB 2957
Date: 2/10/2025

Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2957, which seeks to prohibit employers from entering into agreements that shorten the statute of limitations for violations under the enforcement authority of the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI). I have witnessed firsthand the challenges faced by vulnerable and marginalized populations, particularly when navigating complex public systems.

Currently, individuals who experience workplace discrimination have two primary avenues for recourse: filing a lawsuit, which can be prohibitively expensive, or submitting a complaint to BOLI. The latter option serves as a government-sanctioned mechanism designed to support those who may lack the resources to pursue legal action independently.

However, even when BOLI finds in favor of a complainant, the issuance of a 90-day notice to file a lawsuit can present significant obstacles. This abbreviated timeframe often proves insufficient for affected individuals to secure legal representation, gather necessary evidence, and initiate legal proceedings, especially when the standard statute of limitations is five years.

Several attorneys have highlighted the inefficacy of this 90-day period, noting that the constrained timeline hampers their ability to conduct thorough research and fact-finding. Consequently, many cases are declined, leaving individuals without the means to assert their rights. This situation disproportionately impacts marginalized communities, effectively denying them the protections intended by existing laws.

HB 2957 addresses this critical issue by prohibiting employers from implementing agreements that curtail the statute of limitations for violations within BOLI's purview. By doing so, it ensures that all employees, regardless of their socioeconomic status, have equitable access to justice and the opportunity to seek redress for workplace discrimination.

I understand the profound importance of safeguarding the rights of vulnerable individuals. HB 2957 represents a necessary step toward reinforcing these

protections and promoting fairness within our legal system. I urge the committee to support this bill and advance it through the legislative process.

Thank you for your consideration.