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State of Minnesota  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

EIGHTY-SIXTH  
SESSION

**HOUSE FILE No. 3661**

March 15, 2010

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Commerce and Labor

1.1 A bill for an act  
1.2 relating to labor and industry; modifying the packinghouse workers bill of rights;  
1.3 amending Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 179.86.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 179.86, is amended to read:

1.6 **179.86 PACKINGHOUSE WORKERS BILL OF RIGHTS.**

1.7 Subdivision 1. **Definition.** For the purpose of this section, "employer" means an  
1.8 employer in the meatpacking industry.

1.9 Subd. 2. **Right to adequate equipment; production line speed.** (a) An employer  
1.10 must furnish its employees with equipment to safely perform their jobs under OSHA  
1.11 standards.

1.12 (b) An employer and its employees who work on an automated production line,  
1.13 or the employees' representative, must mutually agree upon the rate of speed of the  
1.14 packinghouse production line. The employer must document the mutually agreed-upon  
1.15 speed of the production line with the meat packing workers' rights coordinator established  
1.16 in subdivision 4. If the parties do not mutually agree upon the speed of the production line,  
1.17 the employer must hire additional workers sufficient to satisfy the safety requirements of  
1.18 this section and document those actions with the meat packing workers' rights coordinator.

1.19 Subd. 3. **Information provided to employee by employer.** (a) An employer  
1.20 must provide an explanation in an employee's native language of the employee's rights  
1.21 and duties as an employee ~~either person to person or through written materials~~ that, at a  
1.22 minimum, ~~include~~ includes:

1.23 (1) a complete description of the salary and benefits plans as they relate to the  
1.24 employee;

- 2.1 (2) a job description for the employee's position;
- 2.2 (3) a description of leave policies;
- 2.3 (4) a description of the work hours and work hours policy; and
- 2.4 (5) a description of the occupational hazards known to exist for the position.

2.5 (b) The explanation must also include information on the following employee rights  
 2.6 as protected by state or federal law and a description of where additional information  
 2.7 about those rights may be obtained:

- 2.8 (1) the right to organize and bargain collectively and refrain from organizing and  
 2.9 bargaining collectively;
- 2.10 (2) the right to a safe workplace; and
- 2.11 (3) the right to be free from discrimination.

2.12 (c) An employer must provide the explanation required by this subdivision:

- 2.13 (1) in written form to each employee at every regularly scheduled pay date; and
- 2.14 (2) by posting and displaying the information in a conspicuous location at the  
 2.15 employer's premises.

2.16 **Subd. 4. Commissioner duties; meat packing workers' rights coordinator.** (a)  
 2.17 The commissioner of labor and industry in consultation with the commissioner of human  
 2.18 rights must develop and implement a strategy to assist employers in providing adequate  
 2.19 notice and education to employees of their rights under this section. The commissioner  
 2.20 shall assign the duty to implement the strategy to a specific identified position in the  
 2.21 department. The position, which shall be known as the meat packing workers' rights  
 2.22 coordinator, along with contact information, must be included on printed materials the  
 2.23 department prepares and distributes to carry out the commissioner's duties under this  
 2.24 section.

2.25 (b) The meat packing workers' rights coordinator has the following duties:

- 2.26 (1) educating employees on their rights under this section;
- 2.27 (2) providing a collective voice for the employees to the department;
- 2.28 (3) planning and conducting training for workers at packinghouses;
- 2.29 (4) performing site visits and interviews to monitor compliance of line speed  
 2.30 standards and compliance with this section; and
- 2.31 (5) documenting and collecting violations of this section and submitting them to  
 2.32 the department for enforcement.