

Sponsor Statement for HB 128

Employment of Minors

An Act relating to the required approval of the commissioner of labor and workforce development for the employment of certain minors.

A local Valley farmer informed me that there were lots of kids who wanted to work on his farm but because it took so long to get permission from the state they declined or missed a substantial part of the harvest season.

Parents were surprised to learn that granting their permission was not good enough for the state. The Commissioner of Labor had to grant his approval so that their kids could pick vegetables or gather up some hay.

In my opinion requiring the Commissioner to grant permission after parents have already signed off is not necessary.

I cannot think of a better place for young people to learn basic life lessons and come to understand the value of hard work than on a farm. How unfortunate that government has created so many barriers to those experiences with bureaucracy and senseless red tape. The result has been too much non-productive time for many of our teens. We all know what that can translate into.

A change made during the committee process allows employers seeking to hire minors the opportunity to obtain advance approval from the Department of Labor. [This bill](#) now benefits any employer, whether in farming, fishing or a fast food restaurant. The skills learned in a job will help young people later in life with a work ethic that makes them a valued employee as an adult.

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