

Good afternoon Chair, and Commissioners. My name is Renae Brackey and I live in Austin MN. I am here today to voice my support to this working group in favor of providing frontline worker pay for all essential workers.

I'm a UFCW Local 9 member at Hormel. I have worked for Hormel a little over 37 years. I work on the production floor in the Marinated Meats department. I have been on the safety committee at work for over \_\_\_ years.

Before COVID, we had a schedule that allowed you to have weekends off and if not Saturday, at least Sunday. Once COVID hit, the majority of the Plant has been working short and working most every weekend. Some single mothers have had to quit just to take care of their kids. Also, I watched others lose their jobs having to choose between leaving their little kids home alone or go to work.

The workers were and are now scared again of what is next, who is going to get sick, and will they take the virus home to their families.

We all work side by side and we work short most days because of the pandemic and the affects it has had on our workforce.

We didn't choose to be made essential workers during this pandemic but we were deemed essential! Packing house workers across this state are proud to keep the food supply running and the store shelves full, but it has taken its toll on us. We are worn out and tired. When offices, restaurants, hair salons and other businesses were closed and others were working from home, we were face to face with the virus and still are today. We wore face shields and face masks and all other PPE to do our jobs. You have no idea what it is like to work over 8 hours in a wet face mask and a fogged-up face shield, wondering if you will be the next one to get sick!

With that said, please provide all front-line workers pay to all essential workers who kept Minnesota going through the pandemic.