



March 15, 2023

Dear Chair Xiong and Members of the House Workforce Development Finance and Policy Committee:

I am writing to express support for HF 1939 - a bill to support green career pathways for BIPOC communities in Minnesota. New Justice Project is a Black-led organizing hub focused on building power for and with low-income and no-income Black Minnesotans by organizing in jobs, housing, and reimagined community safety.

Black Minnesotans have experienced the worst economic outcomes of the COVID pandemic. Unemployment rates more than doubled for Black Minnesotans during the first year of the pandemic, and after modest improvements, jobless rates increased again in late 2022. Many individuals are also not counted in these numbers - including those who have had so much trouble finding work that they have simply given up. According to national studies, Minnesota also has the third worst racial wealth gap in the country.¹

A pathway to a green energy or green construction job is a pathway to a real career and economic mobility. Creating these pathways would build income and intergenerational wealth, which would help to close the wealth gap for Black families.

I know what good union jobs look like first hand. My father spent five years in prison. When he got out, he got a union job at the airport and was able to do well for himself. He bought a house then he paid for my brother to go to school. This bill is about giving folks who have not had an opportunity to have more than just a job. It is about true economic mobility - the ability for Black and brown folks to build a career, to buy a house and to support their families. It is about building intergenerational stability for Black and brown families.

Minnesota has a gap in the workforce we need for our green economy future. We also have racial inequities in income and wealth that require urgent attention and investment.

¹ <https://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2022/01/25/study-minnesota-racial-wealth-gap/>

This legislation invests in workforce training and partnerships designed to fill that gap, and to build generational economic stability within Black and brown communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. Please support HF 1939.

Sincerely,

Rod Adams
Executive Director
New Justice Project