



# MINNESOTA TEAMSTERS PUBLIC & LAW ENFORCEMENT EMPLOYEES' UNION, LOCAL NO. 320, STATE OF MINNESOTA



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March 28, 2022

Representative Connie Bernardy  
Chair, Minnesota House Committee on Higher Education Finance and Policy  
563 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Members of the House Committee on Higher Education Finance and Policy,

My name is Erik Jensen, I'm a thirty-year facilities worker and Teamster member at the University of Minnesota. I've been very active in conservation issues as a hunter, angler, and outdoor wanderer. I've met several of you in that capacity. I've also been involved with sustainability/waste reduction efforts in the Housing Residential Life department where I work.

I write in support of the legislation for a Green Training Fund for workers at the University. The University has established an ambitious and laudable goal of zero waste by 2030. However, this won't be achieved without resources behind it. Our workers need to understand the recycling process, and need to be better harvesters of usable waste. This will take time, resources, and training. As someone who was involved with the University Housing sustainability committee, I was able to visit the University's recycling center and hear from the director of recycling efforts about how the process worked, including the markets for what we had saved. This opportunity should be extended to all workers.

When our workers have more knowledge of our recycling and reuse processes, they can use this knowledge to improve students' waste disposal habits. While many students are conscientious regarding reuse, I continue to see massive amounts of usable resources being disposed of every day. Workers interact with students directly, every day. They are in a good position to persuade them to increase their recycling rate if given the knowledge of how to do so.

Thank you for your time, I hope you will consider supporting HF 4539.

Sincerely,

Erik Jensen  
Senior Buildings and Grounds Worker  
Department of Housing and Residential Life  
University of Minnesota