



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



AFFILIATED WITH
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

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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,

Teamsters Local 320 urges the legislature to pass HF 4539 and create a new Green Training Fund at the University of Minnesota. This is a timely and necessary initiative that will educate front line union employees around energy conservation, waste reduction, and sustainability at one of the state's largest employers.

In its recent funding request to the legislature, the University of Minnesota demonstrated its commitment to sustainability by asking for significant investments in green infrastructure on its campuses. Teamsters Local 320 supports these investments, but as many of our members will tell you, there are serious gaps and failures in how the University is implementing these sustainability measures on the ground. More training and compensation is needed to educate and retain University employees and ensure that tax-payers' money is being used efficiently on these programs.

This proposal to create a Green Training Fund comes on the heels of similar training funds that have been established across the country and have yielded impressive results. In Minneapolis, janitors represented by SEIU 26 recently established their own Green Training Fund in negotiations with downtown office buildings. The new training available to workers is expected to put a dent in the city's waste and emissions levels, and put money in members' pockets. We believe this model can be replicated with the University of Minnesota workforce.

Our labor union wants to see the University succeed in its land-grant mission. Front line employees play a vital role in helping the university to fulfill this mission and its obligation to students, faculty, and the environment. This Green Training Fund has widespread support from workers, students, and community groups, and we expect that it will receive your support.

In solidarity,
TEAMSTERS LOCAL 320,

Brian Aldes,
Secretary-Treasurer