

**SMART**

## International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers Local #10

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As a collective voice of over 5,000 Minnesotans, Sheet Metal Workers Local 10 writes in support of significant investments in the Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement (HEAPR) program at the University of Minnesota.

Local 10 members tie up their bootstraps every day to build our communities' infrastructure. From energy efficiency and historic preservation to healthy indoor air quality and fire safety, our members play a skilled, important role in residential, commercial and industrial buildings of all sizes.

The University of Minnesota has \$6 billion in deferred maintenance under its asset portfolio over the next 10 years. \$200 million annually is needed just to prevent further accumulation of deferred maintenance. Governor Walz initially proposed \$102.9 million but is now at \$85 million for the U's HEAPR request. The University of Minnesota's full ask is \$200 million (plus \$20 million for project design on an agriculture research project). We ask that the Legislature support a minimum of \$85 million for this important work.

The future of higher education is always changing. In today's competitive landscape, our state's colleges and universities need not only top-notch staffing and coursework that prepares the workforce of the future, but also campus infrastructure that inspires confidence, creativity and a sense of place within its facilities and students. Premier research does not and should not happen under crumbling roofs, and the most talented recruits will not be compelled to attend our institutions when caution tape greets them at the door.

Most lawmakers understand the cost savings offered by HEAPR investments. We are talking about maintaining previous investments, upgrading for the future and avoiding costly reconstruction. For our members, these investments are also about jobs. Sheet Metal Workers show up every day on geothermal heating conversion projects, exterior envelope improvements, research lab renewals, mechanical system upgrades, life safety and code upgrade projects, roof replacements, HVAC renewals, and energy efficiency improvements.

As you work diligently to create a bonding bill that addresses our statewide needs, we ask that you prioritize one of our state's most treasured assets – the University of Minnesota – and meaningfully invest in HEAPR. The need is great. The time is now. Your investment today will move the needle closer on critical projects to maintain the University of Minnesota's competitiveness and provide quality jobs for thousands of working-class Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Matt Fairbanks

Business Manager, Sheet Metal Workers Local 10