

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 320

UNION BULLETIN



Press conference with school employees and leaders from across the state talking about the need for a change in law so hourly school employees are eligible for unemployment insurance like everyone else. Currently tens of thousands of dedicated school staff – the Teaching Assistants, ESPs, bus drivers, food service workers and more who are the backbone of our educational institutions – have no access to unemployment like most other workers in Minnesota, leaving them without pay during summer months. Speakers include members and leaders with SEIU Local 284, Education Minnesota, Brian Aldes from Teamsters Local 320, and AFSCME Council 5. Watch Brian's full statement at https://teamsterslocal320.org/news/news/news/20366/2



On Monday, March 1, I joined with non-licensed school and university employees represented by several labor unions in addition to Minnesota House Majority Leader Ryan Winkler, Representative Emma Greenman and Representative Mohamud Noor to support H. F. No. 1054. The bill will provide all non-licensed school and university employees with permanent access to unemployment insurance benefits.

We support H. F. No. 1054 because the COVID-19 Pandemic pulled the rug out from under many school and university employees who are forced to confront increasingly unstable and unreliable temporary job prospects during school closures, distance learning, and a decline in seasonal jobs as more Minnesotans choose to isolate and scale back their leisurely activities.

H. F. No. 1054 is a direct response to arbitrary layoffs, the continued threat of layoffs, and a significant difficulty to find summer jobs that our members have faced since the beginning of the Pandemic. Furthermore, Minnesota is facing a severe bus driver shortage and we don't yet know what things will look like this summer for overcoming the Pandemic with vaccines.

The bill will face major hurdles at the State Legislature as employer groups such as the Minnesota School Boards Association, Minnesota Association of School Administrators, and the Minnesota Association of Independent Schools are all unified in their opposition to H.F. No. 1054. School districts fear they will have to pay additional costs for unemployment insurance to cover the new benefit participants.

It is our hope that the State of Minnesota will finance the increased costs to school districts to help with the financial burden. We must protect our vital education infrastructure during academic and seasonal layoffs to ensure educational support staff have the economic stability they deserve.

In solidarity,
Brian Aldes, Secretary Treasurer and Principal Officer

CAPITOL REPORT

Teamsters Local 320 is aware of several bills proposed at the Minnesota State Legislature this session that would affect Law Enforcement. A recent bill H.F. No. 440 which would force all Licensed Peace Officers to purchase liability insurance has caused great concern amongst Local 320 members. This bill will not make it out of committee and there is no danger of it passing into law. There is bipartisan opposition to H.F. No. 440 and Local 320 believes that we will reach widespread consensus to block any bill that harms Peace Officers.

Teamsters Local 320 has a big presence at the State and Federal Capitols. We have a lobbyist and our Joint Council 32 is involved at the State Capitol every legislative session to report issues that may affect Local 320 members. This session has already been interesting with several bills introduced that, if passed, would hamstring law enforcement. Thus far, none of these bills have had hearings and we are working to ensure they never do.

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 320

FIGHTING FOR A PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY

ALERT! STOP BAD UMN REGENT CANDIDATES

We want regents who will support their workforce, respect the rights of students and faculty to unionize, and defend collective bargaining and fair contracts with Teamsters, AFSCME, and UEA Duluth/Crookston. We want regents who are responsive to the needs of students. We want regents who aspire to a university that is accessible to all, a truly public good.

Karen Schanfield does not fit that description!

Schanfield played a central role in busting the most recent faculty unionization campaign in 2014–2018, and during the unionization process treated contingent faculty with profound disrespect. Please scan the QR Code sign this petition to stop Karen Schanfield from becoming a University of Minnesota Regent.

VIRTUAL LOBBY DAY 2021

We strongly encourage Local 320 members to register for Teamsters Local 320 Virtual Lobby Day | **Scan QR Code**

Lobby Day is very important this year because it is a ***budget year*** for state agencies and institutions that Teamsters rely on for their wages and benefits. Biennial budgets for Higher Education, Public Defense, State Courts, and aid to local governments will be decided during the 2021 legislative session.

The Minnesota Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement (LCPR), or Pension Commission, is currently studying retiree COLAs and disability benefits for PERA recipients.

The matter of COLAs for public employees is of the utmost concern to our members. The recently completed COLA study shows the current COLA's are simply not keeping up with inflation. The study demonstrates how retired public employees will see a reduction of their purchasing power of anywhere from 10% to 25% over their lifetimes. This is wrong. The legislature is not living up to its principle that public employees are entitled to benefit increases during the period of their retirement to offset the impact of economic inflation.

Employer groups representing Minnesota's cities and counties propose to make access to duty-related and PTSD disability more restrictive and want to force disability beneficiaries back to work. The employer groups are engaging in a knee-jerk reaction to the spike in disability claims in the Minneapolis Police Department which is not a indicative of a general trend, nor is it a significant burden on the Fund's liabilities.

We must encourage the Pension Commission to study the matters of COLA's and disability benefits with more depth and not take any action that would undermine the LCPR's commitment to ensuring Minnesota public employees have decent pensions and benefits.