



Community Organizations at Work

March 28, 2022

Chair Eric Pratt and Senate Jobs Committee Members:

MESC is a coalition of 18 employment service providers in the metro area: American Indian OIC, Avivo, CAPI, CLUES, Common Bond, Emerge, Hired, Hmong American Partnership, International Institute, Jewish Family and Children's Service, Lutheran Social Services, Project for Pride in Living, Soar Career Solutions, Teamsters | Minnesota Job Partners, Twin Cities RISE!, Urban League, and Vietnamese Social Services. We are on the frontline helping job seekers and employers come back from the pandemic.

We support the workforce development components in the Walz-Flanagan Budget to Expand Economic Opportunity, with five priorities (listed in green) that we believe will make the request even stronger.

- Replenish the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund (\$2.73 billion)
- Nonprofit Resiliency and Recovery Fund (\$50 million)
MESC: Also fund Community Capital Grants (\$30 million) available to Community Based Organizations for construction of training centers, etc.
- Paid Family and Medical Leave (\$17.4 million)
- Modernize Workforce Tools (\$15 million)
MESC: Create a universal application to give job seekers easy access to any employment service. It travels with them like an electronic medical record. No need to repeatedly upload Social Security card and driver's license.
- Tech Jobs Pipeline for Youth (\$15 million)
Technology Reskilling Training (\$13 million)
Clean Tech Workforce Training (\$8 million)
MESC: Also boost Pathways to Prosperity (\$7 million) to meet industry skill gaps for healthcare, IT, manufacturing, transportation, etc. Provide bridge funding to keep programs whole between funding cycles.
- Office of New Americans (\$470,000)
MESC: Remove Selective Service requirement; it's a barrier to new Americans.
- **MESC:** Expand Eligibility for Dislocated Worker Program. Open state program to anyone unemployed or underemployed. Require employers to warn DEED of mass layoffs. Raise maximum cost per participant from \$4,500 to \$7,500 to meet needs for training, counseling, housing, childcare, and transportation.
- **MESC:** Invest in Core Employment Services (\$7 million) for low-income people needing employment services, but not training.

Sincerely,

Mike Wynne – MESC Public Policy Chair, Emerge CEO, wynnem@emerge-mn.org
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