



March 30, 2022

Sen. Eric R. Pratt, Chair
Committee on Jobs and Economic Growth
Finance and Policy
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3219
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for SF 4091

Chair Pratt and members of the Committee on Jobs and Economic Growth Finance and Policy:

I am writing on behalf of the Minnesota Technology Association (MnTech) to voice our support for the workforce development provisions in SF 4091. MnTech is a coalition of more than 200 member companies united in building a stronger tech ecosystem and innovation economy in Minnesota. We work to ensure that Minnesota's technology-driven companies have access to exceptional talent, dedicated public policy advocates, and are part of an innovative and inclusive technology community. For more than 30 years, MnTech has helped nurture each of these attributes within our state, enabling Minnesota technology-driven businesses, professionals, and communities to thrive. Our member companies work the spectrum of technology, from IT, advanced manufacturing, life sciences, fintech, agtech, cleantech, and edutech, and range from long-established corporations to small and growing startups.

The tech industry in Minnesota provides some of the highest-paying career tracks in the state, but currently lacks a strong and diverse talent pipeline to fill the jobs of the future. As the diversity of the state increases over the next decade, it will be even more important to prepare the future of our workforce, including Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) students and youth to meet the growing demands of the tech industry. MnTech members know that diverse teams produce stronger outcomes, yet the Minnesota tech workforce does not reflect diversity of our community. This is why we support the additional workforce development funding called for by SF 4091 to prepare more youth for tech careers and equip unemployed and under-employed adults with the digital skills needed to succeed in an increasingly tech-driven economy.

In addition to state investments, MnTech is committed to working through the Technology Inclusion Alliance (TIA) and leveraging investments made by member companies to close the tech talent gap while simultaneously addressing racial and



economic disparities. This includes supporting policies that help a diverse community of workers address barriers to entering the tech workforce like access to affordable child care, and supporting workplace retention through policies providing paid family leave.

Education and workforce development policies and programs that expand talent pipelines to include more diverse representation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and women are critical to the competitiveness of the Minnesota tech sector. This is why MnTech supports the proposed \$15 million appropriation for the youth technology competitive training grant program and \$13 million appropriation in the adult technology competitive training grant program, both aimed at preparing Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), and women to meet the growing labor needs in Minnesota's technology industry.

Thank you for your consideration of these important investments.

Katie McClelland

Katie McClelland
Director of Policy & Research
Minnesota Technology Association