

To the Senate Committee on State and Local Government and Veterans,

My name is Ian Moore and I am a librarian at the University of Minnesota Duluth. I am writing to testify in support of S.F. 4597, which amends the Public Employee Labor Relations Act.

The Public Employee Labor Relations Act prevents professional employees like myself and my colleagues from organizing to advocate for ourselves in the University of Minnesota system. In particular, pay for professional and administrative employees has lagged far behind the rising cost of living and the university has done little to address it. Stagnating pay leaves many staff demoralized and unable to live comfortably in the communities we are so proud to be a part of as employees of the University of Minnesota system. Again and again, I have seen talented colleagues who are passionate about the work they do at the University of Minnesota leave for work because the university is unwilling to compensate professional staff fairly. Our libraries in particular are uncompetitive with their peers in the region, making it difficult for us to recruit and retain new employees. Turnover, our difficulties in hiring, and stagnating wages have negative effects not only on our staff, but also on the students, faculty, and communities we serve.

I believe that amending the Public Employee Labor Relations Act will enable staff and faculty at the University of Minnesota to effectively advocate for themselves and for their communities. U of M workers, like other public employees, should have the right to join and form the unions that work for them.

Thank you to everyone on the committee for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ian Moore

Business & Economics Librarian at the University of Minnesota Duluth