

March 7, 2024

Minnesota Senate
1200 Minnesota Senate Building
Higher Education Committee
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Fateh and Members of the Higher Education Committee,

As a current employee of the University of Minnesota (UMN) Libraries, I am writing to express my support for SF4597, which if passed would reform the MN Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA).

The bargaining units currently designated by PELRA lump me, as a Professional & Academic (P&A) employee in Unit 11, together with thousands of UMN employees whose jobs have little in common with my own. For example, as a faculty-like staff librarian with continuous appointment status, I care deeply about workplace issues that are not as relevant to other P&A staff, like academic freedom and protection of research time. The enormity and heterogeneity of the current bargaining units serve to, in practice, deny collective bargaining rights to UMN workers.

The UMN Libraries and our staff are essential to our campus, students, faculty, and the community. We steward millions of dollars worth of books, articles, archives and other rare materials; we oversee large library spaces humming with activity; we support the research mission of the University in countless ways; and much more. The ability to come together with a meaningful focus on the library workplace will lead to a stronger library, to the ultimate benefit of students, faculty, staff, and the public.

Thank you for your consideration,



Danya Leebaw
Associate Librarian, University of Minnesota Libraries