

April 8, 2024

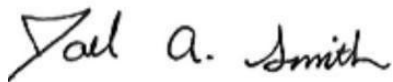
Chair McEwen and members of the Senate Labor Committee:

On behalf of the 14,000 members of Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) Minnesota and North Dakota and their families, I am writing to express our support for the proposed \$9 million appropriation to support the development of Rise Up Center. We look forward to collaborating with Unidos and other community-based organizations that seek to use the project to create pathways for workers who currently have limited access to family-supporting construction careers in partnership with unions.

LIUNA members build and maintain critical infrastructure, including transportation, water and energy systems that provide the foundation for the clean, equitable and inclusive economy that Minnesota seeks to build over coming decades. Our organization has also been on the forefront of efforts to secure a just energy transition and to address economic and environmental problems that have disproportionately impacted communities of color and low-income communities across Minnesota – from air pollution to the presence of lead in drinking water to lack of family-supporting jobs and careers.

Over the past few years, we have worked with Unidos and other partners in the Rise Up Center to address barriers to equitable participation in Minnesota's economy and to advance investments and policies designed to make our state healthier and more prosperous. We have no doubt that the Rise Up Center will become a hub for efforts to recruit the next generation of skilled and diverse construction workers. We fully support the proposal and are ready to work with sponsors to make it successful.

Sincerely,



Joel Smith
President and Business Manager
LIUNA Minnesota and North Dakota