

IBEW LOCAL 292



HF 2755 MNDOLI Budget Bill House Labor Committee March 23, 2023

Thank you, Chair Nelson and members of the House Labor Committee. for allowing us to submit testimony in support of HF 2755 the MNDOLI budget bill.

My name is Andy Snope, I am the Legislative Director for IBEW Local 292. We represent 5000 electrical workers in our jurisdiction, as well as today I am writing on behalf of the 14,000 IBEW workers who work throughout the state of Minnesota in the electrical industry.

Thank you MNDOLI Commissioner Blissenbach and the Walz administration for putting together these appropriations and prioritizing working families, through sound policy and funding for Labor and Industry. These budget items and priorities will help to make Minnesota a better place to live and work for families and businesses and provide for a stronger economy for all Minnesotans.

I would like to take a moment to touch on just a few of the items in this bill that the IBEW supports.

This proposal asks for increases in funding to help to support education and compliance with prevailing wage requirements. This increase will help to pay for more staff to assure better wage compliance and enforcement to see to it that Minnesota tax dollars spent on construction projects are spent responsibly on workers wages and benefits to assure the best quality installation with the best trained workers and to help eliminate wage theft and misclassification of workers.

With the evolution of more renewable energy, higher efficiency, and the move towards electrification; this bill helps Minnesota move in that direction more efficiently and effectively. This bill provides for funding to help the department adopt and implement accelerated energy codes for commercial buildings as well as recommending requirements for building electrification, specifically in the form of Electric Vehicle infrastructure to help meet the demand for more electric vehicles in transportation. The IBEW has been working with stakeholders on these initiatives for many years. The IBEW and the Contractors we work for are ready to meet the challenge to build more efficient buildings, this is the work we are trained for and that we perform.

This bill also allocates money to increase funds for registered apprenticeship programs and apprenticeship readiness programs in this new clean economy. This will help our training centers keep up on the latest training technologies and equipment to help attract a more diverse workforce to our training programs.

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This proposal will help to keep construction workers safe. Provisions in this bill will finally bring conformity for MN OSHA with Federal OSHA and adopt maximum federal penalties tied with inflationary increases for those employers who fail to keep workers safe on the jobsite. This alignment will ensure future federal funding for MN OSHA. Construction workers deserve to go home free from injury after a hard day's work.

In conclusion we are pleased to see the allocations and policies proposed through this MNDOLI Budget bill. We see this as a mutual benefit for all workers and the employers they work for as well as to help create a thriving economy for all Minnesotans.

Thank you for your time today, please contact me if you have any questions.

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