

DON'T FORGET US CAMPAIGN!

July 13, 2020 (updated July 16, 2020, with additional signers)

Governor Tim Walz & Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan
130 State Capitol
St. Paul, MN 55155

Speaker Melissa Hortman
463 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3113
St. Paul, MN 55155

House Majority Leader Ryan Winkler
459 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt
267 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senate Minority Leader Susan Kent
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2227
St. Paul, MN 55155

House Jobs and Economic Development Finance
Division Chair Tim Mahoney
365 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senate Jobs and Economic Growth Finance and
Policy Committee Chair Eric Pratt
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3219
St. Paul, MN 55155

Sent via Electronic Mail

RE: Act this Special Session on Unemployment Assistance for Working High School Students

Dear State Leaders,

As the latest special session begins, we, the undersigned organizations, urge you to make sure working high school students ages 16-and-older get the money they've earned.

These students who were part of the workforce before COVID-19 and whose employers had been paying into the unemployment insurance system for them have been waiting months for unemployment benefits. It's past time for legislation to make them temporarily eligible this special session.

These students are real people who rely on their wages to support themselves and their families, paying for basic needs like food, rent, and utilities. For many of them, access to unemployment assistance is about survival.

Because of a 1939 state law, thousands of hard working high school students who lost their jobs because of COVID-19 are denied access to state unemployment insurance and federal support through Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.

Minnesota is one of the only states in the country where high school students are not eligible for either state or federal benefits. As a result, many students face the prospect of dropping out of high school or not getting the benefits they've earned. When young people are forced to drop out, it jeopardizes the future of their education and their ability to participate in the economy.

Some students were even granted benefits by the state incorrectly and now are in debt because the state is demanding the money back.

Legislators from both parties are working on legislation to provide temporary access to this assistance for high school students ages 16 and older through the end of the year.

We urge you to support this legislation to help fuel our state's recovery from this pandemic.

Sincerely,

**African American Leadership Council
(AALC)**

MCLA Board

**African American Leadership Forum
(AALF)**

Men of MARCH

ANew BAM

Mentoring Young Adults/Guns Down St. Paul

Appetite For Change, Inc.

Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board

**Brainerd Lakes Area Community
Foundation**

Minnesota Parent Union

Bridgemakers

MN Assoc. of Alternative Programs - STARS

**Brooklyn Center Community Schools Early
College Academy**

National Youth Leadership Council

Casa de Esperanza

New American Development Center

Center for Redeemer Center for Life

New Vision Foundation

Center for School Change

NewPublica

Centro Tyrone Guzman

Northfield Healthy Community Initiative

Change Inc.

Northside Achievement Zone

Children's Defense Fund - Minnesota
Coalition of Asian American Leaders
Community Ambassadors Initiative
Community Integration Center (CIC)
Courageous heARTS
East African Integration Center
East African Integration Center
East Side Neighborhood Services
Every Body's In
Face to Face Health & Counseling & Homeless Youth Program
FamilyWise
Foster Advocates
Great Expectations
Greater Twin Cities United Way
Grey Duck Films
High School for Recording Arts
Hired
IMPACT LIVING Christian Center
Ka Joog
LatinoLEAD
LISC

Northwest Minnesota Foundation
Pillsbury United Communities
Plymouth Christian Youth Center
Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood
Sheridan Neighborhood Organization
Somali American Social Service Association
Somali Community Resettlement Services
South Sudanese Foundation
Southside Pride
St. Paul Community Literacy Consortium
Sundance Family Foundation
The Sanneh Foundation
Twin Cities Changemakers
UpTurnships
VOA High School
We IMPACT!
West Central Initiative
World Savvy
Youth Intervention Programs Association (YIPA)
YouthLead Minnesota
Youthprise

Cc: Sen. Jason Rarick
Sen. Jeremy Miller
Sen. Carla Nelson
Sen. David Tomassoni
Sen. Jerry Newton
Sen. Steve Cwodzinski
Sen. Bobby Joe Champion
Rep. Mohamud Noor
Rep. Bob Gunther

Rep. Kaohly Her

Rep. Jamie Becker-Finn

Rep. Hodan Hassan

Rep. Frank Hornstein

Rep. Kelly Moller

Rep. Michael Howard

Rep. Mary Kunesh Podein

Rep. Ruth Richardson

DEED Commissioner Steve Grove

Asst. Commissioner and Executive Director of the Governor's Children's Cabinet Erin Bailey

Binta Kanteh

Jason Chavez