

November 10, 2022

Dear Chairman Moe and Chancellor Malhotra,

I am pleased to write a letter in support of the FY2024-2025 Biennial Budget Request submitted to the Minnesota legislature by the Board of Trustees and Minnesota State. I would strongly support this request for the 800 MSUAASF members who continue to provide essential services to students even as State support has dwindled over these many years.

Our organization's mission--to support student access, engagement, and success within the universities of the Minnesota State higher education system--aligns with the budget request statement under the Expanded Student Support Services section "Student support services help students plan how their educational efforts will fit into their other life activities, coordinate educational concerns with other concerns, navigate requirements, take advantage of opportunities, and manage complex activities made more difficult by a student's challenges." We know that the Board and Minnesota State's true passion is fostering the brilliant minds of tomorrow. We admire MinnState's initiatives to fund services such as student advisors, social workers, basic needs coordinators, community resource connectors, and mental health support staff alongside the other essential academic and student services that our members provide.

As professionals who work closely with students, we understand the importance of providing financial resources for students to reach their educational goals. As such we support the funding of Transfer scholarships and Emergency grants as indicated in the budget request. We do ask that the funds being requested in the area of workforce development scholarships consider the needs of students in unpaid internships, student teaching, field experiences, practicums, and clinicals when developing and awarding scholarships once the funds are received. While we value many forms of experiential learning, these crucial but time-intensive curricular requirements have proven a significant barrier to completion for students who work while studying and, in turn, have contributed t