



Minnesota Federation of Teachers

168 Aurora Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55103
Phone: (612) 227-8583 ■ Wats 1-800-652-9710 ■ Fax (612) 293-1648

May 17, 1991

Dear House and Senate Members:

Today you will be voting on HF 700, the conference committee report for K-12 funding. The Minnesota Federation of Teachers wishes to share with you our lack of support for this bill. This action is taken as a result of a vote of the MFT executive council which met May 17, 1991 and reviewed the final bill.

When the Governor's budget was presented, we were shocked by the negative impact of the budget proposal on students, the classroom and teachers. We shared these concerns with the legislature. We were asked to analyze the loss of jobs, class size increases, and program cuts. This was done and the results were dramatic. The impact on teachers personally (salary, health cost, buying supplies for students, etc.) was also shared. Despite this information, the proposals passed by the House and Senate and now the conference committee do not diminish these issues or concerns.

HF 700 fails to address the funding needs of K-12 education. It will create significant stress in meeting the needs of students and the staff who work with those students.

In addition to the funding concerns, MFT also strongly objects to the inclusion of proposals for charter schools and the contracting of educational services with sectarian (religious) schools. The moratorium on referendums at a time of great need, the reductions in cooperative and intermediate district funding, limitations on the use of staff development funding and limitation of T&E to MA30 are a few of the other aspects of the bill that we find disturbing.

This has been a hard session for all of us for a variety of reasons. Our teachers express frustration because as they attempt to be innovative and change the system, they face incredibly escalating needs of children. Yet the message to them from the legislature is you will have larger classes, fewer supplies and we expect you to do this without additional pay. This message is sure to have lingering consequences for all of us.

Sincerely,


Sandra Peterson, President



Rose Hermodson, Director of Legislation
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