

Minnesota AFL-CIO Sample Caucus Resolution

Extending Unemployment Benefits & Protecting Trust Fund Solvency

BE IT RESOLVED: That the _____ party support legislation to extend unemployment benefits to the miners on the Iron Range and those laid off from vendors supporting the mines, allowing working people to continue providing for their families until they can return to work; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the _____ party oppose efforts by the State Chamber of Commerce and other business groups as well as some legislators to give corporations and their CEO's refunds from the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and putting at risk the solvency of the fund.

TALKING POINTS:

- Thousands of miners on the Iron Range have been laid off, and 700 more Minnesotans who work for vendors that support the mining industry have also lost their jobs.
- A major cause of the massive number of unemployed miners is the “dumping of steel” by foreign countries pushing steel prices to a 10-year low, and devastating more than half the 11 mining operations on the Iron Range.
- By the first week of March 2016, 600 steelworkers on the Iron Range will have run out of their unemployment benefits.
- The Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund is funded by taxes paid by all businesses in the state, based on how often they lay off workers.
- The trust fund balance is currently \$1.6 billion. However, during the great recession \$1.8 billion was paid out in unemployment benefits in one year. It would be irresponsible to give large businesses and their CEO's refunds from the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund when economists are predicting another recession soon.
- When the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund goes into deficit, the state has to borrow from the federal government to pay benefits to unemployed workers, triggering an increase in taxes on employers during difficult economic times.