

**Testimony of Cherrene Horazuk, President of AFSCME 3800**  
**Board of Regents Public Forum on the University Budget**  
**Wednesday, June 5, 2013**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Cherrene Horazuk. I have worked in the Humphrey School of Public Affairs for 9 years and am President of AFSCME 3800.

Each year, clerical workers testify regarding the U's budget priorities. Each year, we play a game, where we testify, and you pretend to listen. Or at least that's how it appears, because year after year, we have told you of administrative bloat and excessive administrative salaries that are being paid for with skyrocketing tuition, the elimination of frontline jobs, and the rolling back of clerical worker wages in real terms.

Year after year, we have called for transparency in financial decision-making. We have called for equity in staffing cuts. We have denounced the policies and practices of administrative enrichment that are unacceptable for a world class public institution. We have also gone on strike twice. We have shouted from the mountaintops (or at least the steps of Morrill Hall). Yet it's as if none of this took place, at least if you consider your responses to the Wall Street Journal.

We have been the canary in the coal mines. Administrative bloat at the U has made front page headlines and led to scrutiny from the governor and legislature. Yet your response has largely been to deny, to deflect and to treat those raising criticisms, such as Governor Carlson, the way you've treated us – with disregard and disrespect. You seem to view us as a thorn in the side of the individuals who use this land grant institution as a vehicle for personal enrichment at taxpayer expense.

The legislature took a stand and is demanding accountability. This year's budget process reflects that. However, change needs to happen and happen now.

We applaud the freeze in tuition but it is at least 10 years too late as tens of thousands of alums face debt loads that will cripple their finances for decades.

We applaud the commitment to cut \$15 million in administration but this, as well, comes at least 5 years too late, after a veritable administrative boom town mentality that has seen an increase of 85 high paid senior administrative positions, all while 184 clerical jobs were eliminated.

The \$15 million in administrative cuts need to be made at the top. Clerical, technical, healthcare, maintenance and food service workers have paid the price for a system that has created wealth for a few and poverty for thousands of workers who struggle to get by.

So I challenge you today, to actually listen and HEAR what our members have to say, regarding the job losses, the poverty wages, the lost educational opportunities, the

inequity of leave policies, the devastating impact of health insurance cost increases. Hear what we say about the work we do every day in spite of all of these attacks, to further the mission of this University.

I also challenge you to do something about what you've heard. Create a truly world class university that pays all workers a livable wage, not a poverty wage for many and luxury wages for a few. A university that recognizes and respects the work that is done and the people that do it. A university that puts students and the mission first. A University that can't be called the University of Haves and Have Nots. It's long past time to chop from the Top!