

REP. CHUCK BROWN REMEMBERED



The House approved a resolution Feb. 5 memorializing former Rep. Chuck Brown who passed away unexpectedly in August 2003 at age 52.

Brown, of Appleton, served in the House from 1985-1996. His legislative district included Big Stone, Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens, Swift, and Traverse counties.

He was remembered on the House floor for his quick wit, love of family, bipartisan approach, and dedication to rural Minnesota, particularly his work to ease farmers' financial burdens during the troubled economic times of the late-1980s.

Brown is survived by a wife and four daughters.

peak morning and evening commute times. Estimates say enough riders would use the line to reduce round trips on the corresponding highways by 2,800 per day.

Costs associated with building the line involve improvements necessary along the tracks and construction of stations and park and ride facilities and right-of-way acquisition.

The Federal Transit Administration has initiated new guidelines for evaluating projects seeking federal funding, prompting completely new and incomparable projections for the line's ridership and costs. The administration evaluates the dollar value of travel-time savings to determine whether a project is cost-effective. Officials at the meeting were careful to note that a cost-effectiveness standard is not the same as a cost-benefit analysis, which has not yet been performed on the Northstar project.

The cost-effectiveness indicators suggest the line will save commuters 892,000 hours per year.

Preliminary plans show improvements, complete by 2008, would cost \$265 million to begin the line, with the federal government picking up 50 percent, the state 33 percent, and local entities 17 percent, under the governor's proposal.

In addition, officials said that initial operation of the Northstar line would not eliminate the need for expanding Highway 10 if anticipated growth continues.