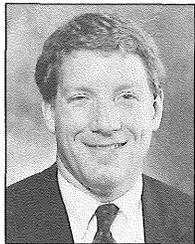


Kelley to focus on improved governmental services

Rep. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins) shares the same sweeping complaint about government that many voters expressed in 1992.



Rep. Steve Kelley

"There are things that the government could be doing a better job of for citizens — providing services to help make life better for individuals and families," he said.

Kelley said he found the Capitol an inviting place to help solve these problems: fitting for someone who has "always had an interest in public affairs" and who is educated in the law and public policy.

He began his legal career in 1979 after graduating from Columbia Law School, and his political start came a year later when he served on the DFL State Central Committee. In 1984, he made an unsuccessful bid for the House against former Rep. Sally Olsen (IR-St. Louis Park). When Rep. Olsen resigned to become a judge on the Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals, he tried again.

"I think I was better at campaigning the second time," he said.

Kelley's west-suburban district includes all of Hopkins and portions of St. Louis Park and

Minnetonka. More than 50 percent of the area's residents live in apartments, Kelley said, adding that the district is home to both the poor and the very rich.

While campaigning, Kelley "mostly heard about the importance of education and concern about the property tax system" — two issues that are very much linked in the minds of his constituents, he said.

"Hopkins and St. Louis Park have traditionally had good schools and there are a lot of people who moved there for the quality of the schools," he said. "They're willing to pay some levels of property tax, but they're concerned about the fairness of the system."

Voters in the district wonder to what extent their taxes are subsidizing other areas. This session, Kelley intends to focus on intergovernmental relations to improve government services in the state.

"I'd like to see the Legislature create some incentives for greater cooperation and collaboration among different groups in government providing services to people so that we're more effective . . . while holding down the cost of government."

While Kelley conceded that his first few days in office have been relatively easy, he said he is looking forward to the hard part: "decisions

about how to allocate resources to people."

More optimistic than some, Kelley said he expects the Legislature will proceed with "a lot less acrimony than people expect."

Most legislators "realize that citizens are still looking for their representatives to be pragmatic and not excessively political," he said.

And that, he said, is what he intends to deliver.

— Adam Samaha

District 44A

Population: 32,773

Distribution: wholly urban; all residents live within a city.

Counties: Hennepin

Largest city: Hopkins (wholly contained within the district). Also contains a portion of Minnetonka.

Location: west Metro

1992 presidential election results:

Clinton/Gore: 48.2 percent

Bush/Quayle: 29.9 percent

Perot/Stockdale: 21.2 percent

Other: 0.7 percent