

open-air manure storage structures until July 1, 2000, or after the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) has given to the Legislature a timeline and cost for doing a GEIS.

A third bill (**HF3421**) comes from House Majority Leader Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda), also a farmer.

Winter's bill would forbid permits to increase or establish feedlot capacities greater than 1,875 hogs, 15,000 calves, 533 dairy cows, or 750 feeder cattle, unless the applicant gets an environmental impact statement. That can cost between \$50,000 and \$100,000.

His bill would also ban open-air, below-ground earthen or clay-lined manure storage facilities after July 1, 1998. Existing structures would have to be replaced by June 30, 2001, under the bill.

Winter's bill also creates a livestock industry environmental steering committee made up of legislators, farmers, and environmentalists to perform a GEIS, which would examine long-term effects of the livestock industry and its effects on the state, including the effects on environment, the family farm, and the roles of local government.

Jeff Gresser, who is a construction supervisor from Martin County, said Winter's bill would hurt.

He said he has been busy helping construct feedlots and his business has been successful. He testified against the bill Feb. 10 before the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

"If that would shut off, people would be laid off and people wouldn't have jobs. That would certainly be devastating if that happened," he said.

Linda King, an Olmsted County farmer, agreed, testifying against Peterson's moratorium bill, **HF3320**, which also was heard Feb. 10 by the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. She said any farmer in business today has to expand and has to invest a lot of money.

"Minnesota's agriculture economy does affect every citizen," she said. "The Minnesota farmer will not go back to the back-breaking operation of the past. Minnesota farmers and their profits are Minnesota's greatest treasure."

Both **HF3320** and Winter's **HF3421** bill were approved by the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. Both bills moved to the House Agriculture Committee.

Peterson was very passionate in his presentation of **HF3441**, the "Living with Livestock" bill, which was approved by the Agriculture Committee Feb. 9 and the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee Feb. 11.

"I believe the middle ground is still being worked," Peterson said. "I think I've worked

hard on [the bill], and I've got some soul in this thing. If we lose the ability to keep working toward a middle ground by defeating this tonight, in my heart of hearts, I believe rural Minnesota will never be the same. You will be owned by the corporations.

"I want my kids to own agriculture. I don't want them working for the country store. I don't believe it does any good in rural Minnesota," he said.



Ogren enjoys private sector, recalls 'passion' of lawmaking

By Sandy Donovan

Former Rep. Paul Ogren, a DFLer who served an Aitkin-area district, says there's no job in the world like being a legislator.

"It was utterly fascinating," he said. "Your job is to champion people's needs and concerns. That's a rare privilege and it's very exciting."

During his 12 years in the House (1980-1992), Ogren championed the health-care needs of Minnesotans as an architect of MinnesotaCare, the comprehensive reform package passed by the 1992 Legislature.

Today, he continues to work in that field at Health Strategies Group, a private health-care consulting firm, and said he hopes to see the state further improve access to care for low-income citizens.

"There are far too many people who don't go to the doctor simply because they can't afford it," he said. "Today, MinnesotaCare helps over 100,000 people a year, and I think that's marvelous. But I regret that so much of the money raised in 1992 under the MinnesotaCare Act went to pay for prior and other objectives."

Although Ogren is perhaps best remembered for his work on health-care reform, he says he is equally proud of his efforts in creating the Fond du Lac Community College in 1990. While in the House, he also chaired the powerful Taxes Committee.

And although he said he would not have missed his years in the House, he also

Rep. Ron Kraus (R-Albert Lea) said Peterson's "Living With Livestock" bill would go too far.

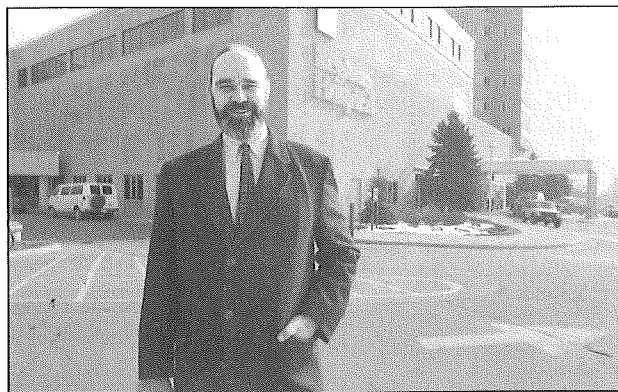
"It's a really important issue to my district, too," Kraus said. "With so many good people on each side of the issue, why couldn't we have had more middle ground?"

HF3441 now moves the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. ❧

said he is enjoying life in the private sector.

"It's terrific having a private, unlisted telephone number," he said. "And having a personal private life that cannot be intruded on at the whim of constituents is something to enjoy."

After retiring from the Legislature, Ogren campaigned for the DFL gubernatorial nomination for the first few months of 1993. He pulled out of the race in May of that year, citing the potential that his candidacy would have jeopardized the career of his wife, Associate Justice Sandra Gardebring of the Minnesota Supreme Court. Judges are prohibited by state code from participating in partisan politics.



Former Rep. Paul Ogren, the architect of the MinnesotaCare program, is in the private sector now, but he's still working on health issues.

Ogren then spent several years as executive director of the St. Paul-based Center for Health Care Access and Reform, a national nonprofit group that gathered health-care information and assisted with policy crafting.

Today, he said, he's happy in the "for-profit sector," occasionally thinking back to the "raw vitality of legislating, the opportunity to advocate with absolute and exuberant passion." ❧