

# 'Interesting work' of House delights Orfield

Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) may be one of the youngest and newest faces in the House this year, but he already has one of those classic resumes from which political careers are built.

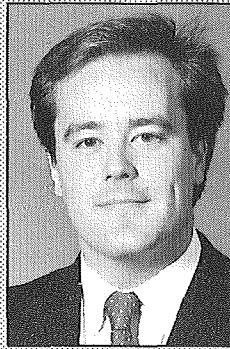
Orfield graduated summa cum laude from the University of Minnesota with bachelor's degrees in history and political science, did graduate work at Princeton University, and received his law degree from the University of Chicago.

He then served as a law clerk for a U.S. Court of Appeals judge, and later became an associate with the prominent law firm of Faegre & Benson in Minneapolis.

But Orfield, who during college worked as an intern for Minneapolis Mayor Don Fraser and on three campaigns for former Sen. John Brandl, says he's always been interested in public service.

So when the job of special assistant opened in the state Attorney General's Office in 1989, Orfield applied. He now is on temporary leave from that job, but he says he loves the work.

"Public service is much more interesting than two big companies fighting over whether their accountants made mistakes while doing their bills," says Orfield. "I defended the rights of victims of sexual assault, prosecuted drunk drivers, all of those things are interesting things to do."



## Myron Orfield

District 59B

Age: 29

Home: Minneapolis

Occupation: Attorney

**District traits:** 59B includes the immediate area surrounding Lake Calhoun in the uptown section of Minneapolis. The heavily DFL district voted for the Dukakis-Bentsen ticket by a 72.8-to-27.2 percent margin over Bush-Quayle in 1988.

For example, when former Gov. Rudy Perpich blocked Minnesota National Guard troops from training in Central America, Orfield co-wrote the legal brief defending the governor's action when the case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

But as rewarding as writing a legal brief to the U.S. Supreme Court must be, Orfield says he believes being a representative will be even more interesting.

"I can't believe how interesting the work is," he adds.

And no one can accuse Orfield of not being in touch with the district he now represents. He grew up there.

The area, which was represented by former Rep. Todd Otis, ranges "from some of the richest parts of Minneapolis to some of the poorest," says Orfield. "It

is a very progressive, sensible district, independent and well-informed."

Orfield says he intends to concentrate on issues pertaining to the environment, education, and crime, while paying particular attention to developing ways to increase recycling and reducing toxic emissions.

Although Orfield has long had an interest in government, he says getting to the House had a lot more to do with timing and hard work on the campaign trail.

"A year ago I never would have guessed I'd be here," he says. "But I'm delighted to be here. Todd Otis . . . decided sort of at the last minute that he wasn't going to run again. I had to decide right then and there to do it. I'm glad I did."

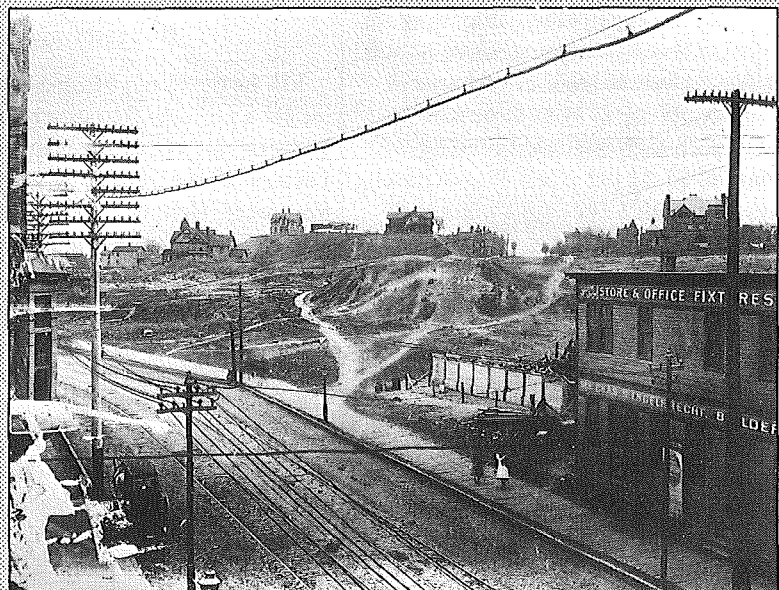
## It's a fact!

*For sale: Hilltop bldg site, near paved roads & utilities, downtown view.*

If the people who sold the land for the Capitol in 1893 had advertised in the newspaper, they might have hyped those amenities. The Board of State Capitol Commissioners liked the site, but it dickered about the price, slashing the cost from \$480,000 to \$285,225, says an 1895 report.

The site was one of four considered for the new building, which opened in 1905.

"It has as commanding a view as you probably could secure," St. Paul lawyer and landowner Robert P. Lewis told the board, according to Minnesota Historical Society records.



About 1895, looking north along Wabasha Street, the site of the new Capitol was just a mound of dirt. (Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society)