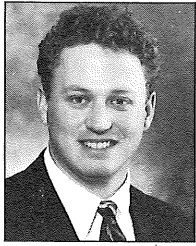


# Van Dellen urges less government to help families

As a 28-year-old father of three, Rep. H. Todd Van Dellen (IR-Plymouth) says he's a vanishing breed.



H. Todd Van Dellen

While many struggle to make ends meet, Van Dellen said young couples especially are finding it nearly impossible to work and maintain a successful family.

"Some of the people I remember most from campaigning were people about my age, with kids — and there aren't many people my age anymore that have three children — and even if they disagreed with me on [the] issues, they still said, 'I want to elect you because you have some sense about what I'm going through,'" he said.

"The next generation is suffering. A whole generation of kids is growing up in day care, without their parents, and a majority have both parents working, and a lot of them know that it's not the best way. . . . I don't think the government is doing very much to help with that problem."

Van Dellen argues that the current tangle of state laws has created a system that discourages having families. He suggests that those laws have failed "to deal with some of the economic problems — the burden of just complying with all those laws being chief among them — that people in the middle class face."

"I found during the campaign almost a level of revolt," he said.

Voters are "discontent with the size of government, the level of taxation, [and government's] intrusiveness and entanglement in people's lives," he added.

And while voters complained about taxes, Van Dellen said that's not the only reason they're upset with government.

"I think people are tired of being coerced by the government, know that they can get along okay by themselves, but are drowning in legislation that comes out of this body and the federal Congress in Washington. . . . I think they're begging for some changes."

And he said it's getting worse.

"That's why I ran." Refining the existing body of law, rather than adding new ones, is what Van Dellen said he favors.

"Government, which is too often preoccupied with divisive parochial interests, cannot serve to rebuild a sagging value system or to reunify society. But it can throw enough additional obstacles — in the form of taxes and regulation — in people's way to ensure those things won't happen," he said.

"This generation is facing immense challenges," Van Dellen said. Attempting to tilt the scales in favor of families is one he'll try to address.

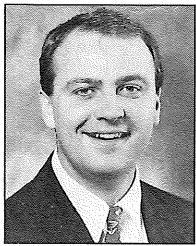
—John Tschida

## District 34B

Population: 33,195  
Distribution: 99.2 percent of residents live in urban areas, 0.8 percent rural.  
County: Hennepin  
Largest city: Plymouth (portion)  
Location: northwest Metro  
1992 presidential election results:  
Bush/Quayle: 42.5 percent  
Clinton/Gore: 32.2 percent  
Perot/Stockdale: 24.7 percent  
Other: 0.6 percent

# Teacher Holsten: an active student of government

Just two months ago, Rep. Mark Holsten (IR-Stillwater) was teaching in the Stillwater School District. Today, he is the Legislature's second youngest representative, and his desk is covered with letters from some very young constituents — his students.



Rep. Mark Holsten

"These kids are talking about the same issues as adults," said Holsten. "In some cases, they are talking about them more in-depth than the adults. They each require a personal answer," said Holsten. "It means a lot to these kids, and they want to hear back."

At 27, becoming a representative is Holsten's second job since graduating from the University of Minnesota-Duluth and the University of St. Thomas.

Holsten is certified to teach social studies, but three years of substitute teaching have brought him into a variety of classroom situations. "You name it, I've taught it — even personal band lessons," said Holsten, who admits he doesn't play an instrument.

Some of his classroom lessons about grassroots involvement he is now learning first-hand. Other

lessons he didn't anticipate. There is the trip that he and 70 other legislators took to Duluth last month, courtesy of the Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce. The furor took him by surprise.

"The *real* problem is special interest groups pumping thousands of dollars to certain individuals," said Holsten. "There is a difference between giving money to get [a candidate] elected. There's a string attached there. At some time the string is going to be pulled. I see a difference between that and business saying 'this is what your state dollars have done, this is what we're doing and here is what we need.'"

Then there is the lesson of partisanship. Partisan politics, he thought, would subside once his campaign was over.

"I understand the campaign part of politics," said Holsten. "Once we got here I thought we would be more interested in taking care of the state than we are."

His interest in public policy was developed by his parents, Holsten said, who "always discussed issues and news" and took vacations centered around historical sites. His father, Roy Holsten, served in the Senate from 1967 to 1971.

Holsten's newly created District 56A is an Independent-Republican-leaning district, and

Holsten's campaign called for a state spending freeze and no tax increases.

"The thing I heard was get a handle on state spending," said Holsten. Minnesota has been taking the wrong path and now ranks second in the nation in commercial and industrial property taxes, he said.

"We've had growth in the public sector, while we're losing business. We have to foster private business growth to employ our people. I see the role of government as helping the private sector grow — to employ our people and make their lives better."

—Joyce Peterson

## District 56A

Population: 32,113  
Distribution: 75.4 percent of residents live in urban areas, 24.6 percent rural.  
County: Washington  
Largest city: Stillwater  
Location: east Metro, bordering Wisconsin  
1992 presidential election results:  
Clinton/Gore: 39.6 percent  
Bush/Quayle: 33.5 percent  
Perot/Stockdale: 26.1 percent  
Other: 0.8 percent