

2 GOP leaders to retire from state House

By Steven Dornfeld
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Two assistant leaders of the Minnesota House Republican caucus have decided to retire, which will almost wipe out the leadership of their minority caucus.

Rep. Charles Weaver, Anoka, confirmed last night that he plans to retire and Rep. Thomas Newcome, White Bear Lake, said that he will make a formal announcement today.

Rep. Robert Johnson, St. Paul, the other assistant Republican leader, had announced previously that

he will not seek reelection. In addition, Minority Leader Aubrey Dirlam, Redwood Falls, has indicated that he may retire after 34 years in the House.

Like other House members who have announced their retirement plans, Weaver said he is finding it impossible to put in the increasing amount of time required by legislative duties.

Weaver, 42, a member of the House since 1967, is best known for his passage of the Fiscal Disparities Act in the 1971 legislative session.

This unique law, which has attracted national attention, would pool 40 percent of the growth of the commercial tax-base of the seven-county metropolitan area, and redistribute it in the area on the basis of population and need. Its purpose is to allow poorer communities to provide the same public services as wealthier communities.

Implementation of the law has been delayed by a challenge of its constitutionality. The case is now before the Minnesota Supreme Court.

Newcome, 50, who also is

a lawyer, was first elected to the House in 1964. He was chairman of the Governmental Operations Committee before the DFL gained control of the House in the 1972 elections.

Other veteran House Republicans who have announced their plans to retire include Reps. Ernest Lindstrom, Richfield; Robert Bell, Roseville, Cal Larson, Fergus Falls, and August Mueller, Arlington.

In addition, Rep. John Johnson, Minneapolis, is seeking the Republican nomination for governor

and Rep. Thomas Hagedorn, Truman, is the Republican-endorsed candidate for Congress in the 2nd District.

Their departure from the House will make it difficult for the Republicans to increase their numbers in this fall's elections. The DFL now has a 78-56 majority in the House.

The DFLers who are leaving the House include Reps. Helen McMillan, Austin; John Salchert, Minneapolis; Harry Peterson, Madison; and Richard Menke, Prior Lake.