

# Transportation and spending top priorities for Wolf

A year ago, Rep. Ken Wolf (IR-Burnsville) had no idea he would end up as a member of the Legislature. But when redistributing created an open seat in District 41B, the city council veteran of 10 years decided it was time for a change. As a representative of District 41B, he'd have "the opportunity to serve [the public] in a little different capacity, with different issues, and different challenges."



Rep. Ken Wolf

In his first run for the Legislature, he bested his opponent by about 1,500 votes.

Public service is not a new area of work for Wolf. In addition to his tenure on the Burnsville City Council, he was active in the League of Minnesota Cities and the Association of Metropolitan Municipalities, and he chaired the Dakota County Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

"I'm not unfamiliar with the [legislative] process," explained Wolf, pointing out that his work in city government has brought him to the Capitol many times. "But I'm learning more and more every day, and the learning process will never end."

Prior to becoming a House member, Wolf

spent 28 years with Control Data Corporation, and then ran a restaurant in Savage for two years. Describing himself as "semi-retired," he still does part-time computer consulting for a medical company. He hopes to use his extensive corporate and "public budgeting" background to contribute to the ongoing legislative conversation on "fiscal responsibility" in government.

Wolf hopes the Legislature will include itself in that discussion. He has co-authored a bill calling for a reduction in the size of the Legislature (HF478). It would reduce the Senate to 34 members, down from the current 67, and trim the House to a body of 68, down from 134.

Wolf also serves on the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, and hopes his experience on the Dakota Solid Waste Advisory Committee might "bring some perspective to that [policy] area" as well.

But a major issue for his new constituents, Wolf said, is transportation. His district, which covers the southeastern corner of Eden Prairie, southwestern corner of Bloomington, western Burnsville, and all of Savage, contains a severe traffic bottleneck along Interstate 35W near the Minnesota River, and at the Bloomington Ferry Bridge between Savage and Bloomington. When other members speak of redistributing dollars

away from the southwestern suburbs, Wolf will be there to suggest that the area is far from perfect.

He was also told on the campaign trail "to get the deficit under control." Indian gaming and gambling expansion is also an issue he'll be watching, considering the proximity of his district to Mystic Lake Casino.

As for the session ahead, Wolf says he's excited about his move from city to state government, and is sure his new job will be both "interesting and educational." He's not here with a set agenda.

"There's an awful lot of knowledge and wisdom and experience up here. . . I really feel like a college freshman, and right now I'm in a listening mode."

—Marnie Sadlowsky

## District 41B

**Pop.:** 31,914

**Distribution:** 100% in urbanized areas

**Counties:** Dakota, Hennepin, and Scott

**Largest City:** Bloomington (portion)

**Location:** southwestern Metro

**1992 presidential election results:**

Bush/Quayle: 38.4 percent

Clinton/Gore: 34.4 percent

Perot/Stockdale: 26.7 percent

Other: 0.5 percent