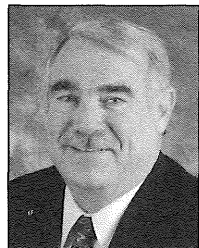


Aiming high

Advice received from one of Minnesota's top statesmen continues to energize new member Borrell

By MIRANDA BRYANT

Campaigns are nothing new to Rep. Dick Borrell (R-Waverly). In fact, he's been working at them since the age of 17.



Rep. Dick Borrell

Not even of voting age himself, Borrell worked in 1968 for Hubert Humphrey's presidential campaign.

By coincidence, Humphrey spoke one year later at the commencement exercises at St. Mary's Catholic High

School in Waverly. Borrell's class was the last to graduate from that school.

"Hubert Humphrey said something that has stuck with me all of these years," said Borrell. "He said, 'Thirty-three years ago this week I graduated from a high school with 15 graduating seniors and I became the vice president of the United States of America.' He said, 'Never set your sights too low.'"

Fast forward to 1998. Borrell, at the age of 47, decides to run for governor. He was one of four candidates at the start of the party's state convention, along with current U.S. Sen. Norm Coleman, former Lt. Gov. Joanne Benson, and Allen Quist. But Borrell dropped out before balloting began.

The father of five pitched himself as a small business Republican who was against high taxes, the Profile of Learning, and abortion. Such issues remain important to him as he serves on the House committees of education policy, taxes, and civil law.

Former state Rep. K.J. McDonald belongs to the same Toastmasters club that Borrell claimed as his own. McDonald said he and other members helped Borrell campaign for state representative because they favored his no-new-taxes pledge and pro-life views.

"All of his friends in Toastmasters club knew that he would be outspoken and they

(legislators) would all get to know that he's there," McDonald said.

On only the second day of the 2003 Legislative session, Borrell was one of 35 representatives to sign and introduce a bill (HF2) to repeal the Profile of Learning. If enacted as law, the bill would require the Legislature to review proposed standards in language arts, math, science, history, and geography.

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of Learning through the education of his children, the youngest of whom is a high school junior. He was dismayed to find that gifted student programs were eliminated, making it impossible for son, Tom, to take a college math class like his older brother had previously done.

A key component of the bill, according to Borrell, is that new standards would be subject to legislative review.

"I think one of the mistakes that the Legislature made when they passed the Profile of Learning was the implementation was completely outside of legislative review," said Borrell, himself a former teacher. "The Department of Children, Families and Learning could just implement it in whatever manner they saw fit."

Borrell said the Profile of Learning pushes a child toward a particular career by the eighth grade. This negates a student's developing life

experiences as well as ignores the fact that many people have numerous career changes in their lives, he indicated.

"The system is designed to push kids toward a particular career," Borrell said. "I think that's a horrible idea. I think we should teach kids the basics and let them determine what they want to do. Sometimes human beings go through a very tremendous period of suffering and out of that they develop a phenomenal product, business, or nonprofit organization. Society benefits greatly from people overcoming these tremendous times of challenge or struggle."

Terrorism is another big issue for the former Marine, whose hobby is flying a Cessna 172 from a private airstrip in his Wright County backyard. Borrell said he wants to become an expert on anti-terrorism measures.

Borrell supported the bill (HF1) that would require that the visa expiration dates of temporary visitors from other countries be printed on their identification cards and driver's

licenses. Supporters of the bill say it would help law enforcement determine whether a visitor is still legally in the country. Critics say it is another method of singling out foreigners following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

DISTRICT 19B

2002 population: 36,729

Largest city: St. Michael

Counties: Hennepin, Wright

Location: northwest and west Twin Cities suburbs

Top Concern: "I campaigned on repealing the Profile (of Learning). I thought that was an important thing to deliver to the voters that trusted me with their vote."

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