

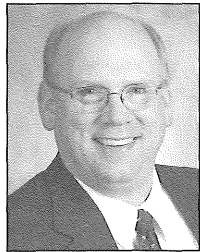
Taking a new direction

Faust hopes to get government working

By **SONJA HEGMAN**

Rep. Tim Faust (DFL-Mora) wants to move Minnesota in the right direction.

The freshman has already co-sponsored legislation to get the state's government "working again." This is also the reason he ran for office.



Rep. **Tim Faust**

He also signed onto the DFL's so-called "Focus on Basics" agenda, which include bills that would extend health care coverage to every Minnesota child; make voluntary full-day every day kindergarten available in each school district; increase the basic education funding formula by 3 percent in both 2008 and 2009; prevent government shutdown; and provide \$20 million in tax relief to Minnesota taxpayers.

With no job growth in his district "for a long time," Faust said job creation is probably the No. 1 issue in his district.

"We're competing in the global job market," he said. "When my kids get out of college they won't be competing with the kid from South Dakota. They'll be competing with the kid from South Korea."

For this reason, Faust, who beat two-term incumbent Judy Soderstrom, wants to see equity in school funding so all students get the knowledge they need.

"There's no excuse not to have equity in school funding," he said. "It would be easier to throw our model away and start over, than try to fix it." He has co-sponsored a bill that ensures state education funding so districts can budget more efficiently.

Health care costs are also an issue for his constituents. For example, one family's per

DISTRICT 8B
2002 population: 36,998
Largest city: Mora
Counties: Isanti, Kanabec and Pine
Top concerns: Job growth, the economy and education funding

paycheck cost for health insurance jumped from \$100 to \$400. These costs, in addition to rising property taxes, have hurt his district tremendously, he said.

"Some people who have lived in their homes for years have been forced to move to nursing homes because they can't afford their property taxes," Faust said. "It's crazy to force people out of their homes. We have to do everything we can to help them stay in their homes."

In addition to serving as vice chairman of the House Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs Committee, he serves on the Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs, and K-12 finance divisions.

Schools advocate

Laine seeks to address education, property taxes in year one

By **CRAIG GREEN**

Rep. Carolyn Laine (DFL-Columbia Heights) believes in family and the power of education.



Rep. **Carolyn Laine**

Taking on her new responsibility at the House, after serving 10 years on the Columbia Heights Board of Education, Laine wants to work with fellow legislators to find ways to help the education system in Minnesota.

Laine, who holds degrees in education and psychology, believes in the importance of early childhood education. "I've studied how the brain develops, and I know that the early years are the foundation of a child's education," she said.

She believes that with adequate resources and attention, the educational development of

young people in Minnesota can be addressed more effectively. "If [a child] has stress in their life, they live in poverty, have inadequate housing and no health care, their development is affected."

Laine, who serves on the Columbia Heights Charter Commission, decided to run for office after former Rep. Barbara Goodwin announced that she would not seek another term. With encouragement and support from her five children — Jennifer, Jesse, Teresa, Sarah and Anniki — she entered the race.

The level of property taxes her constituents are asked to pay is something she wants to address. "There needs to be an equitable form of taxation. We encourage people to buy homes, and then we tax them at unreasonable rates."

Laine will have a direct voice on these issues, serving on the House E-12 Education Committee, the House Early Childhood Learning Finance Division, the House

DISTRICT 50A
2002 population: 36,916
Largest city: Fridley
Counties: Anoka and Ramsey
Top concerns: Education, property taxes and health care

Housing Policy and Finance and Public Health Finance Division and the House Labor and Consumer Protection Division. She also serves on the Minnesota Heritage Finance Division.

Sitting in her new office, decorated with the help of one of her daughters, Laine knows she has an opportunity to speak and stand up for many others.

"I grew up on the Iron Range, and I'm focused on supporting working families and their struggles. There are businesses and corporations that need to remember that they have human beings with families working for them. You don't stand on the back of anyone and pretend they're not there."