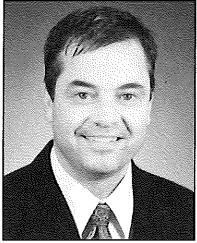


Firsthand information

LeMieur brings his business background to the Capitol

By **MIKE COOK**

Rep. Mike LeMieur (R-Little Falls) has seen firsthand what a bad business climate can do to a smaller community.



Rep. Mike LeMieur

A lifelong resident of Little Falls, he's seen a pair of large boat manufacturers close up shop in his hometown. One has since reopened to a lesser degree.

"It affects all other businesses," said LeMieur, who, with

his three brothers, owns a plumbing and heating company that their father began 55 years earlier.

"I see that people are hurting and that they don't have the extra money to spend on, for example, replacing their furnace when it

should be replaced. Instead, they just need it to limp along because they don't have the money they normally would have or they're worried about not having a job," LeMieur said.

How does that turn around?

"We're rated one of the worst states for being a business-friendly state, yet we have the greatest workforce," he said. "I truly believe if we can create a business-friendly state, and combine that with our workforce, we will have a recipe for success and we will grow jobs. When you grow jobs you grow revenues." He lists reducing business tax rates and streamlining the permitting process as two ways of growing business.

With the varied makeup of his Central Minnesota district, LeMieur is pleased to serve on two distinct committees — House Agriculture and Rural Development Policy

DISTRICT 12B

Population (2009 est.): 39,452
Largest City: Little Falls
Counties: Crow Wing, Morrison
Top Concern: Jobs

and Finance, and House Jobs and Economic Development Finance — along with the House Property and Local Tax and House Veterans Services divisions.

"My district has a lot of agriculture, Camp Ripley is in the center of my district. I thought my business background would help on jobs and economic development and I think property taxes are an issue," he said. "I think my property taxes are high for the home I live in."

A husband and father of three sons, LeMieur likes to hunt and fish. He also has spent 20 years on the Little Falls Fire Department.