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Minnesota House of Representatives
Committee on Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections

Committee Report on Legislative Process Reform
August 2008

On June 10, 2007 Representative Gene Pelowski, Chair of the House Committee on Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections, issued a press release announcing his intent to "use the 2007 interim and the 2008 legislative session to study ways to improve the legislative process in Minnesota". Representative Pelowski began this process in the summer of 2007 by meeting informally with staff from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) to discuss national trends in legislative process reform.

The committee met three times on this issue during the 2008 legislative session:

- On April 15, 2008 the committee met to hear testimony from Brenda Erickson, program principal in NCSL's Legislative Management Program. Ms. Erickson testified and gave the committee written information on national trends to streamline the legislative process.
- The committee met again on April 16, 2008 to hear more testimony from Ms. Erickson. That day the committee also heard presentations from Michelle Timmons, Revisor of Statutes, on trends in legislative activity, and from former State Senator and former Court of Appeals judge Jack Davies.
- On April 30 the committee heard testimony from Patrick McCormack, Director of House Research and from Phil Griffin, from the Minnesota Government Relations Council (MGRC).

The committee continued its meetings after adjournment of the 2008 legislature:

- The committee met on June 13 for a general discussion of the legislative process, including policy considerations and potential changes.
- On June 23 the committee discussed committee structure and procedures in more detail, and also heard testimony from Geoff Bartsh of the MGRC.
- On July 10, the committee discussed floor procedures, conference committees, and issues relating to the end of Session.
- On July 28, the committee discussed conference committee and issues relating to the end of session, and heard testimony from Keith Carlson, representing the Minnesota Inter-County Association, and from Mark Anfinson, representing the Minnesota Newspaper Association.

At its final hearing, on August 15, 2008, the committee recommended that the 2009 legislature consider certain changes in the legislative process. Those changes are listed in this report. The changes in this report come from ideas suggested from a variety of sources: House members, lobbyists, and members of the public. Where practical, this report includes sample language changes in House rules that could be considered to

implement the changes. The ideas in this report were discussed, but not formally adopted, by the House Committee on Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections. The committee discussed whether to pass along all of the ideas for others to consider, or whether to vote separately on each idea. By a vote of 7-5, the committee decided to pass along all of the ideas for others to consider in the 2009 session.

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COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES

Cooperation between House and Senate committees

#C1 The names and jurisdiction of House and Senate committees should be more closely aligned, including the accounts assigned to budget divisions.

#C2 House and Senate committees should cooperate more, by establishing more joint House/Senate committees, or by having more joint committee meetings. The Pension Commission is a good example. Having joint committees or joint hearings would be particularly useful for finance committees.

#C3 House and Senate committees with similar jurisdictions should facilitate joint hearings. These committees could be scheduled to meet at the same time, to facilitate joint hearings. However, if this is done, committee chairs and staff would need to coordinate to make sure members of the public can participate in the meetings of committees in both the House and Senate when they don't meet jointly.

Number of committees; membership and jurisdiction of committees

#C4 Each House member should serve on fewer committees, which should be accomplished by reducing the number of committees and by reducing the number of members serving on each committee.

#C5 Subcommittees should consist entirely of members of the parent committee.

#C6 The minority caucus should have proportional representation on all committees and divisions.

> *6.02 COMMITTEE AND DIVISION MEMBERSHIP. At least 30 days before the start of a regular session of the Legislature, the Speaker-designate must provide the minority political party caucuses with a list of the standing committees and divisions proposed for the session. The ~~Speaker-designate must prescribe the~~ number of minority caucus members to be appointed to each committee and division must be determined by the Speaker and*

must be proportional to the number of minority caucus members in the House. The Speaker-designate ~~and~~ may require general membership guidelines to be followed in the selection of committee and division members. The minority leader must appoint members of the minority caucus to each committees and divisions, consistent with the number of members and general membership guidelines specified by the Speaker-designate.

~~If the minority leader submits to the Speaker-designate, at least 15 days before the start of the session, a list of proposed committee and division assignments for the minority caucus that complies with the numbers and guidelines provided, the Speaker must make the proposed assignments with the purpose of attaining proportionate representation on the committees and divisions for the minority caucus.~~

#C7 The jurisdiction of each House committee and division should be described in detail (including the chapters of Minnesota Statutes within the jurisdiction of each group) and this information should be available on the House website.

#C8 All committees should have jurisdiction over both policy and finance matters.

Bill introductions

#C9 The number of bills each member can introduce (as chief author) each session should be limited, with possible exceptions for local or individual bills, executive branch bills, or as otherwise authorized by the House.

#C10 Allow an unlimited number of authors on a bill.

1.12 AUTHORS OF BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS. ~~A bill, memorial, or resolution must not have more than 35 authors.~~ After a bill or resolution is introduced and given its first reading: (a) a member may be removed as an author, by motion of the member; and (b) a member wishing to be an author may be added as an author, by motion of the author of the bill or resolution.

A member may not be the chief author of more than 25 bills in any annual regular session. A bill that the chief author designates as a local or individual bill or that the author introduces at the request of an executive branch agency does not count for purposes of the limit in this paragraph. Upon motion of a member, the House may excuse compliance with the limit in this paragraph.

#C11 Establish an annual deadline for bill introduction for bills to be considered that year.

1.10 INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS. A bill or resolution must be submitted to the Speaker at least 24 hours before the convening of the daily session at which it is to be introduced.

A bill or resolution must be introduced in triplicate and each copy must bear the signature of the member or the name of the committee or division introducing it.

In regular session, a bill prepared by a department or agency of state government must be introduced and given its first reading at least ten days before the date of the first committee deadline. A committee may not act on a House file during an annual regular session unless that House file is introduced at least 20 days before the date of the first committee deadline that year.

Referral/re-referral of bills to committees

#C12 The House should devise a mechanism under which bills, or parts of bills, could be considered simultaneously by multiple committees.

#C13 When a bill is re-referred to a committee with limited jurisdiction over certain parts of the bill, the secondary committee should limit its consideration of the bill to matters within the jurisdiction of the committee

1.11 FIRST READING AND REFERENCE OF BILLS. A bill or resolution must be reported and given its first reading when it is introduced. A bill or resolution must not be objected to when it is introduced.

After its first reading, the Speaker must refer a bill or resolution to the appropriate standing committee or division, except as provided in Rule 1.15 and Rule 1.13. The Speaker may refer a bill or resolution simultaneously to more than one standing committee or division. If this occurs, the Speaker may provide that a committee or division has jurisdiction only over a specified portion of the bill, and may specify the sequence in which the committees or divisions are to report the bill back to the House.

#C14 The House should reduce re-referral of bills.

#C15 The House should have clearer standards (in addition to those in current rule for some committees) for when re-referrals of bills to certain committees is required.

#C16 The House should consider more carefully, or perhaps develop a formal mechanism for determining, the sequence of re-referrals for bills that need to be referred to multiple committees.

1.11 FIRST READING AND REFERENCE OF BILLS. A bill or resolution must be reported and given its first reading when it is introduced. A bill or resolution must not be objected to when it is introduced.
After its first reading, the Speaker must refer a bill or resolution to the appropriate standing committee or division, except as provided in Rule 1.15 and Rule 1.13. At the time of the initial referral, the Speaker may designate subsequent committees to which the bill must be referred, and may specify the sequence of these referrals.

#C17 The House should develop a mechanism under which a secondary committee would formally be assigned jurisdiction only over limited parts of a bill.

6.30 COMMITTEE REPORTS. Except as provided in this rule, the House must adopt or reject a committee report on a bill or resolution without amendment.
A committee report recommending that a bill be re-referred to another committee may recommend that the subsequent committee have jurisdiction only over limited parts of the bill. The House may amend the portion of the committee report that recommends limited jurisdiction for a subsequent committee...

Committee scheduling and agendas

#C18 The House should allow each member to designate one or more bills as priority bills, and require that committees hear and vote on these bills, assuming there is a Senate companion.

6.19 HEARINGS ON PRIORITY BILLS. Each House member may designate one bill, for which the member is the chief author, as a priority bill each annual legislative session. The chair of each committee to which a priority bill is referred must schedule the bill for a hearing if there is a Senate companion bill.

#C19 Committees should give better notice of their agendas, including notice of major amendments to be considered.

6.20 COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE; DEADLINES. The Speaker must prepare and publish a schedule of committee meetings, fixing as far as practicable the regular meeting day and time of each committee. ....As far as practicable, amendments to be offered in committee must be filed with the chair of the committee at least 24 hours in advance of the committee hearing. The chair of a committee must make the amendment available to the public as soon as practical after the amendment is filed with the chair.

#C20 Committee chairs should attempt to give notice of the next week's agenda by Thursday of the preceding week.

6.20 COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE; DEADLINES. ... As far as practicable, the chair of a committee must: (1) give three days notice of the date, time, place and agenda for each meeting; and (2) give notice of the date, time, place and agenda for the next week's meetings by Thursday of the preceding week.

#C21 Committee meetings should begin at the scheduled time.

6.20 COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE; DEADLINES. The Speaker must prepare and publish a schedule of committee meetings, fixing as far as practicable the regular meeting day and time of each committee. The chair of the committee must convene the meeting at the scheduled time.

#C22 An amendment in a committee should be in order only if it is made available to the public in advance, with possible exceptions for author amendments, technical amendments, or amendments authorized by specific vote of a committee (or perhaps a supermajority of the committee)

6.20 COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE; DEADLINES. The Speaker must prepare and publish a schedule of committee meetings, fixing as far as practicable the regular meeting day and time of each committee. ....An amendment may not be offered in a committee unless the amendment has been filed with the chair at least 24 hours before the scheduled start of the committee meeting. A committee may waive compliance with this requirement by a vote of -----members of the committee. The chair of a committee must make an amendment available to the public as soon as practical after the amendment is filed with the chair.

#C23 Committees should more closely follow the order of bills listed on committee agendas.

6.20. COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE; DEADLINES. .....As far as practicable, the chair of a committee must give three days notice of the date, time, place and agenda for each meeting. The committee must take up items in the order listed on the agenda, unless otherwise provided by vote of the committee.

#C24 Committees should not schedule a bill for hearing until the bill is introduced and available to the public.

6.20. COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE; DEADLINES. .....As far as practicable, the chair of a committee must give three days notice of the date, time, place and agenda for each meeting. A bill must not be listed on the agenda for a committee meeting until the bill has been introduced, and the committee may not report the bill until at least two days after the bill has been introduced.

Other issues relating to the work of committees

#C25 Committees should be expected to do most of the work on bills. The House should use standing committees and subcommittees to hear testimony, build expertise, and take action on bills, and not rely on working groups, or leave detailed work for the House Floor. Committees should take the time necessary to do this work, even if it means holding bills over for multiple hearings, or having bills sent back from the floor to committee. Committee schedules, member schedules, and committee deadlines should be designed to facilitate this role.

#C26 Omnibus budget bills should contain only budget-related material. Language items should relate to budget decisions made in the bill or to general matters with a fiscal impact within the jurisdiction of the bill.

4.03 WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE; BUDGET RESOLUTION; EFFECT ON EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE BILLS. ....

....(e) Major finance and revenue bills are:
the higher education and workforce development finance bill;
the K-12 education finance bill;
the early childhood learning finance bill;
the agriculture, rural economies, and veterans affairs finance bill;
the environment and natural resources finance bill;
the health care and human services finance bill;
the state government finance bill;
the transportation finance bill;
the public safety finance bill;
the Minnesota heritage finance bill;
the energy finance bill;
the housing and public health finance bill;
the capital investment bill; and
the tax bill.....

.....(j) A major finance and revenue bill may contain only material that is related to the finance and revenue decisions made in that bill.

OR *.....(j) A major finance and revenue bill may contain only material that affects present or future financial obligations, budget policy, or revenue of the state.*

#C27 Policy language should not be included in finance bills unless the appropriate policy committee has considered and recommended approval of the language.

4.03 WAYS AND MEANS....

...(j) A major finance and revenue bill may contain only material that affects present or future financial obligations, budget policy, or revenue of the state unless the appropriate policy committee has recommended approval of a bill containing other language.

#C28 Amendments offered in committees should be germane to the jurisdiction of the committee, especially for secondary committees that should be considering only parts of a bill.

6.21 COMMITTEE PROCEDURES.....

....An amendment offered in committee must be on a subject that is within the jurisdiction of the committee. A member of a committee may raise a point of order objecting to an amendment that the member believes is not on a subject within the jurisdiction of the committee. Whether an amendment is on a subject that is within the jurisdiction of the committee is a question to be decided by the person chairing the meeting, who may put the question to the committee.

#C29 Finance and Tax Committees and divisions should not act on a bill before receiving applicable fiscal and revenue notes for the correct version of the bill.

4.10 BILLS AFFECTING STATE REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES. (a) Except as provided in Rule 1.15, a House or Senate bill that directly, substantially, and specifically affects any present or future financial obligation, budget policy, or revenue of the State must be referred as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) to the appropriate Finance or Tax Committee before the bill receives its second reading. ...

... (b) A bill subject to paragraph (a)... must, if recommended to pass, be subsequently referred to the Finance Committee...

... (c) A bill with a substantial impact on the tax revenues or tax policies of the State must be referred to the Committee on Taxes....

.... (e) To the extent practicable, a committee or division must not report a bill subject to this rule until the committee or division has received an executive branch fiscal note or revenue analysis, as applicable, for the version of the bill the committee or division is considering.

FLOOR PROCEDURES

Consideration of Amendments

#F1 The House rule governing germaneness of amendments should be made more specific, either by codifying current custom and usage or by making the germaneness standard more restrictive.

#F2 A floor amendment should not be in order if it annexes another bill.

3.31 AMENDMENT NOT TO ANNEX ANOTHER BILL. Except in a committee or division, no bill or resolution shall be amended by annexing or incorporating any other bill or resolution.

#F3a A floor amendment should not be in order if the amendment has previously been offered and rejected either in committee or on the floor.

3.32. AMENDMENT MAY NOT BE OFFERED MULTIPLE TIMES. An amendment to a bill is out of order if the amendment has previously been offered and not adopted, either in a committee or division or by the House.

#F3b A floor amendment should be in order only if it has previously been offered and rejected in committee.

3.32. FLOOR AMENDMENT NOT ALLOWED UNLESS OFFERED IN COMMITTEE. An amendment to a [major finance or revenue] bill on the House floor is out of order unless the amendment has previously been offered in a committee or division, unless the amendment is purely of a technical nature.

#F4 Amendments to be offered on the floor should be pre-filed, and made available to the public, including on the Internet, before the House considers the bill being amended.

3.33. AMENDMENTS MUST BE PRE-FILED. An amendment offered to the House is out of order unless the amendment has been filed with the Speaker at least 24 hours before being offered. When an amendment is filed with the Speaker, the Speaker must have the amendment posted on the House website as soon as practical.

#F5 The House should establish a process for controlling what amendments can be offered, at least for certain bills.

3.34. LIMITS ON AMENDMENTS. The Committee on Rules and Legislative Administration may designate amendments that may be offered to a bill on the Calendar for the Day or the Fiscal Calendar. If the Committee designates amendments for a bill, any proposed amendment to the bill that has not been designated by the Committee is out of order.

The Committee on Rules and Legislative Administration must give notice of intent to designate amendments under this rule at least ---- days before the Committee meets to designate amendments to be considered. A member intending to offer an amendment must file the proposed amendment with the Committee at least ---hours before the meeting at which the Committee will designate amendments.

#F6 The House should establish a process under which aggregate time limits can be established for debate on all amendments to a bill.

2.42. TIME LIMIT FOR DEBATE. The Committee on Rules and Legislative Administration may designate an aggregate time limit for debate on all amendments offered to a bill on the Calendar for the Day or the Fiscal Calendar.

#F7 The House should relax or repeal rules that restrict the ability to offer amendments that are not consistent with the budget resolution.

4.03 WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE; BUDGET RESOLUTION; EFFECT ON EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE BILLS.....

...(g) After the adoption of a resolution by the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Ways and Means must reconcile finance and revenue bills with the resolution. When reporting a bill, the chair of the Committee must certify to the House that the Committee has reconciled the bill with the resolution.

~~(h) After the adoption of a resolution by the Committee on Ways and Means, an amendment to a bill is out of order if it would cause any of the limits specified in the resolution to be exceeded. Whether an amendment is out of order under this Rule is a question to be decided on the Floor by the Speaker or other presiding officer and in Committee or Division by the person chairing the Committee or Division meeting. In making the determination, the Speaker or other presiding officer or the Committee or Division chair may consider: (1) the limits in a resolution; (2) the effect of existing laws on revenues and expenditures; (3) the effect of amendments previously adopted to the bill under consideration; (4) the effect of bills previously recommended by a Committee or Division or bills previously passed in the legislative session by the House or by the legislature; (5) whether expenditure increases or revenue decreases that would result from the amendment are offset by decreases in other expenditures or increases in other~~

~~*revenue specified by the amendment; and (6) other information reasonably related to expenditure and revenue amounts.*~~

#F8 The number of delete-all amendments and other major substantive amendments offered on the House floor should be reduced, with bills being referred back to committee, where public testimony can occur, if major amendments are needed.

#F9 A floor amendment proposing a constitutional amendment should be out of order, unless it is amending a constitutional amendment already proposed in the bill being considered.

3.34. AMENDMENT MAY NOT PROPOSE A NEW CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT. An amendment offered to the House is out of order if the amendment proposes a constitutional amendment. However, an amendment may propose a change to the text of a constitutional amendment already being proposed in the bill under consideration.

Consideration of bills

#F10 The House should use a general orders calendar.

1.03 ORDER OF BUSINESS. After the Journal is read, the order of business of the day is:

(1) Presentation of petitions or other communications
(2) Reports of standing committees and divisions
(3) Second reading of House bills
(4) Second reading of Senate bills
(5) Reports of select committees
(6) Introduction and first reading of House bills
(7) Consideration of messages from the Senate
(8) First reading of Senate bills
(9) Consent Calendar
(10) Calendar for the day
(11) General Orders
~~(11)~~ (12) Motions and resolutions

1.05 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE. The Committee of the Whole is a committee of the entire membership of the House. The Speaker may appoint another member as chair to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

When the House arrives at the General Orders of the Day, it shall resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider bills on General Orders.

The Rules of the House shall be observed in the Committee of the

Whole so far as applicable, except that the previous question shall not be forced or speaking limited. A roll call must be ordered if 15 members demand it. A roll call must be ordered on a amendment increasing the amount of an appropriation.

A motion that the Committee arise shall always be in order and shall be decided without debate.

1.07 GENERAL ORDERS OF THE DAY. The chief clerk, at the direction of the Speaker, shall prepare the General Orders of the Day, which is a list of all bills that have been given their second reading that have been not been placed on another calendar. Bills on General Orders must be numbered according to their order at second reading. Unless otherwise ordered by a majority of the Committee, items on General Orders shall be taken up in numerical order.

~~*1.20 GENERAL REGISTER. The General Register consists of all bills that have received a second reading, except those placed on the Consent Calendar under Rule 1.23. Bills must be placed on the General Register in the order that they receive their second reading. A bill must be on the General Register, be given to each member, and be available to the public before it may be considered by the House on the Calendar for the Day or the Fiscal Calendar. Each day that the House meets in session, the Chief Clerk must publish a list of the bills on the General Register.*~~

#F11 The House should take up bills in the order stated on a published calendar.

1.51. ORDER OF CONSIDERATION OF BILLS. Unless otherwise provided by the House, bills on the Calendar for the Day, Fiscal Calendar, and Consent Calendar must be taken up in the order listed on the calendar.

#F12 The House should establish a limit of one hour for debate on most bills, and a limit of two hours for major budget bills or other major bills. Time available for speaking on bills should be allocated between the majority and minority caucus, based on the percent of House members in each caucus.

2.42. TIME LIMIT FOR DEBATE. Debate on a bill, including proposed amendments, on the Calendar for the Day or the Fiscal Calendar is limited to one hour. However, the limit is two hours for a major finance or revenue bill or for another bill in which the Committee on Rules and Legislative Administration specifies a two-hour limit

#F13 Better notice should be given of when motions to concur/refuse to concur in Senate amendments to House files will be considered. There should be a waiting period, during which the text of Senate amendments to House files must be available to the public, before the House can vote to concur in Senate amendments.

1.16. MOTIONS FOR CONCURRENCE. The chief clerk must publish and make available on the House website a list of House files passed by the Senate with Senate amendments, for which House concurrence in the Senate amendments is requested. A motion to concur in Senate amendments to a House file is not in order until 24 hours after the chief clerk has published this list.

#F14 The House should make greater use of motions "for the previous question" to cut off debate, provided the House develops a custom of being consistent about when the motion is regarded as appropriate.

#F15 The number of days that a bill must be placed on the General Register before floor consideration should be increased, with limited exceptions.

1.20 GENERAL REGISTER. The General Register consists of all bills that have received a second reading, except those placed on the Consent Calendar under Rule 1.23. Bills must be placed on the General Register in the order that they receive their second reading. A bill must be on the General Register for at least two days, be given to each member, and be available to the public before it may be considered by the House on the Calendar for the Day or the Fiscal Calendar. Each day that the House meets in session, the Chief Clerk must publish a list of the bills on the General Register.

Other issues relating to floor sessions

#F16 It should not be possible to waive the rule that forbids the House from meeting after midnight.

1.50 ADJOURNING OF THE HOUSE. The House may not meet during a legislative day after midnight~~, except that the House, by majority vote, may meet past the time of adjournment required by this Rule~~.

#F17 The House should consider the scheduled time of floor sessions in relation to scheduled committee meeting times, in particular with regard to potential inconvenience to the public and to House members if meetings/sessions run longer than expected.

#F18 House rules should provide for floor votes specifically addressing the issue of whether the body believes that a bill is constitutional, and should specify consequences if a body believes that a bill is not constitutional.

3.05 CONSTITUTIONALITY. A motion as to the constitutionality of a bill or amendment is in order, and must be put before the body by the Speaker. The question must be put as follows: "Is the matter before the body deemed constitutional by the majority of members voting?" If a majority of members do not vote in favor of the constitutionality of a bill or amendment, that bill or amendment is laid on the table.

3.10 PRECEDENCE OF MOTIONS. While a question is under consideration, only the following motions may be received:

(1) To fix the time of adjournment
(2) To adjourn
(3) To lay on the table
(4) For the previous question
(5) To question constitutionality
(6) To refer
(7) To postpone to a day certain
(8) To amend
(9) To postpone indefinitely
(10) To pass

The first four motions must be decided without debate.

The motions have precedence in the order listed, except that if the motion for the previous question has been properly made, and if necessary seconded, and the main question ordered, the motion to lay on the table is not in order

#F19 The House should more strictly enforce the current rule providing that members must not speak more than twice on a subject, and not more than once until every other member wishing to speak has had an opportunity.

#F20 The House should develop a custom of referring bills back to committees if extensive amendments are needed (perhaps granting exemptions from committee deadlines when this happens).

#F21 The House should ensure that members of the minority caucus have a reasonable opportunity to have their bills heard in committee and on the House floor, in part because this likely will tend to limit the number of amendments offered on the House floor.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES/END OF SESSION

Conference committees

#CC1	Joint rules should allow bills to be passed between the House and Senate more than once before requiring a conference committee.
#CC2	Joint rules should further restrict the ability of conference committee members (even less than a quorum) to meet privately.
#CC3	Conference committees should be scheduled at a time and with enough advance notice to facilitate public participation.
#CC4	The House and Senate should reconsider rules governing what language is permissible to include in a conference committee report.
#CC5	House and joint rules should require conference committees to meet and accept public testimony on final conference committee reports, particularly when there have been significant policy changes that weren't in either the House or Senate bill.
#CC6	Conference committee reports should always be available to members and the public for at least 12 hours before being considered for adoption by the House and Senate.
#CC7	The House and Senate should reduce the need for conference committee by increasing use of joint House/Senate committees and/or establishing standing joint committees with an institutional role in negotiating major budget items at the end of session.
#CC8	The House and the Senate should establish better methods of communicating and coordinating between various conference committees at the end of session, so that language being agreed to in one conference committee can better be taken into account by other conference committees.

End of session

#ES1 The House and Senate should establish a deadline for acting on bills and conference reports that is a prescribed period in advance of the constitutional deadline for adjournment.

#ES2 The House and Senate should establish a period at the end of session during which the only permissible legislative action would be making corrections to legislation previously passed.

#ES3 More key decisions at the end of session should made be in public meetings by more groups of legislators, rather than being negotiated in private meetings between the Governor and legislative leadership. Decisions on budget bills should be made in individual conference committees.

#ES4 End of session agreements should be made far enough in advance so that legislative staff have adequate time to prepare final drafts of conference reports and other bills, and members, the executive branch, and the public have time to review these documents (and if necessary make suggestions to correct unintended results) before the legislature takes final action.

#ES5 The House and the Senate should set deadlines for giving targets to key budget conference committees, or should submit these issues to the full House and the full Senate for votes.

Joint Rule 2.06....(Several paragraphs dropped for space reasons.)...
If an agreement is reported, the house of origin shall act first upon the report. A Conference Committee report must be limited to provisions that are germane to the bill and amendments that were referred to the Conference Committee. A provision is not germane if it relates to a substantially different subject or is intended to accomplish a substantially different purpose from that of the bill and amendment that were referred to the Conference Committee.
The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Majority Leader of the Senate shall agree upon budget targets and any substantive limitations on the actions of the Conference Committees [necessary to meet the constitutional requirement of a balanced budget] by a date no later than ten days prior to the date of adjournment and shall communicate those to the chairs of the Conference Committee. After this date, the Speaker and Majority Leader shall submit the question of budget targets to each floor and allow a vote of all members on the targets for budget negotiations. A Conference Committee report may not appropriate a larger sum of money than the larger of the bill or the amendments that were referred to the Conference Committee unless the additional appropriation is authorized by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Majority Leader of the Senate.....

OTHER ISSUES

Public Access and participation

#P1	In establishing House rules and procedures, a primary consideration should be making the legislative process easier for the public to participate in and to follow. To the extent possible, the process should be made more transparent to the public, including specifically allowing the public to track movement of language between bills.
#P2	The House and the Senate should make it easier for the public to track bills, especially when bills from one chamber are substituted for companion bills from the other chamber, and when individual bills are rolled into omnibus bills.
#P3	The house should hold more hearings away from the Capitol, including possibly mini-sessions in Greater Minnesota during the interim
#P4	The legislature should attempt to create reasonable expectations for the media and for the public about what the legislature can accomplish and what process is necessary for the legislature to conduct its business.
#P5	Legislative public information functions should be centralized for the convenience of the public

Budget/fiscal year

#B1	The state fiscal year should be changed to conform to the calendar year used by local governments.
#B2	The state biennial budget cycle should be changed so that the biennium starts on July 1 of the even-numbered year.
#B3	The House and the Senate should jointly agree on budget targets before the deadline for legislative committee work on major finance and revenue bills.
#B4	The House should provide more time for members to review omnibus budget bills at each step in the process.
#B5	Budget forecasts should occur earlier.

Schedules, organization, and other issues

#S1	The House should hold meetings after the general election and before the start of the legislative session for organizational purposes, and to begin overviews of issues. The legislature should propose a constitutional amendment as needed to implement this .
#S2	The House should make legislative service more family friendly for House members by limiting evening meeting and limiting meetings on Friday afternoons and Monday mornings.
#S3	At least 2 weeks notice should be given of all non-emergency meetings during interim.
#S4	All interim meetings should be clustered during designated weeks and should occur from Tuesday to Thursday on these weeks.
#S5	The majority leadership should meet early in the session with the minority leadership to agree on a structure and schedule for major parts of the legislative session.
#S6	Legislative leadership and committee chairs should be more willing to say "no" at various points in the process, in part as a means of reducing time spent on matters that are not likely to advance.
#S7	Deadlines for policy committees should be later in the session, to these committees have more time to work on legislation.
#S8	In establishing meeting schedules, the House should take into account the time demands on members who have other jobs.
#S9	The Minnesota Constitution should be amended to repeal the 120 legislative day limit, while maintaining the January to May time period during which the legislature can meet in regular session.
#S10	Statutory deadlines for the executive branch to submit its bills to the Revisor for drafting should be more strictly enforced. New deadlines should be imposed for introduction of these bills.

#S11	The House should codify more of its practices into House Rules, and should rely less on Mason's Manual.
#S12	The House should discourage omnibus policy bills.