

JANUARY 25

SCOTT NEWMAN CONTROVERSY

State Senator Scott Newman from Hutchinson is allegedly refusing to meet with representatives from groups that supported his opponent in the last election. A news story broke this morning after an e-mail was circulated, and Newman also issued a response.

According to the e-mail – last week, Newman turned down a request from the Minnesota Nurses Association to meet with nurses from his district. His legislative assistant, Kim Kelley, wrote in an e-mail to the group that Newman "will not see any organizations" that donated to or supported his Democratic opponent. The e-mail was first published in Bluestem Prairie, a news blog about greater Minnesota.

The Minnesota Nurses Association endorsed Newman's opponent but did not donate money to him. Government affairs aide Eileen Gavin says she's set up hundreds of meetings between nurses and their lawmakers and never had a request refused.

In response, Newman issued a statement saying that an e-mail sent from his office suggested that he will not meet with groups or organizations that supported his opponent in the past election. He says while he did not personally send the e-mail, nor was he aware of it, he does apologize for the confusion and frustration it has caused and he accepts complete responsibility.

Newman says that he wants to be clear that it is not his policy to reject meeting requests on a political or partisan basis. He says he looks forward to continuing to serve all constituents of Senate District 18 as the legislative session continues.

