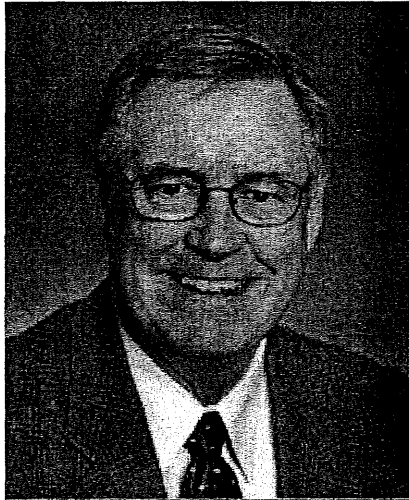


(UPDATED) DFLers call for ethics investigation of Sen. Newman

by Paul Demko

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Sen. Scott Newman

Senate Democrats are calling for an ethics investigation into the behavior of Sen. **Scott Newman**. Last week the Republican's legislative assistant sent a letter to the Minnesota Nurses Association stating that he would not meet with the union because it supported his opponent during the fall campaign.

After the letter was publicized by Bluestem Prairie, Newman distanced himself from the missive, stating that he wasn't aware of its contents and that it does not represent his policy for meeting with constituents.

Democrats are calling on the ethics committee to conduct a full investigation, including interviews of Newman and his legislative assistant, **Kim Kelley**.

"When a senator equates access based upon who may have made a legal contribution or who supported a candidate due to a issue preference, party affiliation or membership in an association, this member conducts themselves improperly and betrays the public trust as

outlined in Senate Permanent Rule 56.3," reads the letter signed by Sens. **Sandy Pappas** of St. Paul, **Scott Dibble** of Minneapolis, and **Ken Kelash** of Minneapolis. "The people of Minnesota expect the members of the Minnesota Senate to adhere to the highest ethical standards, impart fairness and be open-minded to the concerns of all constituencies."

The letter was sent to Sen. **Michelle Fischbach**, R-Paynesville, who chairs the Senate Rules Subcommittee on Ethical Conduct. Newman is a first term senator from Hutchinson. He previously served one term in the House.

Here's the letter.

State GOP party chair **Tony Sutton** issued a statement decrying the call for an ethics investigation as hypocritical. "When then-Minnesota Senate President and Ethics Committee Chairman **James Metzen** was arrested for drunken driving in 2007 just hours after the legislative session was completed, in violation of the Senate's Standards of Ethical Conduct, his Democrat colleagues refused to utter a word of criticism, let alone file an ethics complaint against him," Sutton said.

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