



OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR  
STATE OF MINNESOTA

# Capitol Complex Security

Update to 2009 Evaluation Report

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## Problems Identified

- **Security Vulnerabilities.** Minnesota's efforts to protect citizens, public officials, and employees who use the Capitol and nearby state buildings have been limited. Most states use law enforcement officers for this purpose to a greater extent than Minnesota; many states (unlike Minnesota) have weapons screening in state buildings or courts; Minnesota officials have not taken sufficient steps to plan for emergencies and security threats.
- **Insufficient Oversight.** Minnesota lacks an effective oversight body for ongoing review of Capitol Complex security and recommending improvements.

## Changes Implemented

- **Established Ongoing Advisory Committee.** The 2012 Legislature established a committee to advise the Governor and Legislature regarding security priorities, strategies for addressing these priorities, and recommendations for how to fund these strategies.
- **Clarified State Law Regarding the Scope of State Patrol Protection.** The 2012 Legislature amended state law to authorize the State Patrol to protect state officials besides the Governor—including legislators, Supreme Court justices, and constitutional officers other than the Governor. Such protection will be provided only in response to credible security threats and within the limits of the State Patrol's resources.
- **Some Armed Security Staff Added.** The Department of Public Safety (DPS) increased the number of retired law enforcement officers on duty in the complex during the 2011 and 2012 legislative sessions. These officers are armed but do not have full law enforcement authority. DPS also assigned one more state trooper to the complex for these sessions.
- **Bonding Authorized for Some Security Improvements.** The 2010 Legislature authorized \$1.25 million for "Phase 1" of Capitol Complex security upgrades. As of March 2012, the Department of Administration had spent \$300,000 (for cameras and pre-design work); it was awaiting completion of light rail work before proceeding with design and construction work on additional improvements.
- **Committee Recommended Security Changes.** A "Committee on Capitol Complex Security"—with members from the executive, legislative, and judicial branches—considered the OLA report and offered recommendations in an April 2011 report.

## Action Needed

- **Improve Procedures for Emergency and Threat Responses.** State officials should ensure that plans and procedures for emergencies and security threats are well documented, communicated effectively, and tested periodically.

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*Capitol Complex Security* is available at <http://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us>.

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