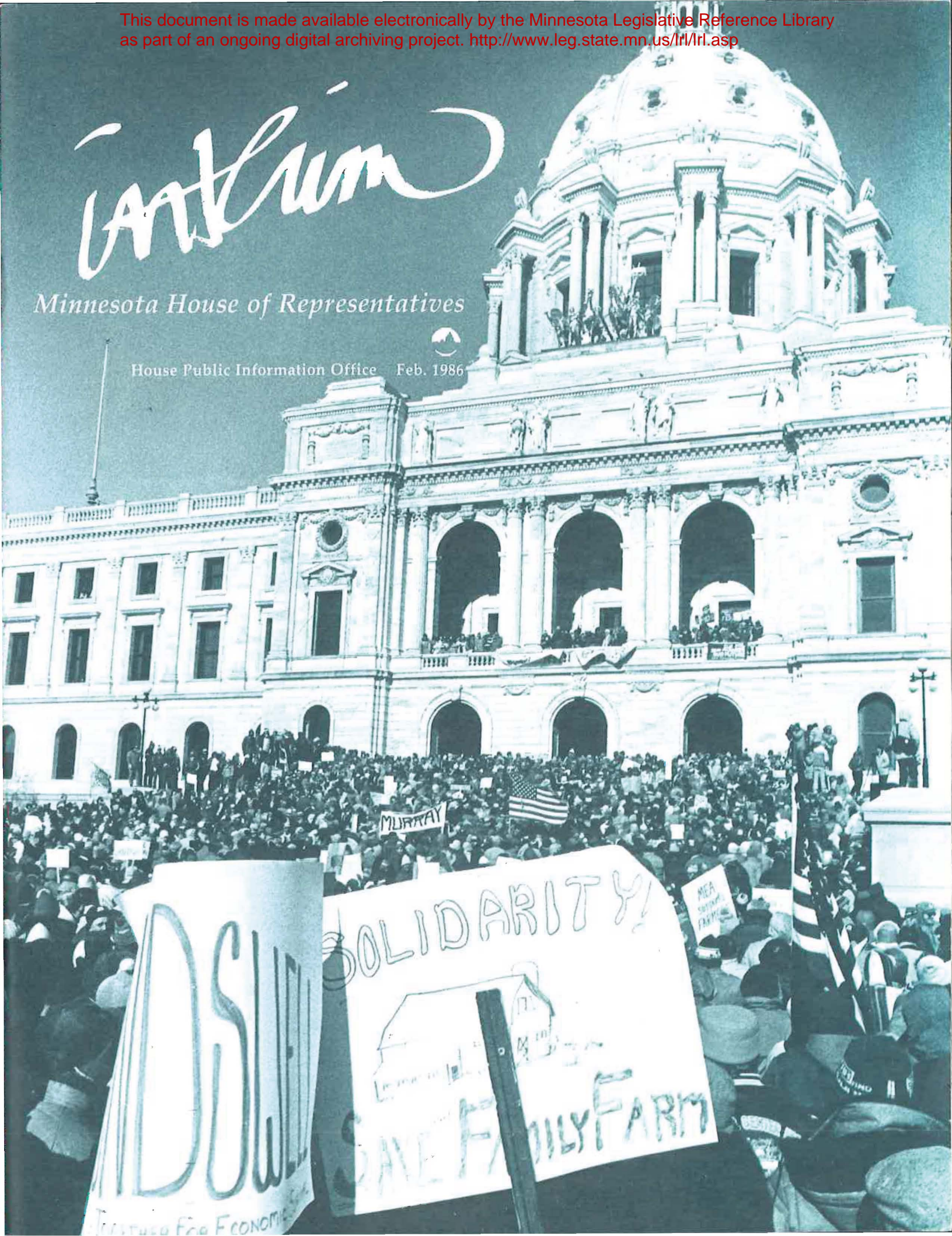


Interim

Minnesota House of Representatives

House Public Information Office Feb. 1986



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• **Information Officer:**

Jean Steiner

• **Editor:** Peg Hamerston

• **Writer/Associate**

Editor: Bonnie Kollodge

• **Writer/Assistant**

Editor: Lisa Lissimore

• **Art and Production:**

Donna J. Lyons

• **Photographers:**

Tom Olmscheid,

Paul Battaglia

• **Staff Assistants:**

Terri Hudoba,

Dorothy Sawyer

• **Staff Intern:**

Karen Richardson

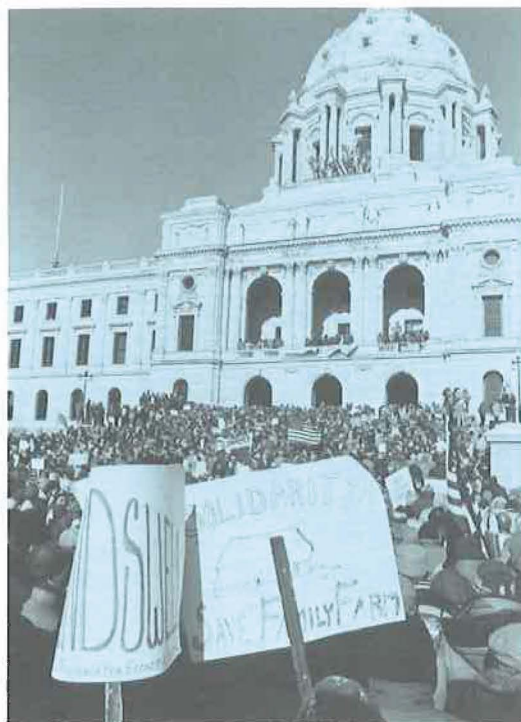


photo by Paul Battaglia

On the cover: Crowds rally at the Capitol in support of family farms. (January 1985)

People are the focus

People are the focus of *Interim* for 1985, from the masses who fill the halls and spill out over the Capitol steps and grounds at a farm crisis rally, to 134 House members whose job it is to represent the opinions of more than four million people in Minnesota.

During the time between sessions, people came to committee meetings at the Capitol. And committees went to *them* in their hometowns. People told their elected representatives how they felt about the gambling laws, the juvenile court system, and other matters that touch their lives.

People visited the House information display at Minnesota's big, annual get-together, the State Fair, and talked things over with House members who were there to meet them. They shared their pride in their state with visitors who toured the Capitol building and viewed the statues on the mall.

The people who are the members of the Minnesota House, in this issue of *Interim*, offer an overview of interim activities and a preview of the work ahead for the 1986 Legislature. Also, they reintroduce some of the people who work behind the legislative scene, and the offices where people can get information to help them understand and follow the lawmaking process.

In Minnesota in 1986, the focus remains on people.



Minnesota House of Representatives



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David M. Jennings
Speaker of the House



Connie Levi
Majority Leader



Fred C. Norton
Minority Leader

Talk to the editor

Interim is part of the Minnesota House of Representatives' public information service. We'd like your comments on this issue of the magazine. Please send them to: House Information Office, 175 State Office Building, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155, or call (612) 296-2146.



Crisis on the farm

WORLD FAMINE
IS
AMERICA'S
RESPONSIBILITY

MURRAY

FAIR FARM
PRICES
WASECA
SOLIDARITY

BOYCOTT
THE '85
FARM

Six House Agriculture Committee members talk about farm issues.

by Lisa Lissimore

At farm rallies, protests, forums, and summits, farmers are demanding higher prices, operating credit, moratoriums on farm, home, and business foreclosures, lower interest rates, and a solution to the farm crisis.

Disagreement on how to battle the farm crisis has divided farm groups and unions, rural communities, and legislators.

Here, six House Agriculture Committee members give their opinions on state and federal farm policy, the farm credit system, and future farming.

Members:

Rep. Glen Anderson (Bellingham-20A)
Occupation-Farmer

Rep. Henry Kalis (Walters-29B)
Occupation-Farmer

Rep. K.J. McDonald, chair, (Watertown-35B)
Occupation-Photographer/Insurance

Rep. Elton Redalen (Fountain-32B)
Occupation-Dairy Farmer

Rep. Merlyn Valan (Moorhead-9B)
Occupation-Farmer

Rep. Stephen Wenzel, former chair
(Little Falls-13B)
Occupation-Legislator/Insurance

Here's what they say . . .

What changes in the agricultural sector today threaten family farms and rural communities?

Wenzel: A withdrawal of support from the federal government, a cheap food policy, and the transfer of technology from this country to third world countries are the changes family farm owners must face.

The federal government has said a loud 'no' to family farmer demands, and has passed a farm bill that cuts farm supports for products in this country. That same body believes in a cheap food policy for consumers, which is fine. But, is it fair that the farmer, who has produced more food for more people than any other country, gets only six percent on each food dollar?

Redalen: We're seeing a painful restructuring in American agriculture and it may never be quite the same as we have known it in the early '70s. For too long, we've looked at agriculture as a way of life, and I deeply believe it's a way of life. But it's also a business. To survive, you have to use good sound financial business management like any other business.

Anderson: For years, family farmers have acted on the advice of the universities and lenders. In the '70s, these folks advised farmers to get bigger—buy bigger equipment, more land. Now, when things have turned bad, everyone has run out on the farmer. Lenders are nervous and putting people who have a chance out of business.

The hurt is well beyond the farmer and there's a lot of growing tension in many farm communities. Communities that used to hum are now near dead.

McDonald: Many farm families are selling out or being foreclosed on because they went too far in debt and can't pay off that debt with current price levels. As the number of farms goes down, small businesses that service the farms begin to go.

Valan: Farmers know there are peaks and valleys in this business. Right now, it's a real valley. I spent two years trying to weed out my financial problems. To avoid a foreclosure, I sold a third of my farm to secure the other two-thirds. This is what I think other financially strapped farmers may have to do.

If farmers continue to sell their land to keep land, then we'll see this country make a policy to subsidize their income or give them cash grants like they did in the '30s.

What can be done to save the farm credit system?

McDonald: It's a federal problem and should be solved on that level. A federal bailout will bring more stability to the system, but the federal monetary policy must address stabilizing the economy so inflation won't recur.

Wenzel: There should be a balanced approach to help lenders and farmers. So far, 13 lending institutions have gone under in Minnesota. Congress passed a proposal to bail out the farm credit system and this will help those lenders, but not the farmers. Again, it's not fair. ▶

photo by Paul Battaglia



About 10,000 people gather at the Capitol on behalf of the state's troubled farm industry (January 1985).

Kalis: The system is in the same trouble as many banks and businesses—the valuation of the property that they're holding deed or contract on has depleted. In return, many of the borrowers can't service that debt because of low prices. So lenders are hit with a high debt on a low-valued piece of property, no money coming in to service the debt, and no equity to justify the amount of the debt. That's why farmers are asking for assistance from the federal government to either increase the dollars for lending or write off some of the debt.

You can't bail out the lenders, unless the farmers have some money to refinance. It makes more sense to put money into a farm program that would put money into farmers' hands to let them pay off their own debts.

Redalen: The federal government had to bail out the farm credit system because of the tremendous losses occurring throughout the system due to land devaluation. Without the federal bailout, the system would have collapsed or bond prices, which are sold on the open market to finance the system, would have reached a point to where normal borrowers would pay an excessive interest rate. These borrowers then, would pay off their loans and go to private sources of capital. This would have forced the system's collapse.

Valan: Congress had to restructure and reorganize the system before it was forced to go deep into reserves. Congress must also make sure the FmHA (Farmers Home Administration), the lender of last resort for farmers, is well-funded and staffed. If FmHA works as it did in the '30s, we'll put recipients of that kind of low interest rate financing in a position so they can go to private sources of funding.

Is today a good time to start farming?

Kalis: No, this is not a good time to start farming. Nothing is on the horizon that will turn the farm crisis around. In this part of the state (Freeborn County), where you have high interest rates and inflation, you can't cash flow anything.

McDonald: Yes. It's a better time to start farming than a couple of years ago. Why? Because of low land prices and the availability and low cost of used machinery. Those who start farming must take on a very minimal debt—start slow or possibly rent land.

Wenzel: I don't know who could make it now except for corporations and big businesses. But, I guess, if you have start-up money, you could begin farming and make it on someone else's misfortune. And that's a shame. ▶

Valan: If you have some money, it may be a good time to start farming. Farmers who've invested their money wisely and have money on hand can now get some good land and machinery at a cheap price. Aggressive farmers, like myself, are looking at foreclosures, restructuring debt, refinancing. It's a tough reassessment period for us all and for our children who are looking to take over the family farm.

Redalen: Yes, it's an excellent time for young people to start farming. Prices for capital improvements needed to go into agriculture have never been lower. Young people can begin farming through sharecropping or through a partnership with a father or uncle who could give them some incentives to get them over the first five to ten years. They would then be able to sustain themselves.

What will happen to farmers leaving the land?

Kalis: It's a known fact that during tough economic times people tend to congregate in the larger cities and I think we'll see more and more people headed to the cities. That's what happened during the depression and we'll see a repeat of that.

Anderson: Farmers will move to the cities and take other people's jobs. Very few will be unemployed. Farmers will come in at low paying jobs, but will move up the ladder fast because of their good work ethics.

McDonald: Many farmers are highly skilled people and will find manufacturing or processing jobs in the small towns. Those who are of age will retire. And some will need help with retraining, relocating, and job placement.

Wenzel: One of the more troubling things about the crisis on the family farm is that it's a way of life that many people want. Those farmers who come to the city and don't get jobs will end up on welfare along with the others who lost their jobs to farmers.

Valan: The moves they make in Washington and the moves we make here at home will determine where farmers go. If we can get an exemption of income tax and capital gains tax on land sold for debt restructure, some farmers will be able to stay on the land and won't become wards of the government.

How should the state respond?

Wenzel: The state is limited in what it can do for farmers. Eliminating, postponing, or reducing the amount of property taxes farmers pay and renewing the interest buy-down program that got off to a late start last year, are two key things the state can do to help farmers.

Redalen: A state conservation reserve program would help put money in farmers' pockets and take highly erodible and marginal land out of production for five to ten years.

Also, this year, we're going back to May 31 instead of May 15 and to Oct. 31 instead of Oct. 15 as property tax due dates. ▶

photo by Tom Olmscheid



Farmers gather in the House gallery at the Capitol; wooden crosses symbolize death of the family farm (April 1985).

Anderson: The state can help stave off foreclosures of farm mortgages through a voluntary or mandatory farm moratorium. This would put pressure on Washington. It's unlikely that we'll get a state imposed moratorium. But, if the proposal for a farm debt mediation program escalates the way I expect, it could amount to a blanket moratorium.

A bonding program for debt restructuring is another thing we can do. The state could sell bonds and the money could go to farmers to help pay off some of the farm debt.

Valan: We need to spend some time looking at legislation to minimize the impact of debt forgiveness, capital gains, and alternative minimum tax. We need to talk about income tax as it relates to the liquidation of agricultural property and look at eliminating the sales tax on farm equipment.

We also need to rededicate ourselves to the Land Grant College.

Kalis: We can provide some indirect assistance such as farm debt mediation, stress management workshops, and farm management counseling.

McDonald: The state must help farmers with retraining, relocating, and job placement. We need to adjust property taxes and provide programs like the interest buy-down and other beginning farmers' programs, for farmers on the edge, and create some kind of financial stability in our economy for farmers who aren't in financial difficulty. They need lower interest rates so they can continue to prosper.

How should the federal government respond?

Wenzel: Agricultural policy needs to be more fair and humane. It needs to support family farms, give them a fair cut of the food dollar, change to reflect our changing economy, and include the U.S. Department of Agriculture in some of the decision-making.

The farm bill that Congress passed cuts the floor of support right out from under the American family farmer. As a result of this lack of government support, I foresee more critical times ahead for Minnesota.

McDonald: We've got a fairly good farm bill to help farmers through this transition period. A better bill would put more emphasis on marketing and come up with alternative uses for surplus farm commodities. In the long haul, I see a need for agriculture and farming to adjust itself to real world market conditions rather than the artificial markets created by government subsidy programs.

Anderson: The federal government must do two things—give farmers a price so they can afford to stay in business and provide some incentives for businesses to locate in rural areas. These are things that should have been done long before the farm crisis came about.

Kalis: Federal farm policies are vital to the economic health of Minnesota producers and rural communities. We have got to have more money in rural areas. Drastic moves must be made to reduce the deficit, reduce production, and increase the price to producers.

Redalen: Under the new farm bill, target prices were frozen and support prices were lowered, which means our commodities will sell for less in the world market. In some cases, we have priced our products out of the world market with our high price support system. The difference between the target price and the selling price at the local market will be made up by government payment. This will insure the continued safety-net for farmers—it wasn't increased, but it wasn't decreased.

How do you see farming in the year 2000?

Valan: I'd like to continue to see small family farms, but I'm a bit fearful that many will disappear. When this happens, and the big ones take over, the cost of food will go up and the general populous will finally realize that family farmers did such a good job of farming, they farmed themselves right out of business.

Kalis: There'll be corporate ownership or mass ownership of farmland if things don't change. Mass operation of the land means certain companies will manage land and get people to run it for them.

Anderson: It's hard to say with the way things are going. People have never realized the importance of food. It has always been there at the lowest price in the world, and they've taken it for granted. There'll be a day when they drive out the family farmer. The big folks will control it, and the consumer will pay through the nose for food and fuel.

Redalen: I have great optimism that the family farm will continue. It will have some new structure and an off-farm job with it for the wife or other family member.

I don't see corporate farming as a threat on the horizon because in Minnesota we have a very strong anti-corporate farm law that prevents them from acquiring land. Secondly, return on capital investment is so low, I don't think there's much incentive for corporate capital to flow into agriculture. ■



A 1927 view of St. Paul looking up Cedar Street toward the Capitol.

Mall design competition underway

by Bonnie Kollodge

Architect Cass Gilbert's Capitol Approach ideas of the 1900s are still on paper. Will today's designers pick up the threads of his dream?

Minnesota's State Capitol Mall may take on a new look over the next few years. An international competition is underway to settle upon a new design for the State Capitol's front yard.

Planners say the changes may be as simple as new lighting and seating, or involve more extensive changes like statuary or regrading the entire mall. Architects may propose changes to the mall area and/or areas along John Ireland Boulevard toward the Cathedral on the southwest and along Cedar Street toward downtown St. Paul on the southeast.

The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB), which Lieutenant Governor Marlene Johnson chairs, is conducting the design competition. The board hopes to attract entrants from all over the world, especially Minnesota.

A jury of landscape architects, legislators, and representatives of the CAAPB will select the winning design this summer, and minor changes could take place yet this year. Work on the large-scale changes would begin in 1987 upon legislative approval. The CAAPB asks architects to keep in mind the original intentions for the Capitol grounds.

Cass Gilbert designed the Capitol Building, the state's third, in 1895. The Capitol doors opened in 1905, and in later years, Gilbert proposed several ways to tie the building into its surroundings. He envisioned grand approaches, avenues, and malls linking the Capitol to the city of St. Paul.

Gilbert developed the first Capitol Approach Plan in 1902. He wanted the approaches to enhance the dignity of the structure. His plan called for widening Cedar Street into a mall running from the Capitol to downtown St. Paul, ending at a proposed Civic Center, and featuring all faces of the Capitol.

After Gilbert presented his dream plan to the Women's Civic League and St. Paul businessmen at the Commercial Club, the Common Council appointed a commission to study it. The 1906 "Report of the Capitol Approaches Commission to the Common Council of the City of St. Paul" incorporated Gilbert's plan and even added to it. The report states, "Beautiful monuments, fountains, pergolas, ponds, trees, shrubs, central or side lawns, etc., will someday give these avenues the beauty of the Champs Elysees, of Unter den Linden, of the Paseos of Mexico City and Kansas City."

"This Capitol is one of Minnesota's most beautiful buildings and its most important symbol," says Governor Rudy Perpich. "With that as a beginning point, we should pick up the threads of Cass Gilbert's dream." ■

photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society

Government's for everyone

by Bonnie
Kollodge

Minnesota has a Legislature that listens, according to a recent Minnesota Citizens League report. "Most aspects of the Legislature's work are open. Hearings are public and the public has an opportunity to be heard at them. Accountability in the process is high. The public, organized in many interest groups, is well represented during the legislative process," says the report.

Who do lawmakers hear from? We talked to people who've appeared before committees or approached the Legislature in other ways, and they shared their experiences.

'I was frightened'

"I had never done anything like this before in my life. But I felt I really wanted this to become law, so I felt this was something I had to do," says Lois TenEyke of Brooklyn Park.

TenEyke lost her 20-year-old son in a 1983 boating accident and came to the Legislature in the '85 session to testify on the boating-while-intoxicated (BWI) proposal.

She says she read about the bill and contacted one of the authors about it. "I would do it again," says TenEyke. "And I would be nervous again. But I feel good about what we did, and I'll feel that our son didn't die in vain if we've done something to help pass the legislation."

'I went there to offer my views'

Proposed legislation at some time, in some way will affect all of us. Just ask Herb Brooks, former University of Minnesota hockey coach and coach of the 1980 U.S. Olympic team, who appeared a few times before the Task Force on Youth Participation in Amateur Sports Programs.

"I'm interested in the sport of ice hockey," says Brooks, "and I went there to offer my views on the Minnesota State High School League and its effect on the growth of hockey."

Brooks says he doesn't know if his testimony will make a difference, but says the opportunity to have input certainly counts. "The fact that there is access to these people is encouraging regardless of the outcome."

'The system works'

The legislative process doesn't restrict itself to any age group, as Lori Ehlenfeldt demonstrates.

Ehlenfeldt was 16 years old when she passed her driving test. She asked to have "donor" printed on her license, but found out she couldn't be an organ donor because she was under 18. She then drafted legislation for the Model Legislature, which high school students at some southeastern Minnesota schools participate in, to allow minors to donate organs under the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act. Ehlenfeldt talked to a teacher at school about it and he contacted Rep. Virgil Johnson (Caledonia-34A).

Johnson brought the bill to the Legislature, and during her senior year in high school, Ehlenfeldt testified on the proposal, now Chapter 123 in Laws of Minnesota for 1985. Minors can now give all or parts of their bodies after death through a signed gift card, driver's license, or document other than a will.

"The system," says Ehlenfeldt, "is long and slow, but it works."

'Most of us view ourselves as educators'

According to the Citizens League report, Minnesota has the fifth largest number of registered lobbying groups.

Anyone who lobbies for pay or has permission to spend money on an organization's behalf and who spends more than five hours in any month or more than \$250 in any year trying to influence legislation must follow certain guidelines and register with the Ethical Practices Board. Also, people who spend more than \$250 of their own money in any year in attempts to influence legislation must register.

"Most of us view ourselves as educators. With all the issues before the Legislature, there is not one legislator who could possibly be well versed in all those issue areas. So the information we give them, taking into consideration the source, is educational and gives them a range of perspectives from which they can make an informed vote," says Patsy Randell, manager of State Legislative Affairs, Honeywell Inc. and a registered lobbyist. ▶



A woman testifies before a House Financial Institutions and Insurance subcommittee.

(insert): Lori Ehlenfeldt of Lewiston testifies at a House Judiciary Committee hearing on a bill that became law.

photos by Paul Battaglia

Her range of issues includes individual and corporate income taxes, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, general liability insurance, and hazardous waste and its management.

'There's strength in numbers'

One of the most effective ways to influence legislation is through organizing, says former legislator, Willis Eken. He now heads the Minnesota Farmers Union, which represents about 20,000 farm families in the state. According to Eken, "There's strength in numbers."

Does public testimony make a difference? Eken says nothing's more important than hearing from those who feel the impact of legislation. "I think it's a necessary part of our legislative process." ■



*Legislators heard people's opinions about issues that may lead to legislation in 1986, at interim committee hearings in cities throughout the state, and during the September 1985 Mini-Session.**

House members who chair committees and divisions give us an in-brief preview of Session '86.

Agriculture Committee

The Agriculture Committee faces the challenge of getting some emergency credit to farmers in time for spring planting.

"We're going to look at possibly renewing the 1985 interest buy-down program and maybe beefing it up to make it more attractive to local lenders," says Committee Chair K.J. McDonald (Watertown-35B). Beefing up, he says, could mean increasing the amount of loan money to each farmer (i.e., from \$75,000 to \$100,000) or allowing a tax

credit for lenders who get into the program.

The committee will look again at the double jeopardy law, says McDonald. That law requires lenders to send periodic notices of existing liens against agricultural products to buyers who register with the state. According to testimony at a mini-session hearing, the law is causing a flood of paperwork for bankers and buyers, and a dramatic increase in multi-party checks to pay for agricultural products.

McDonald says the committee will probably look at some form of mediation efforts to help farmers and lenders bridge communications gaps that may exist. It will also spend time on legislation to promote establishment of local industries that process agricultural commodities.

Concerning taxation, McDonald says the committee will promote legislation to minimize the impact of debt forgiveness income, capital gains, and alter-

native minimum tax.

Also, McDonald says, the committee will try to restore the Family Farm Security Act (FFSA) tax benefit that the Legislature eliminated to simplify the tax form.

Appropriations Committee

It could be a short session for members of the Appropriations Committee, says Chair Mary Forsythe (Edina-42B).

The Appropriations Committee hears only the spending bills, and Forsythe says, "It seems rather unlikely that we'll take up bills that cost money because we don't have any."

"Our workload depends largely upon whether there's a revenue shortfall. If there is one, then we'll have to make some adjustments in the budget—do some cutting."

Whether or not the state has a shortfall, Forsythe says the committee will have to deal with program deficits.

Agriculture, Transportation, & Semi-State Div./Approp.

Chair Merlyn Valan (Moorhead-9B) says his division has a budget of almost \$2 billion for the biennium. Transportation funding takes a big bite out of that.

One of the issues Valan says he wants to address is economic development as it relates to transportation. Questions to look at, he says, are how to finance access to major new developments and what kind of burden new development places on existing highway systems.

Valan says another pressing issue is mass transit. "Last year we didn't even approve a study for light rail, so people will be back over that issue." Other ▶

*People on the House Information mailing list received the *Mini-Session Report* last September. Copies are available from the House Information Office, 175 State Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155. Phone: (612) 296-2146.

questions will be how much transit to provide outside the downtown areas, and how to pay for the subsidies, especially as federal aid declines.

Alternatives to light rail and expensive new highway lane construction, according to Valan, are projects like the I-394 corridor, which extends from downtown Minneapolis to I-494 on Highway 12, with a carpool or "sane" lane down the middle. The project includes parking ramps in downtown for carpoolers at a cost well below market rates to encourage options other than driving alone.

Issues under study include: more carpool lanes; promotional strategies to encourage carpooling and bus transit; more efficient ways to provide transit for those who depend on the transit system to get around; and the extent to which people who use public transit by choice, or otherwise benefit from it, pay for it.

Education Div./Approp.

Chair Bob Haukoos (Albert Lea-31A) said his division spent interim time examining capital building projects. Their tour included a stop at the Faribault schools for the blind and deaf.

Last year, the governor recommended closing those schools, but the Legislature approved a study to look at ways to make the schools more efficient. The cost to run them, says Haukoos, is "tremendously high, climbing to as much as \$35,000 per student, per year."

All aspects of average cost funding will get the committee's attention, says Haukoos. Average cost funding is a means of financing higher education systems on the basis of enrollment and program costs.

The state now pays 67 percent of the instructional costs at the University of Minnesota, state universities, and community colleges. At Area Vocational Technical Institutes (AVTIs) the state pays 75 percent of instructional costs.



photo by Paul Battaglia

Highway 12's new "sane" lane runs from downtown Minneapolis to I-494.

The committee will talk about the governing structure in the AVTI system, and Haukoos predicts a bill may come up to make changes. He says legislation will probably call for more state control over the system, versus local school district administration.

"And we continue to get complaints about the English-speaking abilities of teaching assistants at the University of Minnesota," said Haukoos. "We're hearing that students are dropping and flunking out of courses because they can't understand the instructors."

Human Services Div./Approp.

"Home health care regulation, which could include licensure of people who care for the elderly within the home," says Chair Bob Anderson (Ottertail-10B), "is a controversial issue the committee will study. Currently, the state does not regulate home care."

Another item, says Anderson, is a look at the state policy that requires all nursing-home applicants to undergo pre-admission ▶



People in trouble dial 9-1-1 for emergency help.

screening before admittance to nursing homes.

At issue is whether the state should continue to require the screening for all nursing home applicants, and if it does, should the state require private-pay applicants to pay for it.

"Carryover legislation from the 1985 session," says Anderson, "includes a proposal to consolidate all state monies that pay for chemical dependency treatment." The legislation proposes distributing the money on a formula basis to every county, and put state hospitals in competition with all other treatment providers.

Funding for action on the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) program will get a hearing this year, and Anderson says he expects to see recommendations from the administration and the private sector.

"The division," says Anderson, "will also address the general assistance and medical assistance budgets, which are normally in the red at about this time."

State Departments Div./ Approp.

"If there's a revenue shortfall, we'll be a busy division," says

Chair Gaylin Den Ouden (Prinsburg-21B). "No one wants to raise taxes, so if that's the case, we'll be looking for places to reduce spending."

Den Ouden says activity in his division all depends on the economic outlook.

Previous legislation may spark some discussion this year. Last year, the State Departments bill assigned a monthly fee to telephone customers to pay for the 9-1-1 emergency service. (About 14 cents per month beginning January 1987.)

"We'll wait to see if other committees want to change the way the conference committee handled it (9-1-1) last session," says Den Ouden. "If they wish to change it, they can—if they have a way to fund it other than user fees."

Finally, Den Ouden promises that nuclear waste will be an item on the agenda if the federal government chooses Minnesota as a site for further study in the search for a second location for a high-level nuclear waste depository.

Budget Committee

In the 1985 legislative session, the House passed a budget resolution to set a ceiling on state spending. The resolution gave the speaker the power to rule out of order any bill which raised taxes or appropriations above the budget limit.

In '86, says Karl Aaro, legislative assistant to the speaker, the House could propose a budget resolution to take into consideration supplemental tax or spending legislation.

Aaro says the committee will review the budget process this year to determine whether it worked or how well it worked, and to consider any changes.

The committee will also look at whether the Legislature should set more specific guidelines on bonding. ▶

"We do a lot of it," says Aaro, "for state building construction, remodeling, and repairs, and, there are questions as to how much indebtedness the state should have."

Commerce & Economic Development Committee

"One of the things we may do in the committee," says Chair Tony Bennett (Shoreview-53A), "is look at the lemon car bill again. We may need to make a few corrections."

Bennett says the committee may patch up some loopholes in the law that protects car buyers against getting stuck with a lemon, and extend some kind of truth in sales to used car buyers.

The area of liquor licensing could include legislation to let

municipalities have more licenses, and discussion on whether legal limits on liquor licenses are useful, says Bennett.

The Liquor Control Division in the Department of Public Safety issues wholesale licenses, approves retail licenses, and establishes rules governing wholesale and retail sales of alcoholic beverages. Bennett says the committee will look at those functions.

The committee will also look at municipal liquor store problems. For a number of stores around the state, Bennett says business is no longer profitable.

The bill for sale of wine in food stores got committee approval last year. According to Bennett, whether he tries for passage of this bill depends on public interest in it.

Other possible issues are: taxi cab regulation in the metro area; possible cuts in the Department of Energy and Economic Development (DEED);

building and energy code rules; small business; and tourism.

Crime & Family Law Committee

Boating while intoxicated is an issue Chair Kathleen Blatz (Bloomington-41B) says the committee will take up again this session. "Last year we just didn't have time to get the bill through the House." The bill would carry penalties for people who drive a boat while intoxicated.

A bill to raise the legal drinking age to 21 awaits House action. Last year, the clock ran out on a House-Senate compromise.

"Legislation on juvenile prostitution," says Blatz, "depends on whether we have money." Blatz says, during the interim, the committee reviewed the current law, ages involved, and what other states are doing. ▶

Artists climb floor-to-ceiling scaffolding to restore artwork on Capitol walls and ceilings.

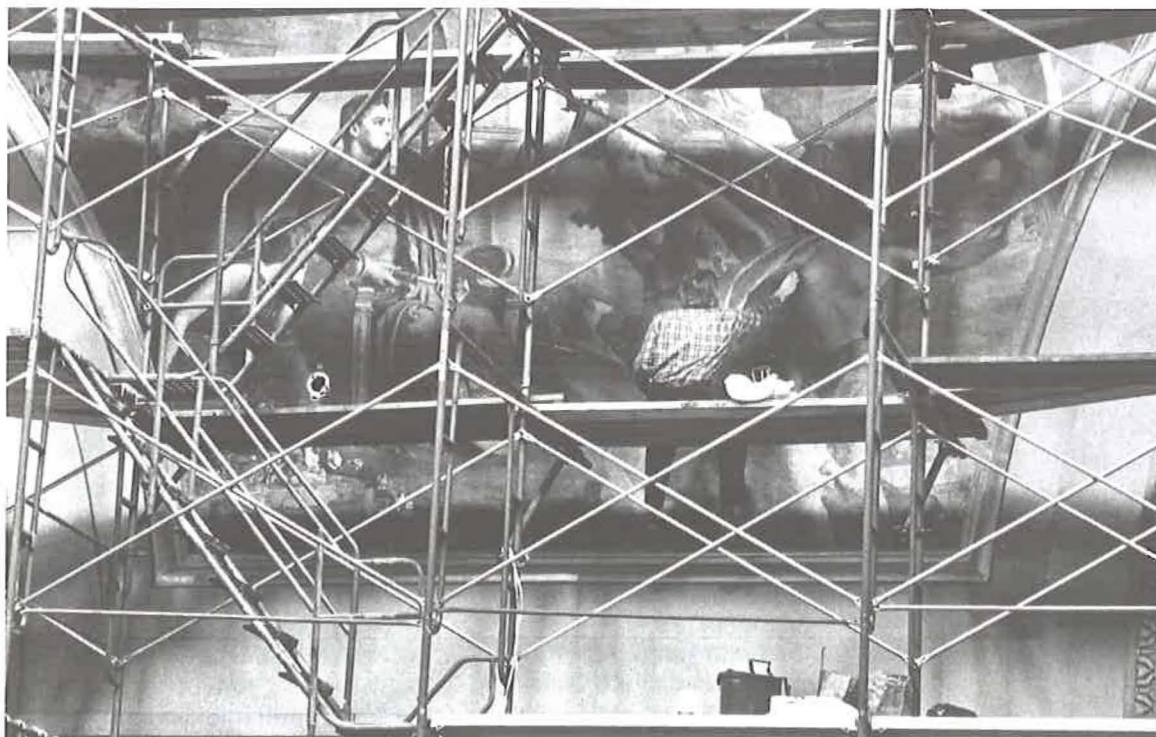
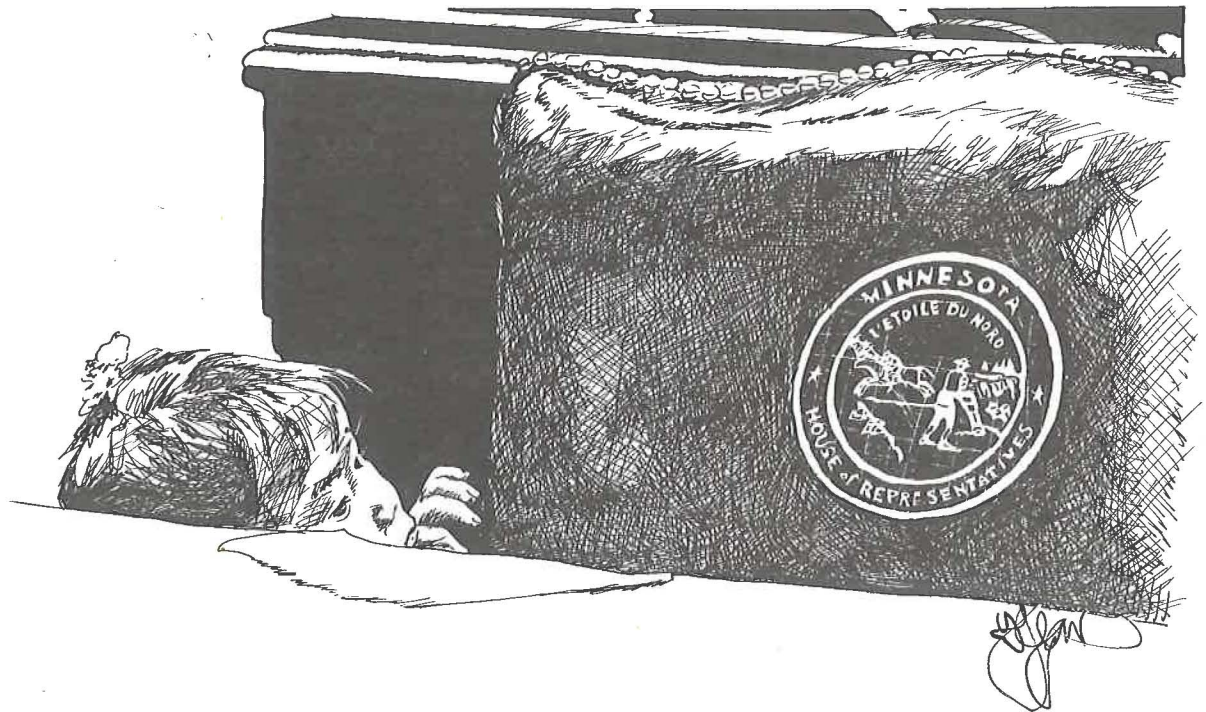


photo by Tom Olmscheid



Child custody and support will be issues before the committee. One proposal under consideration would require courts to grant joint legal custody to parents if it's in a child's best interest. Another would create a preference in law for joint physical and legal custody if both parents agree.

Changes to the juvenile code may also be on the agenda. Legislation the committee discussed during the interim would make changes to the way our juvenile justice system deals with juvenile delinquents, status offenders, mentally ill or chemically dependent juveniles, and children who are dependent or neglected.

"I think we'll look at taxation of marijuana, too," says Blatz. "So when police arrest people on drug charges, not only will their drugs be confiscated, they'll be taxed as well."

A decision the Minnesota Supreme Court issued in December kindled discussion that may come up this session on fetal homicide. The court ruled that causing the death of a fetus is not homicide under current law. Statutes refer to human beings as people born alive.

Education Committee

"Education will continue to be a priority for the '86 session," says Rep. Wendell Erickson (Hills-27B), Education Committee chair. "However, a short session and the uncertainty of state finances may limit the scope of legislation."

The committee will focus on legislation that doesn't carry a price tag this biennium, says Erickson. "We'll most likely study the compulsory attendance law," he says. "In July, the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled unconstitutionally vague the statute language that requires non-public school teachers to have qualifications 'essentially equivalent' to public school teachers. We'll want to look carefully at this issue," says Erickson.

Another issue is who governs the Area Vocational Technical Institutes (AVTIs), says Erickson. Currently, local school boards govern each of the state's 30 AVTIs. Proposed options include regional governing boards and a statewide system like the community college system. "Our AVTIs are the finest in the nation," says Erickson, "and we want to ensure that

high quality."

Erickson says the committee will also hear reports on the Post Secondary Enrollment Option, Education for Gifted and Talented, Educational Effectiveness, and Staff Development/Teacher Education.

Education Finance Div./Educ.

During the '86 session, the Education Finance Division will set the foundation aid formula allowance for the 1987-88 school year so school districts can establish their property tax levies in October 1986, according to Rep. Sally Olsen (St. Louis Park-44A), division chair.

The division will also: consider possible changes to the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Act (PSEOA); make recommendations to the Taxes Committee on changes in the fiscal disparities and tax increment financing laws as they impact school districts; and review reports and evaluations on programs including the gifted, special education, early childhood family education, and any studies relating to teacher retirement funding and other school district financing the Legislative Commission on Public Education ▶

has completed, says Olsen.

The division held interim hearings on the PSEO in Bemidji, Brainerd, Fridley, Gibbon, Mankato, and Richfield. At other meetings, members examined fiscal disparities and tax increment financing programs and their impact on pre K-12 school financing.

Higher Education Div./Educ.

Rep. Mark Piepho (Mankato-24A), division chair, talks of three issues his division will handle in the upcoming weeks.

First, the division will look at expanding the existing state college work study program to include private, for-profit organizations. Now, the program allows post-secondary institutions and non-profit organizations in the program.

Second, members will study peer counseling on financial aid. Piepho says campus financial aid offices should hire students to advise other students on how to finance a college education.

Third, Piepho says the division will review progress in implementing "Commitment to Focus," a document by University of Minnesota President Ken Keller. The report suggests the University move toward becoming a graduate research institution.

The division held interim hearings in Bemidji, Brainerd, Duluth, Mankato, Marshall, Moorhead, St. Cloud, St. Paul, and Winona on public post-secondary education issues.

Environment & Natural Resources Committee

"We will continue to work with the State Planning Agency and others on the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) bill in '86," says

Chair John Rose (Roseville-63A). "Almost all the principal players recognize this as good environmental legislation, but funding is still the major obstacle."

The RIM bill is a proposal Rose sponsored in '85, based on a report from the Governor's Citizens Commission to Promote Hunting and Fishing in Minnesota.

Rose says the committee is also "deeply involved in examining the whole hazardous waste situation." Early in the session, Rose says, the committee will take up legislation to manage Minnesota's hazardous waste.

"Another issue is nuclear waste," says Rose. Minnesota is one of 17 states under study as a possible second site for high-level nuclear waste disposal. "We should know by the time session is upon us whether the federal government selected Minnesota as a state for further study," he says.

"Another area to watch," says Rose, "is the whole area of water and ditches. Right now there's a move on to combine the three water boards: the Southern Minnesota Rivers Basin Council, the State Soil and Water Conservation Board in the Department of Agriculture, and the Water Resources Board, and that could be a big issue."

Financial Institutions & Insurance Committee

General liability insurance, says Chair Adolph Kvam (Litchfield-21A), is an area the Legislature really has to take a hard look at. That's the insurance that covers accidents at businesses that involve injuries to people who are not employees. Kvam says increasing rates are driving companies out of business.

Professional malpractice insurance needs legislative attention, says Kvam. You're probably hearing more about

malpractice suits involving accountants, doctors, and lawyers. More claims and higher claim settlements means insurance rates go up. For professionals, that could mean losing their practices. For the consumer, it could mean higher fees.

Finally, insurance for municipalities is a likely topic, says Kvam. The committee may consider a proposal to limit the liability of municipalities by eliminating joint and several liability for municipalities, he says. That would mean, for example, that if a city was only partly responsible for an accident, the city would have to pay a percentage of the total damages.

Under present law, the city would be liable for all the damages if other responsible parties involved couldn't pay.

General Legislation & Veterans Affairs Committee

The charitable gambling law tops the agenda for this committee. After hearing from the Charitable Gambling Control Board and organizations that sponsor charitable gambling during the interim, Committee Chair Dave Fjoslien (Brandon-11B) says, "some changes must be made."

The lottery is one issue that Fjoslien says may get legislative attention this year. At the close of the last session, 10 lottery bills were pending with revenue to go to environmental, economic development, natural resources, and agricultural projects. To allow a lottery, residents would have to vote to amend the state's constitution at the next general election. ▶

Fjoslien says the committee will also consider election law changes the task force on Election Contests and Fair Campaign Practices proposed after 10 months of work on the issue.

Other business to come before the committee, according to Fjoslien, includes some veterans legislation, a bill to put a monument memorializing Indians on the Capitol grounds, a review of Minnesota's 30-year-old pound-seizure law, and youth and sports issues (the rules for amateur competition and Minnesota State High School League rules for competition).

Governmental Operations Committee

Legislation to reform the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) is in the works. The APA spells out procedures state agencies and departments must follow when making rules, or when hearing cases about rules already in practice. The House took on a regulatory reform project last year that Chair Gerald Knickerbocker (Hopkins-43B) says could mean more legislative oversight in the rule-making process.

During the interim, the Constitutional Officers Consolidation subcommittee heard testimony on the duties of certain constitutional officers: the secretary of state, state auditor, and state treasurer. Proposed legislation could eliminate or combine one or more of those offices, or create a new state comptroller office.

Another subcommittee began going over the state's ground and surface water policies. The committee will continue to examine how the state can better



A legislative task force spent interim time studying rules for high school and amateur sports competition.

manage its water resources.

Governmental Operations is also the committee that handles pension legislation. This year, Knickerbocker says he expects to look at the issue of consolidating local police and fire pension funds in the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA). The committee will also discuss a bill to provide health insurance coverage for retired public employees whom Medicare doesn't cover.

Other issues Knickerbocker says will come before the committee include a statewide fund for fringe benefit coverage for school district employees, and minority contract set-asides.

Health & Human Services Committee

"In line with the House Regulatory Review Project, the Health and Human Services Committee will consider at least two related bills this session—home and day care regulation," says Chair Tony Onnen (Cokato-22B).

Home care regulation, a controversial area last session, prompted the committee to spend a lot of interim time studying the problem. Statewide hearings (Bemidji, Duluth, Fergus Falls, Hastings, Mankato, Rochester, St. Cloud, and Winnetonka) provided excellent testimony and recommendations for both home care and group and family in-home day care, says Onnen.

The day care regulation rules adopted in March 1985 caused heavy reaction, says Onnen. "We will propose legislation to address many issues that surfaced during our mini-session and statewide hearings.

"In both areas of regulation, we want to provide people with adequate protection, but at the same time, we do not want to create rules that are burdensome, that unnecessarily increase costs, and that limit the development of needed services," says Onnen.

Onnen says the committee will also follow up on the October acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) hearing. ▶

Judiciary Committee

"We'll be looking at a full range of issues dealing with the availability and cost of insurance, including general liability and malpractice insurance issues," says Chair Charles Halberg (Burnsville-38A). "And we'll probably examine a proposed living will bill."

According to Halberg, several proposals from the Commission on Uniform State Laws will come before the committee, including changes in the Uniform Limited Partnership Act, Uniform Trade Secrets Act, and Uniform Fraudulent Transfers Act. Committee members may also examine the proposed Uniform Pre-marital Agreement Act and the Transboundary Pollution Act, he says.

Halberg adds that the committee may hold hearings on the Morris Commission Report with a view toward updating the statute in this area. "If time permits," he says, "we may examine a proposed bill that would provide a greater access to justice for small businesses."

Labor-Management Relations Committee

The Labor-Management Relations Committee's priority issue for '86 will again be the state's unemployment insurance system, says Jim Heap (Plymouth-45B), committee chair. Last year, he says, the House passed a bill that would have addressed two major parts of the unemployment issue: employer taxes and employee access to benefits.

That bill, after several conference committee battles, died in the final days of the session. "We're going to try one more time to get the unemployment insurance bill signed into law," says Heap.

He says the committee will also review workers' compensation. "The objective there is to see how it's working. If there are any changes that can be

made to improve the system, we'll make them."

Unemployment Ins. & Workers' Comp. Div./Labor-Management Relations

The Unemployment Insurance and Workers' Compensation Division will continue work on the state's unemployment insurance and workers' comp systems, says Chair Steve Sviggum (Kenyon-26A).

Last year, the division spent a good share of its time examining the unemployment insurance system and drafting legislation to address the problems. This year, Sviggum says, they'll attempt to get the legislation passed and will keep working on a reform plan for the state's workers' compensation system.

Division interim work included out-state meetings (Albert Lea, Moorhead, St. Cloud, Willmar, Winona, and Worthington) and hearings at the State Office Building with employers and employees on the impact of the 1983 Workers' Compensation Act.

Local & Urban Affairs Committee

Committee Chair Don Valento (Little Canada-54A) expects the committee to take up a number of bills in the upcoming session, including: the Minneapolis personnel bill and convention center, Ramsey County Bonding Authority, Mega Mall, and Ramsey County Hospital Reorganization.

Valento named task forces for three interim projects he says will likely lead to 1986 legislation: Metropolitan Affairs, Pollution Control Agency (PCA), and Port Authority.

The Metropolitan Affairs task force chair: interviewed Metropolitan Council members and other metropolitan organizations to get an overall picture of the agency; reviewed a House Research governance report; and drafted a bill for the '86 session.

The PCA task force: heard testimony from 44 cities on the wastewater management treatment program; reviewed federal action through a Washington, D.C. conference on funding and a briefing by Minnesota Congressmen on the House-Senate Conference Committee on the Clean Water Act reauthorization; and met with Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources staff which administers the Wisconsin Fund (in Wisconsin, 90 percent of all communities comply with federal sewer discharge standards).

The Port Authority task force: held hearings in Bloomington, Duluth, Minneapolis, Red Wing, St. Paul, and Winona for information on operations and management of those port authorities; and reviewed a House Research report on economic development powers.

Regulated Industries & Energy Committee

Who will and who should pay for 9-1-1 emergency services?

That's the question the Regulated Industries and Energy Committee will discuss in the upcoming session, according to Rep. Elton Redalen (Fountain-32B), committee chair. The funding process changed when the 1985 Legislature passed the State Departments Appropriations bill.

Talk of further deregulation of the telephone industry makes that a committee issue—especially with all the new companies on line like Sprint and MCI, that aren't regulated, says Redalen. At present, small companies of up to 15,000 users are deregulated for rate purposes, he says.

Redalen says the solar energy credit issue may surface. The Legislature retroactively repealed the credit in the last session as part of the omnibus tax ▶



Canterbury Downs finished its first racing season with an average daily attendance of 13,163—11th among major North American tracks.

photo by Tom Olmscheid

bill. The Legislature enacted the credit in 1979, and provided a 20 percent tax credit (on the first \$10,000) for residential use including solar, wind, earth shelters, and biomass for farm use.

Redalen says the committee will also look at some of the Department of Energy and Economic Development's energy programs. And, he says, it's probable that they'll take action on some housekeeping legislation related to the Minnesota Racing Commission.

Rules & Legislative Administration Committee

"I hope we'll see a number of things spinning off from our regulatory reform initiative," says Majority Leader Connie Levi (Dellwood-55A), who heads the Rules Committee. Levi says the House is working with the William Mitchell College of Law and the Hamline University School of Law to review state

agency rules and regulations, and the rulemaking process.

In many cases, the Legislature gives agencies authority to establish rules to carry out their programs. Rules have the force and effect of law, and some legislators worry that they change the intent of legislation.

"Rules," says Levi, "drive the state budget and it's important to make sure they are cost beneficial."

Taxes Committee

"Quite frankly, it's likely to be a low-key session as it relates to taxes," says Committee Chair Bill Schreiber (Brooklyn Park-48B), "unless the federal government adopts a tax reform package.

"If that does occur," he says, "it could have quite an impact on Minnesota and we may then have to make some substantive changes."

In terms of significant tax reform, Schreiber says he expects the Legislature to wait until 1987. "Typically, tax reform

proposals come from the administration, and the governor has indicated his staff will work on a major reform proposal for '87."

But the Legislature will have a tax bill of some sort this year.

"We have some groups that are not satisfied with the simplifications we made last year," says Schreiber. "So we'll look at things like the pension exclusion, the exempt status of interest on family farm security loans, and the change in the energy credit."

As far as tax increases, Schreiber says, "no one is in the mood for a tax increase. If revenue estimates forecast a shortfall, we'll have to accommodate it in spending cuts."

On fiscal disparities, Schreiber says he expects some recommendations for change. The program provides for sharing of growth in the commercial-industrial property tax base among municipalities in the seven-county area. The Legislature enacted the law in 1971 and hasn't reviewed it since. ▶

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) was another topic of review during the interim and Schreiber says the financing mechanism may undergo some adjustments this year. TIF is a means of financing public development that uses increased property taxes, which come from a development's increased assessed value, to pay for a portion of its developing costs.

The Bloomington mega-mall will also be on the agenda. In December, the city sold bonds to finance the \$1.4 billion dollar mall at the site of the old Metropolitan Stadium.

Pending legislation asks lawmakers to approve an on-sale liquor tax, a hotel-motel tax, a local sales tax that applies only to on-site goods, and exemption from the fiscal disparities law. Proceeds would back the bonds.

Local Gov't Finance Div./Taxes

Chair Terry Dempsey (New Ulm-23A) says his agenda for this year's session includes: state property tax assessment methods; process for appealing property values; local government aids formula; and property tax law and administration for 1987.

Local assessors determine the market values of property. The county and state boards can examine those assessments and raise or lower them. Issues are how to improve the method of determining market values and how to make assessment levels more uniform, says Dempsey.

Effective 1986, when appealing the value on property, people have to go first to the local and county boards of review, then to the district or tax court. Some people want to bypass local review and go directly to court, says Dempsey. Others feel people should exhaust channels in the administrative process before going through the judicial system.



A bill to regulate three-wheel bikes will get legislative attention.

The state distributes local government aids, which is a property tax relief program. A formula the Legislature set for one year in 1985 governs how the state distributes aid. Lawmakers need to review the formula in 1986, and enact a formula, says Dempsey.

He says the division will start to move on major changes in the property tax law and administration for 1987.

Transportation Committee

A bill that would increase the state's gasoline tax will get the attention of the Transportation Committee. Chair Doug Carlson (Sandstone-14B), says he'll sponsor the bill to increase the gas tax three cents to help pay for highway improvements.

Another concern, according to Carlson, is a bill that would open more or all of the state's trunk highway system to 80,000-pound haulers (current limit is 73,280 pounds). Minnesota has a little over 1,700 miles of 10-ton routes where 80,000-pound haulers can travel year 'round.

During the spring, these routes and others have weight restrictions to regulate heavier truckloads. This, according to some rural community leaders, is a problem for growers and haulers of agricultural commodities. The weight policy, however, means the Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) needs more funds to take care of the increased highway damage from the heavier truckloads.

The three-wheeler bill will demand almost immediate attention, Carlson says. The bill would: require the Department of Natural Resources to license riders; establish a non-operating zone during bird-nesting season; earmark funds for bike trails; and prohibit use of the vehicles as street bikes.

Carlson says the committee will also discuss Mn/DOT's priority system for road construction and repairs, and developing transportation alternatives along the I-494 strip.

Also, Carlson says, the committee plans to introduce a bill that would establish a permanent Legislative Commission on Transportation Oversight. ■

The great Minnesota get-together

Crowds, larger than ever, turned out at the Minnesota House of Representatives State Fair booth in the Education Building last summer.

Nearly 6,000 fairgoers voted in the House unofficial State Fair Opinion Poll. They were testing new optical scanner voting systems for possible certification for use in Minnesota.

Many stopped to pick up information about the lawmaking process and legislation that passed in the 1985 regular and special sessions. Others visited with representatives and staff members, tested their government IQs on a four-part computer quiz, checked for their districts on oversized wall maps, and played the newly developed Minnesota State Symbols Game.

photo by Tom Olmscheid

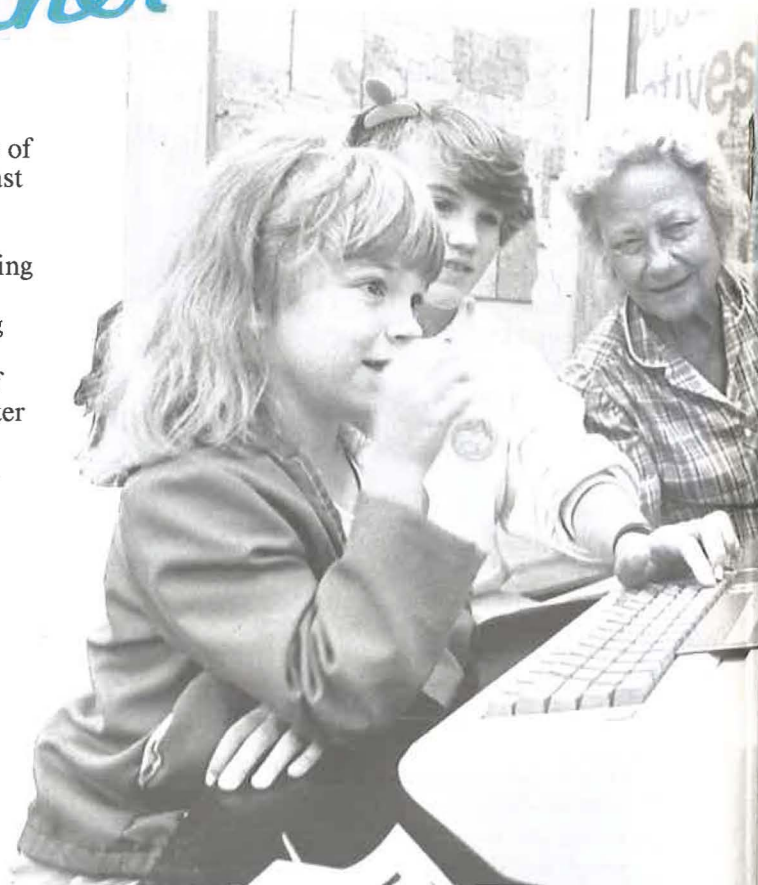


The House booth encourages people of all ages to get interested in the government process.

House members who were at the Fair

Gordon Backlund (IR-Fridley)	Dennis Ozment (IR-Rosemount)
Lynn Becklin (IR-Cambridge)	Jerome Peterson (DFL-Princeton)
John Burger (IR-Long Lake)	Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope)
Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls)	Peter Rodosovich (DFL-Faribault)
Dale Clausnitzer (IR-Maple Grove)	John Rose (IR-Roseville)
Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul)	Gary Schafer (IR-Gibbon)
Carol Dyke (IR-Worthington)	Arthur Seaberg (IR-Mendota Heights)
David Fjoslien (IR-Brandon)	Wayne Simoneau (DFL-Fridley)
Marcel Frederick (IR-Mankato)	Randy Staten (DFL-Mpls)
Dean Hartle (IR-Owatonna)	Ted Thorson (IR-Bemidji)
Bob Haukoos (IR-Albert Lea)	Merlyn Valan (IR-Moorhead)
Loren Jennings (DFL-Rush City)	Don Valento (IR-Little Canada)
Randy Kelly (DFL-St. Paul)	Kathleen Vellenga (DFL-St. Paul)
Rick Krueger (DFL-Staples)	Gordon Voss (DFL-Blaine)
K.J. McDonald (IR-Watertown)	Alan Welle (DFL-Willmar)
James Metzger (DFL-South St. Paul)	Maurice Zaffke (IR-Backus)
Tony Onnen (IR-Cokato)	

Fairgoers give their opinions on current issues by marking paper ballots. Poll results, an optical scanner voting system tallied, are on page 23.



Children and adults play the new, computerized Minnesota State Symbols Game. Nine correct choices make a perfect score.

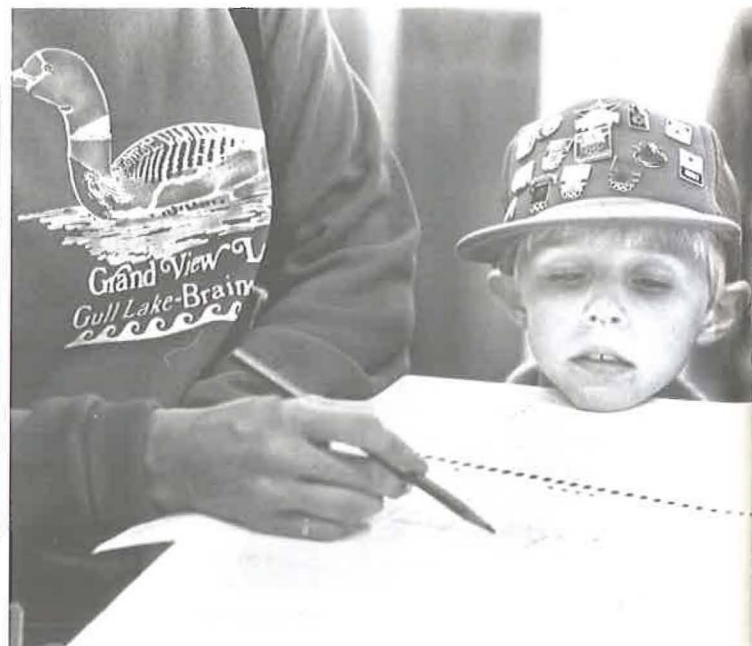


photo by Tom Olmscheid



Fair visitors find their legislative districts on large display maps.

State Fair Opinion Poll Results*

QUESTION	YES	NO	UNDECIDED
Should Minnesota adopt a mandatory seat belt law?	57.5% (3286)	39% (2227)	3.5% (199) Total: 5712
Should state law allow the sale of wine in food stores?	51% (2916)	45% (2534)	4% (247) Total: 5697
Should state law allow high school students to attend the public school of their choice, regardless of district boundaries?	37% (1932)	61% (3174)	2% (113) Total: 5219
Should state law ban professional and amateur boxing in Minnesota?	45% (2338)	50% (2595)	5% (284) Total: 5217

photos by Paul Battaglia

Minnesota's legal drinking age should be: Total votes — 5191

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1) 18 — 528 | 2) 19 — 870 | 3) 21 — 3458 |
| 4) 25 — 160 | 5) Other — 91 | 6) Undecided — 84 |

State law should require people who operate a boat while under the influence of drugs or alcohol to: (Choose two) Total votes — 10,820

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1) Take a breath test — 3393 | 2) Pay a fine and/or serve a prison sentence — 2240 | 3) Give up boating privileges for sometime — 2137 |
| 4) Turn over control of boat to another person — 1271 | 5) Other — 218 | 6) Undecided — 1561 |

What do you think would help improve Minnesota's farm economy? (Choose two) Total votes — 9712

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1) Stronger marketing efforts on the part of government — 2930 | 2) Management training for farmers — 2143 | 3) More soil and water conservation practices — 1292 |
| 4) Minimum prices — 1155 | 5) Other — 566 | 6) Undecided — 1626 |

Which one of the voting systems, the optical scanning ballot counter or paper ballot, do you prefer? Total votes — 5643

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|----------------|
| 1) Optical scanning ballot counter — 3444 | 2) Paper ballot — 1438 | 3) Other — 258 |
| 4) Undecided — 503 | | |

*The opinion poll was informal and unofficial representing a cross section of all fairgoers, including some non-residents and some under 18 years old.

Is Minnesota's juvenile court system working?

Professionals debate the question

A task force spent 18 months hearing testimony on Minnesota's handling of troubled and troublesome children.



photo by Tom Olmscheid

by Bonnie Kollodge

In May 1984, 16-year-old Laura (not real name) admitted to charges of shoplifting and a year-long nightmare began.

Laura had average grades, a job, no record of other law violations, no behavioral problems at school, and she made restitution for the January shoplifting. The initial probation officer's report states that Laura managed her father's household and was very happy to live with him. The report also showed that Laura had a "chaotic" relationship with her mother.

In the following months, the court placed Laura under probationary supervision, twice ordered her to spend 7 of every 14 days with her mother, temporarily placed her in a foster home at her mother's request, and eventually recommended placing her at St. Croix Camp, a residential facility about 150 miles from home.

During hearings, Laura said she wanted to stay with her father. It was her failure to obey the court order to stay with her mother that prompted her probation officer to recommend placing Laura at the facility, even though he reported no other offenses and no school problems. And her father said her behavior was good.

In mid-April 1985, a trial court placed Laura at St. Croix Camp. About two months later, the Minnesota Court of Appeals reversed the order, dismissed the case, and returned Laura to the custody of her parents.

The Court of Appeals decided that "The evidence is insufficient to support the institutional placement of the child, or any future disposition in this case."

An isolated case?

"Save a few isolated cases, there are no indications of abuse of discretion in the system. Sure there is always going to be some extreme case and those things can be corrected. But you don't throw out the whole system because of a few extreme instances." Judge Allen Oleisky, Hennepin County District Court, Juvenile Court Division.

However, Kathy Kosnoff, staff attorney, Minnesota Juvenile Code Revision Task Force, says, "Many of the people who would like to suggest that the juvenile system is just fine say, 'Those are isolated extremes'. The fact is, there are enough of them that they are representative—not of every kid who goes through the system—but a lot of them."

Task force holds hearings

Because the Legislature hadn't looked at the juvenile justice system as a whole since 1959, but made changes here and there, laws affecting children became scattered throughout Minnesota statutes. Some thought it was time to pull those laws together and examine the entire system.

So in 1983, the State Planning Agency, at the request of the Legislature, appointed the Minnesota Juvenile Code Revision Task Force to review the current Juvenile Court Act and relevant child welfare laws.

"Another reason the Legislature called for creation of a task force was because of a report that came out of House Research a few years ago," says Kosnoff.

The report said that about 25,000 children were in out-of-home care in Minnesota, not including out-of-state placements.

"We really didn't know where most of them were. This suggested, particularly on the issue of placement, that the system needs to be closely looked at," says Kosnoff.

The task force spent 18 months holding hearings around the state, taking testimony on Minnesota's handling of juveniles who commit crimes and status offenses, who are mentally ill or chemically dependent, and who are dependent and neglected.

When the task force brought its recommendations for extensive changes in the law back to the Legislature in the '85 interim, the Crime and Family Law Committee heard little, if any, support for proposed legislation (HF774—Seaberg, 38B-Mendota Heights).

Is revision needed?

"What you have now," says Ann Jaede, director, Criminal Justice Program, State Planning Agency, "is justice by geography. There's a great deal of inconsistency in how counties handle children who come into the court system."

Jaede says it's also very common for children to move back and forth among the social welfare, corrections, and mental health/chemical dependency systems. Once a child is in the system there's no telling where he or she may end up, she says.

However, most people involved in the juvenile justice system don't agree with the task force that the system needs extensive revision. ▶

About the proposed legislation, Oleisky says, "It's an unnecessary bill. The present code may need some amendment, but this proposal is too drastic and doesn't serve the best interests of the state, the children, or the community."

Committee Chair Kathleen Blatz says, "Hearing objections to the task force report took up so much time we couldn't get down to the meat of what is going on and how we can make the system better."

The juvenile justice system

Juvenile courts in Minnesota hear and decide two categories of cases: those that involve a minor's conduct that violates the law, and those that involve inability or failure of a parent or guardian to give necessary care and supervision.

Juveniles who commit unlawful acts fall into three categories: delinquents (children who commit acts that would be unlawful if an adult committed them); status offenders (children who engage in conduct that is unlawful for them, but not for adults, for example, running away, truancy, drinking, smoking, incorrigibility); and juvenile traffic offenders (children who violate traffic laws).

The Juvenile Court has a number of options in handling offenders. It can impose fines, probation, counseling, placement outside the home, loss of driver's license, restitution or community service and, for delinquents, commitment to the commissioner of corrections for placement in a juvenile correctional facility.

In cases where parents or guardians cannot or are not giving necessary supervision or care, the court must try to preserve the family. Dispositions include placing the child under protective supervision while at home, placing the child in foster care, ordering the abuser out of the home in cases of domestic child abuse, or ordering special treatment for the child.

Proposed changes affecting children who commit crimes or are in need of protection or services are in Article I of the bill. Changes affecting children who are mentally ill or chemically dependent are in Article II.

Task force proposals in Article I

Very generally, what the task force wants to do is better define the court's jurisdiction and the reasons the Juvenile Court can intervene in the lives of juveniles, limit the court's dispositional (sentencing) powers, and give juveniles more protection in court procedures.

Proposed changes run through the current

code and would affect the purpose statement, court organization, custody and detention, intake and screening, contempt, and voluntary placements and foster care review.

Jurisdiction

Categories of Juvenile Court jurisdiction would change some under the proposed code. Current law gives the Juvenile Court broad authority. The proposed code would create two tracks, one for delinquents and other offenders, and one for children in need of protection or services (CHIPS).

Under the proposal, a child would have to be at least 12 years old for the Juvenile Court to assign punishment and controls associated with illegal behavior. Children under 12 would come under protective services jurisdiction, with certain exceptions.

Disposition

The proposal would also limit the Juvenile Court's broad powers to determine dispositions (sentences) for the offenses and needs of children.

It would give the Juvenile Court a specific set of dispositions for any given offense a child commits or any unmet needs a child has.

Procedure

Other recommendations call for strengthened procedural or due process protections. For example, the law now provides a right to legal counsel, but parents or children can waive that right. The task force wants to place some limits on the waiver right.

Contempt

Another suggested change would affect contempt of court. Law provides that any child who commits contempt of court is guilty of a misdemeanor. That allows the court to order sanctions for a delinquent, which includes placement in a correctional facility.

The proposed code would specify sanctions for contempt and limit secure detention as a sanction to children under the delinquency or major traffic offender jurisdictions.

Voluntary placements, foster care review

The proposal would add some new categories to Juvenile Court jurisdiction. With some exceptions, the proposed code would require court approval for voluntary out-of-home placements of children. It would also establish foster care review boards to periodically review foster-care placements.

Opposition to task force proposals

Oleisky says task force proposals don't meet concerns of public safety and accountability of juveniles. He says the proposed reforms would be expensive and impractical.

Blatz agrees about accountability. She says the recommendations go in the direction of ▶

giving children more rights and less responsibility.

"Children have rights," says Blatz, "but you get adult due process with adult consequences. I think the public is concerned that children are not being reprimanded and treated in accordance with the kind of acts they're committing, and that the system is already too lenient."

Of the many issues the proposal raises, Blatz finds strengthened right to counsel less objectionable than others.

"I don't know that I'd make it (counsel) mandatory, however," says Blatz. "Why should we force an attorney on them to say the child is innocent, when the child is willing to admit guilt? I think that's a very poor example . . . all it teaches our children is that it's good to lie."

Task force proposals in Article II

Judge George Petersen, Ramsey County Juvenile Court, agrees the juvenile code could use some revisions, but not the wholesale revision he says the original proposed code suggests.

Article II of the proposal, in most cases, would require a court order to admit a child to a mental health or chemical dependency treatment center. Petersen objects to that. "It preempts a legitimate right on the part of parents," he says, "to seek treatment for their children without having to get government approval."

But Kosnoff argues that no standards are in place for admitting children to a facility, "except that they have money." Treatment centers for chemically dependent/mentally ill children set their own standards for admission.

Petersen says some alternatives to court review of commitments include: better monitoring; licensing provisions; admission criteria; perhaps some limits on how long a child could be in in-patient treatment before court approval would be necessary to continue treatment; and even a child's ombudsman's office.

System involves discretion

No one argues that the system involves discretion—on the part of judges, county attorneys, police officers, teachers, social workers, and parents. The question is how much is appropriate.

"This is not an indictment on any of those people," says Jaede. "But what we have is a system that is not a system. It doesn't have oversight or checks and balances. So you're kind of playing Russian Roulette when you get involved. You have no idea what's going to happen. Your child could end up anywhere."

Petersen argues with those who think discretion is bad. "Lack of discretion is equally as bad then," he says, "attempting to treat all people in the same way without taking into account individual problems and circumstances."

Oleisky says he agrees with the task force that we have as many systems in Minnesota for handling juveniles as we have counties. He doesn't agree that it's a problem.

"Kids are different," says Oleisky. "Each county should to some extent have a right to look at their kids, because they have different resources, different perceptions. What may be a serious crime in one county may not be in another. So to some extent local resources and local authorities should have a right to make some decisions."

Issues

How to improve our judicial system for juveniles and strike a better balance between acting in the best interest of children and the safety of the public are challenges for the Legislature.

The issues are: how we treat troubled and troublesome children; how to allocate scarce resources and make sure those who most need help get it; and how to make sure juvenile courts and social services offer a corrective path whenever possible.

On Dec. 19, House and Senate authors presented a new bill that addresses some concerns about the task force's original proposal. Rep. Arthur Seaberg, House author, says, "It is a combination of the best of the existing law on juveniles, practices in various juvenile systems throughout Minnesota, and the advice of various professional and trade organizations and practitioners in this area." ■

Gambling to give: Is it harder now?

photo by Larry Salzman



Bingo player takes on the challenge of 15 cards per game.

People from small fundraising organizations, the Charitable Gambling Control Board, a city agency, and House members speak out on the state's 1984 charitable gambling law.

Many small fundraising organizations that sponsor events to raise funds want the Legislature to free them from what they call "cumbersome regulations."

The Minnesota Waterfowl Association (MWA), for example, has 22 chapters throughout the state. MWA Member Steve Sawyer says that each of those chapters might hold only one gambling event a year. And this law subjects them to about 48 pages of regulations.

Sawyer says, "Records must be kept of each gambling occasion and submitted to the Charitable Gambling Control Board along with the tax on earnings on a monthly basis. And a separate bank account must be maintained for gambling proceeds." According to Sawyer, that's a lot to ask of volunteers.

Spring fling, fall festival

Peter Grills who represents the Minnesota Catholic Conference agrees. "A lot of the smaller parishes will put on occasional fundraising events—spring fling, fall festival—with volunteers doing the organizing and managing. We fear that the regulatory aspect of the law will discourage people from volunteering, or that the accounting or reporting forms will be done incorrectly causing us to break the law," he says.

The Board sets rules, issues licenses, levies taxes

Roger Franke, executive secretary for the 13-member Board, agrees that the reporting procedures are demanding. "But what it amounts to is good business practice," he says.

The Board, by law, sets up rules by which to play legal games. It also issues licenses to organizations who want to conduct lawful gambling and to distributors of gambling equipment. Both measures are new.

By adopting state control, the Legislature was responding to two concerns, according to a House Research study. First, it attempted to provide a uniform level of enforcement throughout the state. Fears were that such enforcement was becoming more and more spotty. And second, the law was an attempt to improve gambling tax collection. (The charitable gambling law replaced the six percent tax on gross receipts from lawful gambling with a ten percent tax on gambling receipts, minus prizes.) Indications show that large amounts of sales tax on gambling receipts went unpaid.

"By creating the Board," says Franke, "Minnesota now has a single agency that puts these two tasks together."

Who deserves exemption from Board rules?

The Board, according to Sawyer, has been cooperative in helping small charitable groups to understand the law. But, he says, it's obvious that the problem they're trying to solve—regulating massive bingo-type operations—doesn't apply to small groups holding one or two events a year. Therefore, he says, a better approach is to exempt from Board regulation, organizations that have fewer than four gambling events a year and that give away less than \$50,000 in prizes.

He suggests that organizations with ongoing gambling activities remain under Board regulations.

Rep. Richard Kostohryz (North St. Paul-54B), author of the charitable gambling law, agrees that the Board's rules may be too strict on small service and church organizations and says he will introduce an amendment in the upcoming session that would allow these groups a \$50,000 exclusion.

Local enforcement funds lost

Minneapolis city officials talk about another problem: a loss of funds for local government enforcement programs.

Under the law, local governments still have some say over who gets a license and who doesn't, and which of the five games—bingo, paddlewheels, tipboards, raffles and pull-tabs—they will allow within their jurisdiction.

But, as James Moncur of the Minneapolis Department of Licenses and Consumer Services, points out, "The city can exercise local control, but in practice, they have been stripped of the tools to use this discretion." ▶

"First, the license revenues (some \$56,000) and local taxes (some \$276,000) to fund the local enforcement costs are now lost. Secondly, all reporting requirements are now directly to the Board, making it cumbersome for the localities to monitor the licensee and exercise the veto responsibly," says Moncur.

Moncur says the law is not all bad, that possible enforcement exists where it didn't before. Also, registration of distributors and gambling materials is excellent strategy.

He suggests three amendments to assure involvement for concerned municipalities: (1) a reinstatement of local licensing authority; (2) a provision for local license fees and taxes; and (3) a reimbursement plan so localities get a portion of the state gambling tax for enforcement purposes.

Kostohryz agrees. "We never intended to change the law so that we would kill gambling or wipe out local enforcement programs. I think localities should get a portion of the take for policing gambling events," he says.

Too much power for Board?

While many municipalities and organizations say they don't oppose the Charitable Gambling Control Board or its rules, some legislators feel differently.

Rep. Gil Gutknecht (Rochester-33A), chair of the subcommittee on Gambling and Related Issues, says the Legislature gave the Board too much power. He says, if the state is going to tax charitable gambling, then the Department of Revenue should collect that tax. He says if people embezzle money from charitable groups, the state's laws should kick in. And, he says, the local attorney and sheriff should enforce all gambling rules.

Rep. Dave Fjoslien (Brandon-11B), chair of the General Legislation and Veterans Affairs Committee, agrees with Gutknecht. He says local control is, by far, the best and a lot cheaper.

But, Kostohryz says, "Prior to the law's enactment, it was difficult for the state to know who was gambling and paying taxes to the state." By creating a regulatory board, he says, everyone is operating under the same umbrella and we know who's gambling and who's paying up.

'... we've crossed over too far.'

Gutknecht says state law should allow charitable groups to use certain gambling forms to raise funds, but should redefine the places where they conduct their fundraising.

Under Board rules, an organization can conduct gambling only on premises it owns or leases—all of which means that if an organization wants, it can set up pull-tab games in a public bar. This, according to Gutknecht, "is where we've crossed over too far."

Both Gutknecht and Fjoslien describe pull-tabs as "paper slot machines" and dislike the fact that the law allows pull-tabs in public bars.

Gutknecht says he will again do some negotiating to get a bill passed this year to divide the Board's authority with localities, exempt certain organizations from Board regulation and taxation, and to restrict the sale of pull-tabs in public bars.

The Board says they, too, will have some recommendations for the Legislature this year. "We are proposing some administrative changes so that we can make the charitable gambling law and the rules easier for everyone to live under," says Franke. ■



photo by Tom Olmscheid

School children experience Charles Lindbergh as a boy.

Minnesota applauds the Lone Eagle

by Bonnie Kollodge

Since last July, a bronze statue of Charles Lindbergh, the Lone Eagle, stands proudly on the Capitol Mall Approach, a tribute to one of Minnesota's favorite sons. The Minnesota sculptor, Paul Granlund, depicts two Lindberghs: the national hero, standing straight and tall; and the boy whose dreams took flight, his arms spread like a bird's wings.

Lindbergh, who grew up in Little Falls, Minnesota, made the first solo, non-stop flight across the Atlantic Ocean from New York to Paris in 1927. He made aviation history, but his achievements would take him beyond that. The scientist in him led to experimental work on the design and construction of a perfusion apparatus to keep

animal organs alive outside the body. And he helped raise money so Robert Goddard, one of the first to believe man would someday reach the moon, could continue research on rocketry.

In 1939, Lindbergh spoke out against American intervention in World War II, a position that threatened his popularity. But when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Lindbergh worked for the war effort as a consultant in the testing and improvement of fighter planes. He flew combat missions in the Pacific and taught young pilots ways to save fuel and boost the range of their fighters.

Lindbergh told the story of his transatlantic flight in *The Spirit of St. Louis*, which

won the Pulitzer Prize for biography in 1954. As he continued his work in aviation and technology, he grew concerned about the environmental problems such work created.

The aviator came to believe that the future depended on human ability to combine technology and nature. As he developed an interest in the protection of wildlife and natural resources, he traveled the world as a conservation advocate.

Lindbergh died in Hawaii in 1974 at the age of 72. But his work and tributes to his memory, such as the statue on the Capitol Mall, keep him alive in the hearts and minds of Minnesotans. ■

From General Assistance to Work Readiness

by Lisa Lissimore

In the 1981 recession, the state cut employable people from GA rolls. In 1983, the Legislature returned to the old system to relieve hardship cases. Today, GA employables get a Work Readiness program.

Until a few months ago, 50-year-old Marrion Green didn't have a job. He lived month to month on a general assistance check, food stamps, and medical aid.

Last July, Green's lifestyle changed. He was one of about 6,700 welfare recipients in Hennepin County whose case the county closed and later transferred to something called the Work Readiness (WR) program.

Legislature creates WR program

The 1985 Legislature created the WR program in a move to get employable people off the state's general assistance (GA) rolls. Now, when people apply to their county agency, the agency screens them for GA to see if they come under one or more of 14 categories of eligibility, such as mental illness, functional illiteracy, or other problems that interfere with work ability. Applicants must also meet GA income and resource limits.

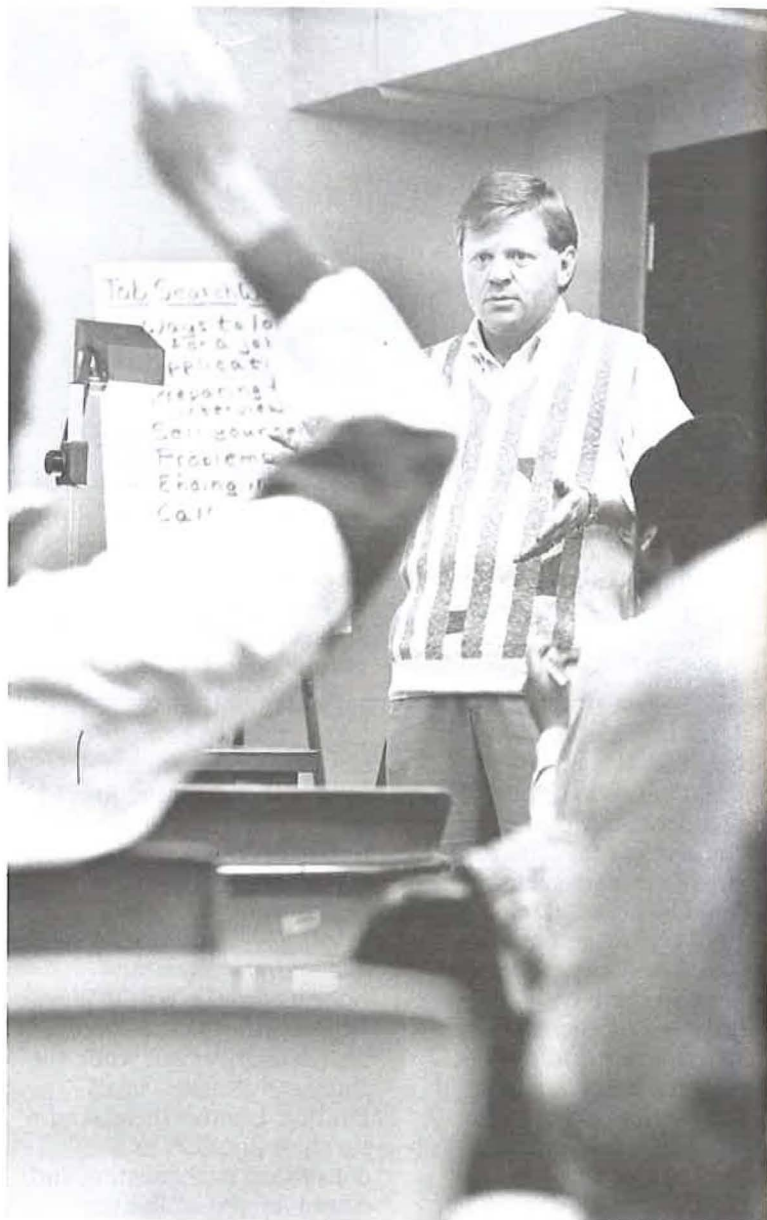
If, after the screening, applicants don't qualify for the \$201-per-month GA money, they're eligible for WR. They can then get an additional two to six months of aid while the county they live in helps them find work.

A one-stop shop

The screening showed Green to be employable, so he went through Hennepin County's WR program.

The program is a one-stop shop for job information, says Lee Berger, program coordinator. Clients first go to WR orientation; ▶

photo by Paul Battaglia



A trainer in the Work Readiness program teaches job-hunting skills.

then to employment assessment sessions. After spending 12 hours in job search workshops, they must spend eight hours a week looking for jobs. Clients can use the resource center and job clubroom to look through job listings and other materials.

It was at one of the job search workshops that Green came across a job opening for a houseman at the Minneapolis Athletic Club. "The job description said they were looking for someone with experience for setting up banquets and general cleaning—the kind of work I'm used to doing," Green says.

Green got the job. According to Berger, he is one of only 156 people (at this printing) in Hennepin County known to have found a job using the resource room. About 375 people have used it on a regular basis.

No statistics

"It's difficult to say how many people have found work because there's no requirement for WR participants to report any kind of placement," says Berger. "But I'm sure others have gotten jobs. It's also hard to keep track of those who have left town and those who have moved in with friends and relatives."

Green worked for about a month before receiving notice that he was laid off. The layoff came as a surprise to him. "I was laid off because I was hired to fill in for people out on medical leave. Now those people are ready to come back to work." After talking to his supervisor, Green says, his chances of getting his job back look slim.

Job competition

Green's situation—a client who's work ready, but is without a job—questions whether there are enough jobs for WR graduates.

Bruce Heinz, head of the employment side of Ramsey County's WR program, says, "Yes—jobs are out there. But," he says, "what we're doing is placing a new sector of the population in competition with many others for entry level, minimum-wage jobs."

To get WR assistance, the law requires applicants to take suitable employment—a job that pays minimum wage, meets state health and safety standards, provides 60 work hours per month, and is within commuting distance. This, Heinz says, may mean the Wendy's, Burger King's, McDonald's, or service jobs that college and high school students and many others go after.

Other chances for employment, according to Heinz, will come through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Minnesota Employment and Economic Development (MEED) Act, and other training and employment options aimed at helping low-income and unemployed people.

Take 22-year-old Tyris Carruthers, for example. Carruthers was an intake client who went through Ramsey County's WR program. Intakes are people who've never been on GA. As of last November, the county had 184 new intake applicants who received referrals.

After working through a job search plan with his employment guidance counselor, the county referred Carruthers to the MEED jobs program.

MEED program

MEED gives priority to applicants who qualify for public assistance. Under the program, job seekers may qualify for temporary jobs with public employers, as Carruthers did, or permanent jobs with private employers who get reimbursed for a part of the salary costs for six months.

Emergency employment in the public service sector, says Heinz, is clearly for temporary employment. It's to help people build a positive work history and to make them more attractive to other employers.

After two days of training at Adams School, Carruthers says he got a temporary custodial job at the Centennial Building near the Capitol while MEED counselors continued to help him find other permanent job possibilities.

Carruthers, unlike Green, got a permanent job working for the state. He is one of 55 people (at this printing) known to have found work under Ramsey County's WR program, but officials say they've placed more.

Green, on the other hand, says he'll go back to the center for what program officials call a two-month assessment interview. There, WR staff will look at Green's job search activity, employment history, education, and other information they have on file, to decide if he will get the maximum six months of cash assistance, or if WR will stop after two months. If Green isn't eligible for the six-month help, he won't be able to participate for the next 22 months.

Both Heinz and Berger say it's too early to tell if the program will move people off welfare and into jobs. But they're sure the program will be up for legislative review in the upcoming session. They expect the literacy issue to come back for a sound definition of functional illiteracy. ■

COMMISSIONS

In addition to their other duties as elected representatives, legislators work on commissions which study and report on areas of interest to both House and Senate.

The majority of members on legislative commissions must be legislators. The speaker of the House appoints House members. In the Senate, a subcommittee of the Senate Rules and Administration Committee selects senators to serve. Appointments are made every two years.

Legislative commissions are ongoing, long term, and more permanent than study groups, task forces, and joint legislative committees. Laws regarding purposes and how they are carried out differ for each commission.

Here are in-brief summaries of interim activities for 13 legislative commissions.

Great Lakes Commission

June: reviewed progress reports on task force activity for the Economic Trends Review, State Water Data Survey, Water Project Cost Sharing, and Water Quality Agreement; recommended that a Soil Erosion Task Force be a priority consideration.

October (Annual Meeting in Indianapolis): heard summary presentation of "The Great Lakes Economy: A Resource and Industry Profile"; heard presentations entitled "Agricultural Exports—Current Great Lakes Shipments and Proposals for Improved Programs," and "The St. Lawrence: A Vital National Resource"; heard report of the "State (Illinois) Water Data Task Force"; heard progress report on "Water Project Funding Review."

Legislative Audit Commission

June-December: the Legislative Auditor's Program Evaluation Division prepared program evaluation reports on "Deinstitutionalization," "Insurance Regulation," "The DNR Fish Fund," "Tax Increment Financing," and "Public Pension Funds" for distribution to legislators during the

'86 session; the Financial Audit Division completed "The Statewide Financial Audit" that will result in an audit opinion on the state's financial statement with individual management letters issued to audited departments.

Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women

August (Duluth): held public hearing on issues related to the economic status of women—insurance, public assistance programs, education, child care.

September (Minneapolis): discussed small business opportunities for women, home-based and cottage industries, barriers limiting public assistance recipients, and legislation to help women's economic development goals.

October (Morris): see August; also considered effects of farm economy on rural women.

November and December (St. Paul): heard briefings on possible legislative issues such as child care, child support, pay equity, tax reform effects, small business set-asides, insurance availability.

Legislative Commission on Employee Relations

June: heard reports on 1985 laws relating to state and local public employees, pending public employee legislation, and labor arbitration in state and local government; discussed 1985 interim study project to survey public labor/management groups' concerns.

July: adopted resolution ratifying the bargaining agreement between the state and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Council #6.

September: adopted ratification resolutions and recommended ratification legislation for collective bargaining agreements between the state and Minnesota Government Engineers Council (MGEC), Middle Management Association (MMA), and Minnesota Association of Professional Employees (MAPE); and for the Commissioner's Plan, Managerial Plan, and the governor's recommendation for salary increases for state agency heads.

October: adopted a ratification motion and recommended legislation for the bargaining agreement between the state and the Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA).

December: adopted ratification motions for the following higher education bargaining units: Unit 9 - State University Instructional, represented by Interfaculty Organization, Minnesota Education Association (MEA) Affiliate; Unit 11 - State University Administrative, represented by Minnesota State University Association, Teamster Affiliate; reviewed staff report on local government collective bargaining issues related to the Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA).

Legislative Commission on Energy

July: heard report on the proposed Department of Economic Security's (now Department of Jobs and Training) energy assistance program—1986; questions answered on the program for 1985.

August: heard reports on Minnesota's Weatherization Program, other programs.

November: heard about the effects of the 1985 legislative retroactive repeal of the Renewable Energy Tax Credit.

Legislative Commission on Long Term Health Care

October: heard reports on Case-Mix Reimbursement System, Escrow Accounts of Nursing Homes, Pre-Admission Screening Study, and the Medicaid Demonstration Project.

January: heard reports on Pre-Admission Screening Program and Case-Mix Reimbursement implementation, Quality Assurance Program activities, long term care issues, "The Needs of the Adult Physically Disabled in Minnesota," and a report from the Minnesota Task Force on the Needs of Persons with Brain Impairment.

Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

June: elected officers; reviewed Minnesota Resources Fund appropriation and work programs; acted to comply with \$5 million legislatively mandated reduction in programs.

July: toured Northern Minnesota; toured Crookston and Detroit Lakes areas visiting facilities involving wildlife, water, land, fisheries, park, and energy issues. Executive Committee adopted a motion for approving Option A of the Department of Energy and Economic Development Recreation Grants Program; approved several work plans for game fish fingerling rearing projects; approved modified work programs reflecting reductions made in June.

August: toured North Central Minnesota to study navigation problems, tourism potential, fishing improvements; toured Cloquet area for herbicide information; toured metro area natural resource projects and facilities; approved amended work plan for "Comprehensive Planning for Fish and Wildlife Resources"; heard memorandum on "Background of Land and Water Administration."

September: toured natural resource sites in Northeastern and Southwestern Minnesota.

October: toured natural resource sites in Southeastern Minnesota; conducted public hearing in Caledonia to consider approval of Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) parcel acquisition.

November: reviewed local recreation grant proposals; heard updates on Presidential Commission on Outdoor Recreation, revenue to Minnesota Resources Fund, Mississippi River management, Science Museum Omnimax film progress, statewide rural needs assessment project, Operation Wall-eye, Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Planning, Comprehensive Local Water Management Act of 1985.

Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement

August: heard "Evaluation Outline for Rule-of-85"; requested valuation of constitutional officers retirement plan; heard report on consolidation of Moorhead Police and Fire Relief Associations into Public Employees Retirement Association Police and Fire Fund (PERA-P&F); reviewed 1984 valuations of PERA, Teachers Retirement Association (TRA), and Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS); reviewed 1985 legislation.

September: heard testimony on Council of Institutional Investors; discussed Wyatt Company contract; heard memorandums on Consolidation of Moorhead Police and Fire Funds, PERA state of affairs, "Proposed Changes in Social Security Coverage Under Consideration by the Congress that Affect Public Employees."

October: heard reports on 1985 valuations progress, withholding state aids from the Winona Police Relief Association, pension fund administrators; approved calculations for consolidation of Moorhead Police and Fire Funds; discussed the Commission's proposed rules governing procedures; overviewed the Unclassified Employees Retirement Plan; discussed effect of *Garcia* decision on volunteer firefighters relief associations.

November: heard progress reports (see October); created task force on voluntary consolidation of police and fire relief associations into PERA-P&F to report before the '86 session. ▶

December: heard reports from Wyatt Company, State Board of Investment on divestment, Department of Finance; discussed post retirement fund, need for improved oversight of police and fire relief associations.

Legislative Commission on Public Education

August: elected vice-chair; decided on equalization of school district revenue and school district retirement funding as topics for interim study.

November: discussed the resource cost model developed by Stanford University as a way of funding education costs; discussed the use of computers in schools.

Legislative Commission to Review Administrative Rules

August: heard testimony; gave advice and comment on need for and reasonableness of Department of Human Services proposed rules on prior authorization of some health services and a second surgical opinion as conditions for Medical Assistance medical care payments.

October: held a preliminary assessment on the Department of Corrections, Office of Adult Release, internal policies on residential treatment of inmates once they reach supervised release status; conducted a follow-up hearing on Department of Human Services revised Rule 2 (for family and group family day care home licensure) which also involved the Departments of Administration and Public Safety.

November: published biennial reports for 1981-82 and 1983-84.

Legislative Commission on Waste Management

June: heard a summary of 1985 waste management legislation; elected officers; heard Metropolitan Council's proposed budget and work program for expenditures from the Metropolitan Landfill Abatement Fund; heard presentation from Pollution Control Agency (PCA) on preliminary rules requiring financial assurance of landfill operators and received testimony on the rules from the public and the National Solid Waste Management Association.

August: heard testimony on the PCA's financial responsibility rules and ways to comply; heard Metropolitan Council's Organized Collection Study report; discussed household hazardous waste pilot project.

September: heard testimony on the Metropolitan Council's work plan for expenditures from the Landfill Abatement Fund and approved expenditures for a co-composting project; heard presentation by the Waste Management Board on its technical assistance and grant/loan programs for processing facilities, waste reduction and collection/transportation of hazardous waste.

November: heard testimony from the Metropolitan Council on the Landfill Abatement Work Program, from the Waste Management Board on the status of hazardous waste processing facilities; heard a draft Estimate of Need report outlining need for a hazardous waste disposal facility.

December: discussed draft solid and hazardous waste legislation.

Legislative Coordinating Commission

August: subcommittee on the Legislative Reference Library discussed procedures and criteria for hiring a director; subcommittee on the Revisor's Office discussed the Revisor's annual performance report, and proposals for salary and staff adjustments.

September: adopted, on the recommendation of the subcommittee on Salary and Budget Review, amendments to the Legislative Plan for Employee Benefits; adopted House salary zones for legislative commissions.

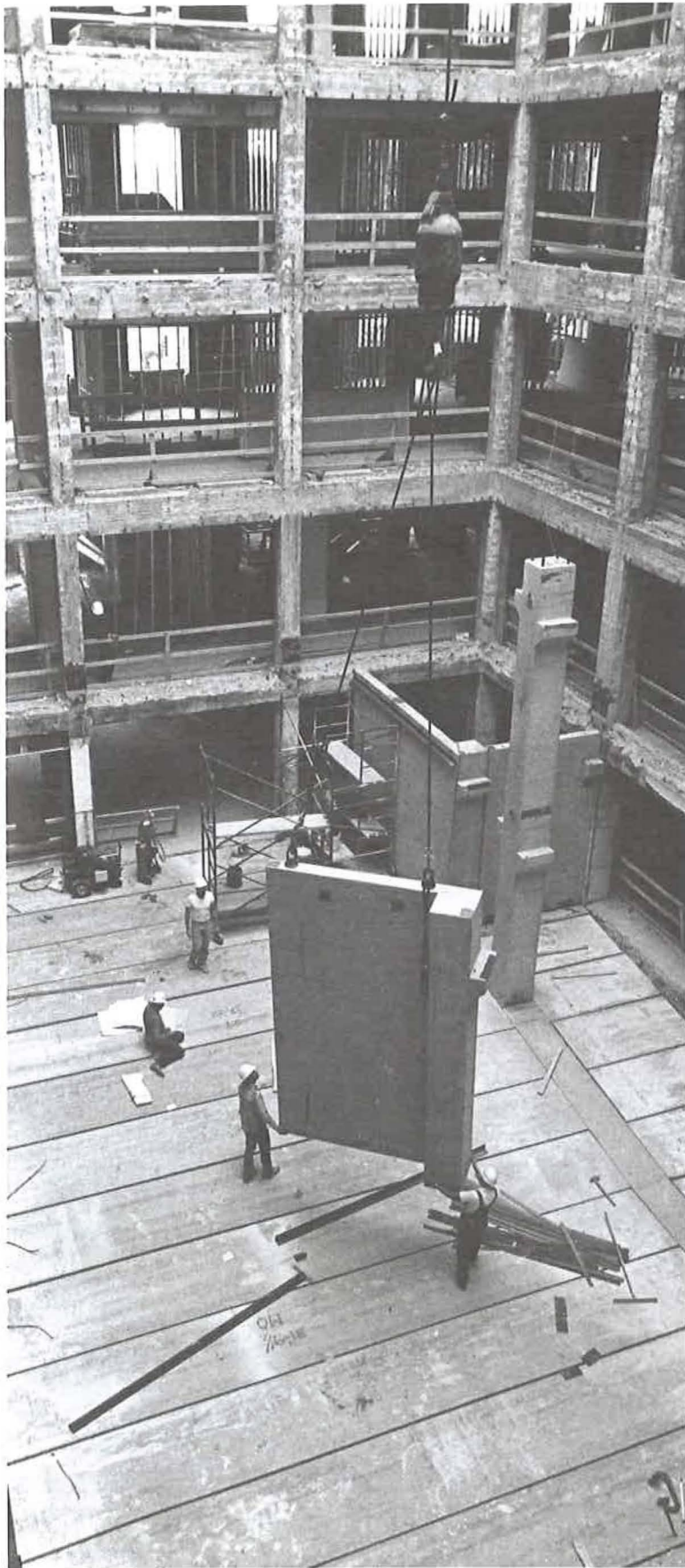
October: subcommittee on Flexible Benefits continued discussions on recommendations to be made to the full commission in the future.

November: appointed, on the recommendation of the subcommittee, a new director for the Legislative Reference Library.

Mississippi River Parkway Commission

November: heard Great River Road reports on status, funding (from a national perspective), and signing; heard reports and comments on the proposed Mississippi River National Heritage Corridor—public involvement, management plans, and promotional materials. ■

A new look for an old building



The six-story State Office Building is 54 years old. At the time of its construction in 1932, it had a distinctive feature: two courtyards within its walls. The open spaces, within borders of gray granite walls, looked like a rectangular figure eight. Offices faced either the streets outside or the courtyards inside.

The courtyards took up a lot of needed space. And legislators, in the 1960s, had no offices, only desks in the House and Senate Chambers in the Capitol. Later, they crowded desk after desk into a few large Capitol rooms, with little privacy.

To improve those working conditions, in 1974, House members and Senate minority members took over the State Office Building after several state departments moved out.

However, the move didn't solve the problems of overcrowding, energy waste, poor fire protection, and a shortage of hearing rooms. In the face of this, the 1983 Legislature voted to renovate the State Office Building. The project began after the 1984 Legislature adjourned in May.

Architects saved the classic exterior of the building so it would continue to complement the Capitol, but renovation included:

- filling in the interior courtyards to add about 35,000 square feet of space;
- adding four large hearing rooms, each seating up to 42 committee members and about 140 spectators, and six smaller ones, each seating about 21 committee members and 60 spectators;
- replacing single-pane windows with double- or triple-pane, energy-conserving windows;
- adding exits, stairways, and a new sprinkler system; and
- constructing a mezzanine with skylights above the sixth floor to add a floor and improve the roof lines.

On Jan. 7, 1985, the eve of the 74th Legislative session, legislators moved into their new offices even though the project was unfinished. On Sept. 16, the last two support service offices moved into their new home. ■

Workers install one of the many prefabricated concrete wall sections of new office and hearing space in what was an open section of the State Office Building.

photo by Paul Battaglia

The big move

Interviews by Karen Richardson

House makes home in both Capitol, State Office Building

"We're studying government and visiting from Oklahoma. Could you tell us where we'd find the Minnesota House of Representatives?" a young man and woman ask the tour guide at the information desk on the first floor of the State Capitol.

"On the second floor," says the guide.

"Thanks," say the visitors, moving toward the staircase that leads to the floor above where they find the historic Chamber of the Minnesota House, the departments of the Chief Clerk's Office, and staff ready to help with information.

When they ask, "Where are the offices of your state representatives, the House Public Information Office, the Research Department, the Legislative Reference Library, and the Revisor of Statutes?" the answer is, "Right across the street in the State Office Building."

Back down on the first floor, they walk past the information desk, through the front entrance, down the steps, turn to their right, and cross the street to the stately gray building. Inside they see burnished brass, polished marble, and newly renovated space.

Nothing about the building's seven floors reveals to them what insiders remember. Gone is the dirt, dust, crumbled brick and mortar; missing are the hard hat construction workers and massive cranes that were part of the recent gutting and rebuilding of the aging structure.

No signs remain of the boxing, taping, and lugging of legislative business and furniture twice—once to the old Mechanic Arts High School near the Capitol and back again. Invisible are memories of handling the busyness of a legislative session in old classroom space, ignoring the groans of aged plumbing and heating systems and the insect and rodent tenants that resisted eviction.

Visible only are the offices up and running, in step with the high-tech information age.

One of the advantages of the move is that it offers a chance to reacquaint readers, including visitors like the students from Oklahoma, with behind-the-scenes legislative services. In the next pages, the chief clerk and four department heads tell about their departments, what they do, and their reactions to the new quarters. ▶



Visitors at the historic Chamber of the Minnesota House of Representatives.

photo by Tom Olmscheid

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol
(612) 296-2314

The Chief Clerk's Office publishes the legal record of House action in the Journal of the House and provides copies of bills and bill status information to the Legislature and the public.

Three hats

Edward A. Burdick, chief clerk of the Minnesota House, unlike many clerks in other states, wears three hats.

He is in charge of all paperwork that enters the House Chamber. He reads bills, motions, and amendments at each floor session. And, as unofficial parliamentarian, "It's my job to advise the speaker and other House members on proper parliamentary procedure and what rules apply to particular situations," he says.

Four divisions

The Chief Clerk's Office has four divisions: House Desk, Index Department, Front Office, and Third Floor.

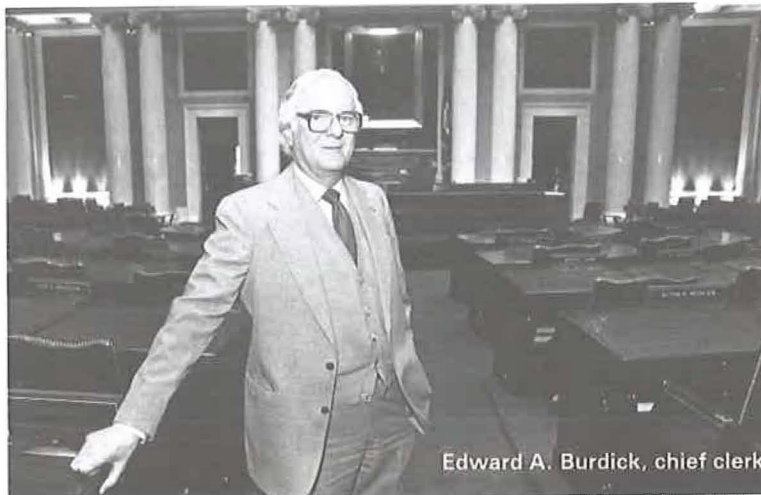
At the front desk in the Chamber, the *Journal* editor records House action for the *Journal* which includes bill introductions, committee reports, and roll call votes. "Minnesota is unique as it is one of the few states where a journal is considered legal evidence," says Burdick. "We have to audit, proof, correct, and index the *Journal* so that every bill that's passed will stand up in court.

"In putting the *Journal* together, we use computers, pre-printed forms, a roll-call machine, and lots of other shortcuts so that we can feed copy to the printer all day long. The *Journal* is then printed over night and deliv-

ered the next morning," he explains.

Lists of bills

Five desk staffers also prepare lists of bills under headings like: General Orders (bills awaiting preliminary House action); Calendar (bills awaiting final House action); Consent Calendar (non-controversial bills which usually pass without debate); Special Orders (bills the House can consider, amend, and pass in one day); and Rule 1.10 (bills the Appropriations and Taxes Committee chairs can call up for immediate consideration). The staff publishes committee re-



Edward A. Burdick, chief clerk

photo by Tom Olmscheid

ports and delivers bills the House passed to the Senate and the governor.

People in the Index Department can answer anyone's questions about bills, says Burdick, by referring to their computerized listing of bills and the status of each. The six-member staff also edits and prints the permanent index to the *Journal*.

By visiting the Front Office, people can get copies of bills, amendments, and records of votes on particular bills. "Actually, the staff does much more than hand out copies of bills," says Burdick. All six staff members are trained to explain the legislative process to those who ask, and to answer questions on bills, he says.

People's right to know

"We feel very strongly about the people's right to know," says Burdick. "There is a lot of public contact both at the Front Office and the Index Department, especially during session. People stand in line to get agendas and bills or to ask questions. And," he adds, "all the material we produce is free."

The Third Floor steno pool connects to the House Desk by public address and pneumatic tube systems. Here, seven people prepare messages to the Senate, bill introductions, and committee reports.

When the gavel raps . . .

"Twenty-four staff members plus five more during the session put in many hours," says Burdick. "It's not unusual for them to work 80, 90, even 100 hours a week during session. Before the speaker even raps the gavel, we have to process amendments, motions, introductions, messages from the Senate, and committee reports. When the gavel raps at the end of the day, we

begin to prepare the copy for the next day's session."

The Chief Clerk's Office, established when Minnesota became a state in 1858, is the oldest legislative office in Minnesota. Burdick, with the House since 1941, began working at the House Desk in 1947 and became an assistant chief clerk in 1953. House members have elected him chief clerk every session since 1967. ▶

Office of the Revisor of Statutes

700 State Office Building
(612) 296-2868

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes, a joint legislative service agency, provides professional, non-partisan drafting, publication, and related services to the members and staff of the Legislature, the executive departments, and the governor.

An 'Emerald City' view . . .

"The view is spectacular—Minneapolis looks like Emerald City in the distance and the St. Paul skyline is magnificent," says Steven Cross, revisor of statutes, from his new office atop the State Office Building. "Quite a contrast from the old ground floor and basement quarters in the State Capitol. The office runs more efficiently now that the entire staff is in one location," he says.

Staff prepares official paperwork

The revisor's 57-member staff includes 13 attorneys, 1 writing specialist, 5 supervisors, 18 bill drafting and editorial assistants, 7 administrative staff members, 3 messengers, and 5 computer analysts/programmers. "Even though each staff member has an area of expertise, most can do everything. So, we all pull together in preparing the official paperwork for the Minnesota Legislature," says Cross.

Whenever a legislator proposes an idea for a bill, the Revisor's Office puts it in proper legal form for introduction into the House of Representatives and/or the Senate. The staff also writes resolutions, amendments, House committee reports, conference committee reports, and other documents.

The office helps the secretary of the Senate and the chief clerk of the House engross and enroll bills. "The secretary and the clerk will send each amended bill to our office, and using our bill drafting system, we turn out a new edition of the bill (an engrossment) with the amendment incorporated into it," says Cross.

"After a bill has passed both houses and we've inserted the new text, we reprint it on archival paper (an enrollment) and send it on to the governor for his signature," he says.

photo by Tom Olmscheid



Steven Cross, revisor of statutes

Changes happen

The operation has changed in the nine years that Cross has headed the office. One example is the merging of the formerly separate drafting and publications staff. "This enabled us to be much more flexible in meeting peak-load production demands in both the drafting and publications areas. The staff also created the first compilation of the state's administrative rules which, arguably, is the best set of compiled rules in the country," says Cross.

Another change is in computer services which originally supported the office in the limited area of word processing for drafting and publications. "Our computer system is now helping or will be helping with the

production of House and Senate Journals, agendas, and calendars. And work is underway to use the computer for qualitative checks on documents, to automatically engross bills, and to develop a better searching program," says Cross.

Other responsibilities of the office are: examining other states' laws and keeping records on their influences; giving a yearly report on decisions of the Supreme Court or other courts, which may have criticized laws or declared them unconstitutional; and giving advice, upon request, on the instruction or interpretation of statutes.

Three major publications:

- **Minnesota Statutes** - law books published every two years with **Minnesota Statute Supplement** published in the intervening years;
- **Laws of Minnesota** - volume with all bills and resolutions adopted during a particular session; and
- **Minnesota Rules** - compilation of Minnesota's administrative rules, a consolidated index, and other finding aids.

A 1939 statute created the Revisor's Office, making it one of the oldest Minnesota state legislative offices. ▶

Research Department

600 State Office Building
(612) 296-8291

The Research Department of the Minnesota House of Representatives serves House members by: providing professional, non-partisan policy analysis; offering informational, legal, and drafting services; and conducting research projects.

'Now we're all together'

"We were split into two different rooms in the Capitol, and now we are all together in one facility," says Carole Pagones in her third year as director of the Research Department. "Everyone has his or her own office and we have much more space. It's a beautiful facility."

The Research Department, housed in the Capitol since the late '60s, has moved to the sixth floor of the State Office Building. Pagones says the move "was an overall improvement to the department."

'Lawmaking more complex'

During the legislative session, the department provides legislators with information, research, and analysis on bills and laws. It also provides legal opinions on questions related to proposed legislation and conducts legal research and analysis on important, current issues. "When the session is over," says Pagones, "our work is far from done. It's then that our interim research begins."

"Lawmaking is more complex these days," she says. "Members have a higher level of sophistication which means that staff members must be qualified to support them." The 33-member staff includes five administrative support staffers, attorneys, economists, methodologists, and quantitative analysts.

"There is now a strong, new focus on quantitative analysis. It's no longer enough to jot a figure on the back of an envelope; members want to eliminate as much of the guesswork as they can," says Pagones. "Just a year ago, for example, we had

photo by Tom Olmscheid



Carole Pagones, research director

one microcomputer, and now we have eight to help in this process."

Publications are unique

The House Research Department is unique in the types of publications it does, says Pagones. "The type of work that comes out of our office, you will not find produced in the Midwest—nor will you find much of it produced in the nation."

Department publications include:

- **Information Briefs** - short reports for legislators;
- **Reference Books** - large amounts of information in easy-to-use formats for legislators to use as reference manuals or guidebooks;

- **Research Reports** - published results of substantial analytical research studies; and
- **Miscellaneous Publications** - technical papers, formal legal analyses, written committee presentations, bill summaries, House and Senate comparisons, and special requests from legislators.

All of the department's publications are on file in the Legislative Reference Library on the sixth floor of the State Office Building.

Staff anticipates issues

Pagones says the Research Department has so many issues to research during and after the legislative sessions that they have to rate the research in order of importance and immediate need. Under Pagones, the department is working on becoming more proactive and less reactive. This means staff members attempt to anticipate issues and produce research before members request it, instead of producing it in the face of a crisis.

"The work can eat us alive at times," says Pagones, "but I've never heard a complaint. This office has a collection of the most talented, dedicated, and skilled people I've ever had the privilege of working with," she says. "I'm fortunate to be the one who is here." ▶

Legislative Reference Library

645 State Office Building
(612) 296-3398

The Legislative Reference Library (LRL) collects, indexes, and provides information to legislative members and staff, and serves as a depository for all state agency publications.

New location, director

"In our new State Office Building location, we have many more patrons than we did in the Capitol," says Daniel Gjelten, chief of reference services and acting director. "We seem to be getting many walk-ins."

Gjelten feels that the library operation is much more efficient now. "Our circulation has gone up because the shelves and the collection are directly accessible to the patrons," he says.

"A few people here still have a sentimental attachment to the Capitol, and during the session, we're going to miss being closer to the House and Senate floors. But, all in all," he says, "we're very happy about the move."

Besides a new location, the library will have a new director. Judith Field, who headed the general reference department of Michigan's Flint Public Library for the past 13 years, takes on the job early this year. Field has an MA in library science and an MBA in business administration from the University of Michigan.

Patrons ask . . .

"Which states have not ratified the ERA?" "Have there been more accidents since the lowering of the drinking age?" "Do you have material on the pros and cons of capital punishment?"—typical questions in a day's work at the library.

"On a busy day, we answer about 110 questions," says Gjelten. "About 60 percent of our patrons belong to the Legislature or state government agencies, but we have reporters, teachers, students, and constituents calling or coming in all the time."

photo by Tom Olmscheid



Dan Gjelten, LRL acting director*

Not 'a warehouse of dusty books'

"This library is not really comparable to other libraries because of its small size," explains Gjelten. "But libraries are changing, and entering the electronic world. We no longer think of ourselves as a warehouse of dusty books, but rather as a connection between literature and patrons. And the literature doesn't actually have to be here because, with a computer like the one we have, we can search and borrow from almost any library in the country."

In 1983, the library's records became a part of the State University System's on-line catalog, PALS. The on-line, common-word, computer search service gives quick and easy access to the library's collection of books, government publications, and

reports. Other on-line databases are available through DIALOG, NEXIS, and NCSL.

"Speed is a big factor in our library," says Gjelten. "We don't limit ourselves to sitting around waiting for a question. We find out about legislators' interests so that as we scan literature we can notify them immediately about pertinent articles," he says.

Of the library's staff, about six work in the public service area with patrons at the reference and circulation desks. "The rest work behind the scenes in technical services where they acquire and catalog books, maintain subscriptions, pay bills, or work with the State Information Systems Project," says Gjelten.

The LRL collection:

- about 26,000 books, pamphlets, and documents;
- 500 active magazine subscriptions;
- newspaper clippings since 1969 on file by subject, district, state agency or individual's name;

- Minnesota government publications since 1974;
- House and Senate Journals since 1921;
- all bill introductions in the Legislature since 1975;
- the monthly **LRL Checklist** of Minnesota documents; and
- the bi-monthly **LRL Resources** listing of new acquisitions.

The Legislature created the Legislative Reference Library in 1969. ▶

*Dan Gjelten accepted a position with Dayton Hudson Corporation beginning Jan. 13, 1986.

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(612) 296-2146

The House Public Information Office serves the general public with information about the House of Representatives and the legislative process.

'It's where we belong'

After 13 years in the State Capitol, the House Public Information Office has moved to the first floor of the State Office Building.

"We're right across the street from the Capitol, just inside the main entrance to the State Office Building, in Room 175," says Jean Steiner, House information officer. "We can say only positive things about the move. All our members have their offices here, so we feel that, as a public service of the House, it's where we belong."

Office serves 4,000,000

The office serves members and their constituents, which means, Steiner says, four-million-plus people in the state. The office staff follows legislation from introduction to the governor's signature and publishes the information weekly during the legislative session. Throughout the time between sessions, information services continue, the staff tracks interim meetings and studies, and summarizes it all in this magazine.

The office is also responsible for informational materials about the lawmaking process, how to contact

elected representatives, and helpful facts about the state and its government. "It's an effort on the part of the House to help people learn about the process, and find their way around state government," says Steiner, "an effort we hope leads to public participation. 'Government is for everyone. Be a part of it,' is our information program's theme."

The House Public Information Office outreach program includes sponsoring a booth at the State Fair for the public (see page 22) and a Media Day for journalists from all over the state.

photo by Tom Olmscheid



Jean Steiner, legislative information officer

"The idea behind Media Day," says Steiner, "is to help reporters, new to the Legislature, learn how the process works. We walk them through the process as 'legislators for a day.'" She says reaction to Media Day has been good and that other states have "picked up our idea."

The beginning

It all began in 1969 when the House of Representatives, by resolution, decided to have a non-partisan information office. Two people held the information officer position for brief periods of time, and intermittently, the position was vacant. Steiner came in December of 1973.

"Since the present program began, the public has responded with enthusiasm," says Steiner. "Few states had information offices 13 years ago. And the Minnesota House program, with its efforts to educate constituents, was unique. We've tested the water, so to speak, which makes other states feel secure about adapting our ideas," she says.

The success of the office, says Steiner, comes from the dedication of its staff, past and present, the support and cooperation of House leadership, members and staff, all of the House departments, the media, and the public.

Write or call House Info for these publications:

- **The Session Weekly** - newsletter that highlights legislative action, lists bill introductions and advance committee schedules;
- **Session Summary** - magazine that summarizes all bills that become law during each session
- **Interim** - magazine that covers legislative activity between sessions;
- **New Laws** - magazine that reviews new laws passed during each session;
- **Informational brochures** - "How a Bill Becomes Law in Minnesota" and others;
- **Chamber seating charts** - House and Senate; and
- **Membership directories** - House and Senate. ■

Government is for everyone . . .

Be a part of it

For information on:

- who your representative is;
- legislators' districts, addresses, phone numbers;
- bills;
- committee meeting schedules;
- committee action; and
- other questions about state government

contact the
House Public Information Office
(612) 296-2146

Committee Hotline: (612) 296-9283

24-Hour Bill Status Information: (612) 297-1264

Minnesota House of Representatives



Publication of House Public Information Office
175 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155 • (612) 296-2146

Speaker of the House: David M. Jennings
Majority Leader: Connie Levi
Minority Leader: Fred C. Norton