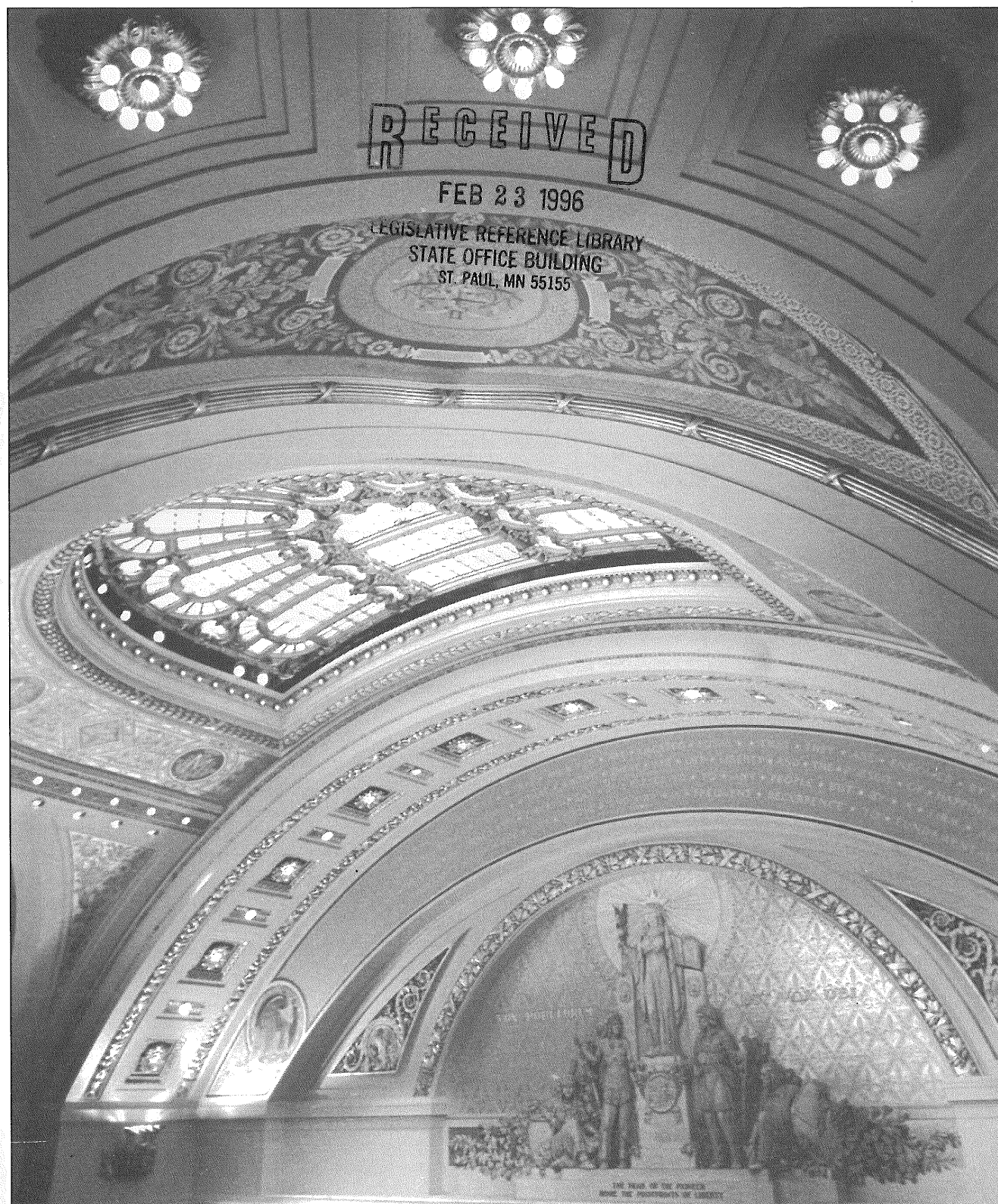


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SESSION WEEKLY

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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • February 23, 1996 • Volume 13, Number 6

Week at a glance

Interest rate hike — Minnesota banks would be able to charge higher interest rates on credit cards they issue under a bill passed by the House Feb. 21.

The vote was 80-51. Page 5

Protecting computer users — Minnesotans who subscribe to on-line computer information services would have greater privacy under a bill approved Feb. 16 by a House committee. Page 7

Investigating physicians — Investigating Minnesota physicians accused of sexual misconduct would become a more open process under a bill approved Feb. 16 by a House committee. Page 8

Expediting visitation — Minnesota parents who have been illegally denied visitation with their children would be able to more easily gain their rights under a bill approved by a House committee. Page 12

Higher education budget bill — The House Education Committee approved \$10 million for campus-based technology, a pilot job skills program and a statewide on-line information library as part of the higher education budget bill. Page 15

Omnibus Human Services — Hundreds of disabled Minnesotans who expected to be cut from a program that helps them live independently at home instead of in a state institution may be spared the budget ax. A \$21 million Health and Human Services supplemental budget bill contains \$7.8 million to restore cuts made by the 1995 Legislature. It won approval from the House Health and Human Services Committee Feb. 22. Page 16

Liquor tax increase — A 3-percent increase in the sales tax levied on alcohol in Minnesota bars and liquor stores would be partially earmarked for chemical dependency treatment under a bill considered Feb. 19 by a House panel. The proposal would increase the state sales tax on liquor and 3.2 beer from 9 percent to 12 percent. The tax would apply to liquor sold by the drink and by the bottle. Page 19

Money-back license guarantee — A bill to encourage the state to make obtaining a driver's license hassle-free won approval from the House Economic Development, Infrastructure and Regulation Finance Committee. Under the proposal, if hassles were to ensue, applicants would be compensated for their frustration. Page 20

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On the cover: Much of the legislative action during the next several weeks will switch from committee hearing rooms to beneath the dome of the House chamber, as daily floor sessions begin Feb. 26.

— Photo by Tom Olmscheid

Highlights

Omnibus crime bill . . .

Lawmakers urge tougher gun laws, stiffer sentences

A bill that bans certain convicted felons from owning a handgun for life, establishes a college-student monitoring program for juvenile delinquents, and makes it more difficult for people to conceal an arrest or conviction record is moving through the House.

HF2161, sponsored by Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), chair of the House Judiciary Committee, contains the omnibus crime bill. It currently awaits official action by the Judiciary Finance Division which is expected to fold the crime bill into the 1996 supplemental budget bill for criminal justice.

The budget bill, which has not yet been assigned a bill number, was not completed by press time for this edition of *Session Weekly* and was expected to be available sometime Feb. 23.

Below are some of the crime bill's highlights:

Tougher gun penalties

Certain convicted felons could not own a handgun for life and anyone carrying a firearm without a permit would face a felony charge rather than a gross misdemeanor charge.

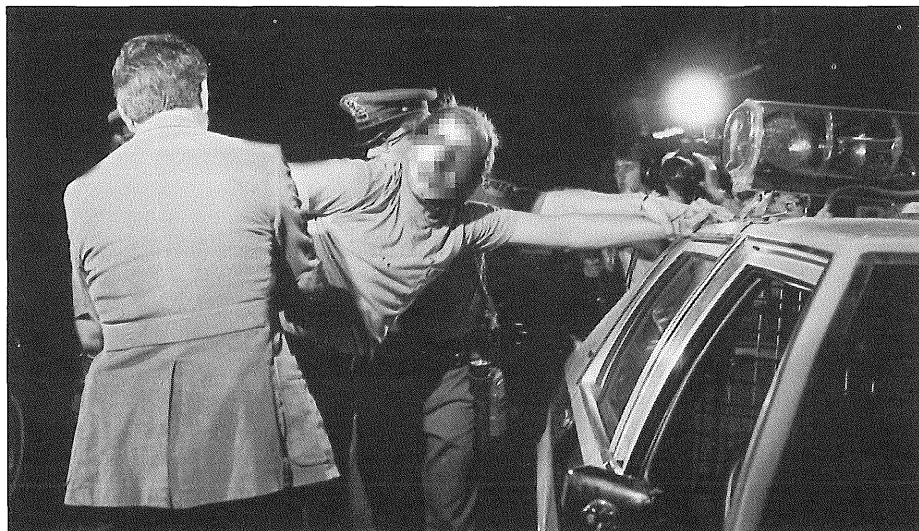
The tough new gun penalties come in the wake of mounting gun violence in Minnesota's inner cities as well as in rural towns.

The provisions, originally part of **HF2578** by Skoglund, are not designed to limit the rights of law-abiding citizens to own a gun, but punish criminals caught with guns, Skoglund has said.

The provisions are timely considering the recent shooting death of a St. Joseph police officer and the imprisonment of a Fargo-Moorhead family by gunmen.

Under these provisions:

- Those convicted of a crime of violence (a category which includes more than two dozen offenses, such as murder, various degrees of assault, robbery, kidnapping, criminal sexual misconduct, burglary, harassment and stalking) would be banned from possessing a handgun or an assault weapon for the rest of their lives. Currently, those individuals have to wait 10



Lawmakers continue their tough stance on crime with a new bill that would require Minnesotans convicted of stalking or violating protection orders to surrender their pistols for three years. It also would deny certain convicted felons the right to own a handgun for life and make it a three-year felony to possess a code-grabbing device with the intent to use it to commit a crime.

years after their sentence expires to legally possess those weapons.

- Certain kinds of felony theft would be added to the list of "crimes of violence" prohibiting those individuals from possessing a handgun or assault weapon for life.
- A felon who has been convicted of a crime of violence who is later found to be illegally possessing a firearm would receive a mandatory prison sentence of at least three years and a maximum of 20 years.

This provision is loudly applauded by county prosecutors who say it will make their jobs easier. Under the provision, it doesn't matter if the felon is using the firearm to commit another crime or has it sitting in his or her car — it is an automatic three-year minimum sentence.

- The penalty for carrying a handgun without a permit would increase from a gross misdemeanor to a felony, punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. The attorney general's office would receive \$500,000 to run a public information campaign on gun violence.

Penalizing abusers

Minnesotans convicted of stalking or violating protection orders would have to surrender their pistols for three years.

The provision also specifies that if defendants in such cases use a firearm while violating the protection order or stalking a victim, they will be required to surrender the gun and could be barred from owning any firearm for the rest of their lives.

"In 1995, 25 Minnesota women were killed by people who supposedly loved them," Ellen Ade of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women told the House Judiciary Committee. "[With this provision], we will never know how many lives we've saved; we can only count the ones who died as a result of domestic violence."

The proposal, originally part of **HF2643**, sponsored by Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) contains other elements which include:

- The county in which a domestic abuse offense is committed would conduct a domestic abuse assessment and submit a report to the court for any defendant convicted of domestic abuse or any defendant arrested for domestic abuse but convicted of another crime connected to the incident.

- Defendants sentenced for domestic abuse would be required to pay a \$125 domestic abuse assessment fee.
- Anyone who commits domestic assault knowing that a child younger than 18 is likely to witness the assault would be guilty of a gross misdemeanor, punishable by up to a year in jail and a \$3,000 fine.

Code-grabbing devices

The bill provides a three-year felony penalty for possessing a code-grabbing device with the intent to use it to commit a crime.

Criminals use the devices to gain access to locked cars, garages, and other things that use a remote control and radio wave security code.

Once a home or car owner presses a remote control to open a garage door or unlock a car from a distance, the code grabbing device scrambles to find the code. Once the code is in hand, the criminal can gain easy access to a home or car.

This provision was originally part of **HF2086** sponsored by Skoglund.

Proof of insurance

Currently, Minnesota motorists cited for failing to provide proof of insurance when stopped by police have 10 days to come up with the proof or face a minimum 30-day license suspension and a misdemeanor conviction.

Under the bill, citizens would have until the day of their first court appearance to provide proof. Often a first court appearance is scheduled 10 to 21 days after a ticket is issued.

Proof of insurance usually consists of a letter or policy card provided by an insurance agent.

Rep. Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) has explained that current law confuses drivers because their tickets record both the date of the offense and the date of their court appearance. Trouble is, they wait until the court hearing to present proof and miss the 10-day deadline.

Pugh, who sponsored the proposal originally as **HF1224**, said there are more than 1,000 cases each year that result in license suspensions when the drivers actually have proof of insurance but present it too late.

Currently, some judges dismiss a license suspension if a driver shows up to the first court appearance with proof of insurance. Other judges, however, stand by the minimum 30-day suspension simply because drivers missed the 10-day deadline.

Under the law, if a person is stopped without proof of insurance and indeed has

none, the license suspension will stay in effect at least 30 days and until they can prove they have purchased insurance.

Guns and kids

An adult who negligently stores a loaded firearm that ends up in the hands of someone under age 18 would be guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

Current law applies only to minors under the age of 14.

Sponsored by Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) as **HF3030**, the much-debated firearms bill was significantly weakened when a provision to require guns and ammunition to be locked and stored separately in households with minors was defeated.

Guns on buses

To combat continued crime on public buses, the bill would increase the penalty for firing a gun "in" a public transit vehicle or facility.

The proposal expands current law which makes it a crime to recklessly discharge a firearm "at" a public transit vehicle or facility.

Penalties would range from up to a three-year felony and a \$6,000 fine to up to a five-year felony and a \$10,000 fine, depending on whether the vehicle or facility was occupied by individuals other than the offender.

The provision stems from recent incidents of gunfire inside buses and transit stations.

In addition, the proposal, originally spon-

Sexual conduct

The bill expands the definition of "sexual contact" in state law to include instances when a person causes another to touch the person's intimate body parts.

The provision, originally part of **HF2538** sponsored by Rep. Bill Macklin (R-Lakeville), was prompted by a Dakota County case in which prosecutors couldn't charge a boy who placed a girl's hand on an intimate part of his body. Such an offense would be fifth degree criminal sexual conduct under the bill.

Aiding juvenile delinquents

A \$250,000 program to pair up college and graduate students with juvenile delinquents in an effort to keep teens on the right track is also a part of the omnibus crime bill.

The program, originally part of **HF2360** sponsored by Skoglund, would establish four separate two-year pilot programs across the state.

College students would work with a juvenile's probation officer and serve as a "big brother" or a "big sister" to a teen who has committed, or is at risk for committing, delinquent acts or crimes.

"After-care is not going on with kids who enter the [criminal and court] system," Skoglund has said.

The Department of Corrections would determine the particulars of the monitoring program. In addition, the department would work with colleges and universities to estab-

"In 1995, 25 Minnesota women were killed by people who supposedly loved them . . . [With this provision], we will never know how many lives we've saved; we can only count the ones who died as a result of domestic violence."

—Ellen Ade of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

sored as **HF2034** by Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park), would increase the maximum felony penalty for intentionally discharging a firearm under "dangerous circumstances" to five years imprisonment, up from the current two-year penalty. (Dangerous circumstances are defined by the jury in any given case.)

Under current law, it is a felony, punishable by a maximum of five years imprisonment and a \$10,000 fine, to intentionally discharge a firearm in a school zone, park zone, or public housing project.

Tom Sather, of the Metropolitan Council Transit Operations, has said gun fire on MCTO property is "happening with an alarming degree of frequency."

lish the criteria for which college students can participate in the program, what kind of training they should receive, and how they should be compensated.

Skoglund has said he envisioned paying college students \$7 or \$7.50 an hour. Their responsibilities could include checking on the juvenile in the morning, reminding them about homework, checking on them after school to ensure they're not hanging out with the wrong crowd, and helping them with homework several times a week.

The college student would then report back to the probation officer so the officer could determine which juveniles need more help.

It is also possible, he said, that some col-

leges would offer credit to students who participate in the program, which would be ideal for those majoring in criminal justice, education, psychology, social work, and other fields.

Indecent exposure

Under the omnibus bill, it would be a felony to commit a second indecent exposure offense in the presence of a minor under age 16. Under current law, the penalty is a gross misdemeanor regardless of how many times the offense is repeated. The maximum penalty would increase from a one-year jail sentence and a \$3,000 fine to a five-year prison sentence and a \$10,000 fine.

The proposal was originally sponsored as **HF2506** by Skoglund.

"Kiddie porn"

Another section of the bill would expand the state's sex offender registration law to include individuals who are convicted of or adjudicated guilty for a "kiddie porn" offense or another offense arising out of the same set of circumstances.

Minnesota law requires certain sex offenders to register their address with a probation officer for at least 10 years following release from a Minnesota prison. Individuals convicted of sex offenses in other states who choose to move to Minnesota also are required to register.

The proposal was originally sponsored as **HF2029** by Skoglund.

Assessing crime impact

In addition to considering public safety and the number of available prison beds, the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission should take into account the "adverse social and economic impacts" crime has on the community when adjusting prison sentence guidelines.

That provision was the original **HF2161** sponsored by Skoglund and became the vehicle for the omnibus crime bill.

Skoglund has acknowledged that this provision is "not going to make a giant-size difference," but said it was important for the commission to look at exactly what crime does to a community.

Many crimes, such as drug dealing, affect whether children can play in the yard, a worker can safely wait for a bus on a street corner, a business can operate, and even the market value of neighborhood homes.

Skoglund has said he isn't necessarily looking for longer sentences. Instead, he'd like the sentences already on the books to be enforced. In addition, he said, he hopes the bill

might help prevent the commission from watering down current sentence guidelines.

In 1995, some on the commission moved to reduce sentences for certain drug offenses. It did not succeed.

The commission recommends to the Legislature sentencing guidelines for trial court judges. The guidelines are advisory to the judges, who can (and do) depart upward and downward from the recommendations depending on individual circumstances.

Expunging criminal records

It would be more difficult for people to conceal an arrest or conviction record under the bill.

People petition the courts to have their records expunged for a variety of reasons — some were arrested but never charged, others were charged but found not guilty. There are also cases where an individual who was found guilty wants the record sealed for personal or employment reasons.

Law enforcement agencies and prosecutors generally oppose the practice because it takes records and information out of the system that could provide leads in current and future criminal investigations.

Under the provision, expungement would be defined as sealing a record and opening it only under a court order or statutory authority. It would not include the complete destruction of arrest or conviction records or their return to the defendant.

Currently, there is no definition on the books and the provision tries to address some existing case law that allows judges to return records to defendants or have them destroyed.

The measure was sponsored originally as **HF2215** by Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center).

Carruthers, a prosecutor, has called himself a "conservative" on expungements and said that while it may not be constitutionally possible to prohibit expungements, it is possible to limit them.

His provision would set out a uniform procedure for people who petition to have their records sealed. Currently, procedures differ depending on the judicial district.

Under the proposal, an individual would have to:

- file a petition under oath and pay the regular civil filing fee;
- provide not only their full legal name but aliases as well;
- provide all addresses from the date of the offense or alleged offense to the date of the petition;
- explain why they want their records expunged and specifically if it is to help them

obtain a job or a license. Many professions rely on criminal history checks such as teachers, child care workers, and police officers. And, those checks also are necessary when applying for some licenses such as gambling, insurance sales, and liquor licenses;

- explain, in the case of a conviction, what steps he or she has taken since the crime toward rehabilitation;
- provide a complete criminal conviction record including all convictions for misdemeanors, gross misdemeanors, and felonies in Minnesota as well as all comparable convictions across the country and the world; and
- include information on all prior requests for expungement in Minnesota, the United States, or the world; whether granted or not.

The provision goes on to set a new standard that expungement would be granted "only upon clear and convincing evidence that it would yield a benefit to the petitioner commensurate with the disadvantages to the public . . ."

Sealed records would be opened only by court order or with statutory authority and the bill spells out several specific circumstances. For instance, records could be opened for a criminal investigation, prosecution, and to evaluate a police officer job applicant or other public safety employee.

In addition, the provision would repeal a law that states a person convicted of a felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor before age 21 may have their record sealed under certain circumstances.

— K. Darcy Hanzlik



BANKING

Interest rate hike

Minnesota banks would be able to charge higher interest rates on credit cards they issue under a bill approved Feb. 21 by the House. The vote was 80-51.

The omnibus financial institutions bill (**HF2369**), sponsored by Rep. Don Ostrom (DFL-St. Peter), would allow financial institutions in the state to charge up to 21.75 percent interest annually on credit cards.

Current state law caps the credit card interest rate for Minnesota financial institutions at 18 percent.

The catch is that federal law does not allow the state to limit the interest on credit cards issued to Minnesotans by financial institutions in other states. And most other states

allow higher interest rates than Minnesota currently does.

As a result, very little issuing of credit cards is done in the state. Most Minnesota banks that do offer credit cards make arrangements with out-of-state financial institutions so higher rates can be charged.

Supporters claim allowing a higher interest rate in Minnesota will simplify business for financial institutions in the state. And proponents say the change could help create more jobs in the state.

The omnibus bill also includes a measure crafted to make "payday loans" more attractive to lenders and consumers.

A 1995 law permits small, tightly regulated, short-term consumer loans. The law sets maximum interest rates and other charges for "payday loans," named for the paycheck-to-paycheck consumers they may benefit.

The law allows the loans to be for no more than \$350 and requires a 30-day term.

Ostrom's bill would give lenders more flexibility by allowing shorter terms for the loans.

HF2369 now goes to the Senate.



BONDING

New science museum

The Science Museum of Minnesota's plans to construct a new museum on St. Paul's waterfront hinge on the financial support of outside sources, including the state.

The museum is seeking \$33.8 million from the state to be included in the 1996 bonding bill.

Museum officials on Feb. 20 presented their plans to the House Capital Investment Committee, which is now working to compile this year's bonding bill.

The city of St. Paul already has promised to acquire the land for the museum and to provide \$10.5 million for construction. The rest of the project's \$96 million price tag would come from private donors.

"It's everybody kind of leaning on everyone else," said Jim Peterson, president of the science museum.

So far, the museum project has won support from state officials.

Gov. Arne Carlson included the full amount requested for the museum in his 1996 bonding recommendations. He touted the museum as "nothing short of a statewide treasure" during his January State of the State Address.

"[A new museum] will serve as a draw for the entire area, bringing worldwide tourists

and economic vitality with it," Carlson said. "The science museum models how interdependent quality of life and economic success are."

The House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee followed suit by including the full \$33.8 million for the museum in **HF3198**, the committee bonding recommendations bill sponsored by Rep. Chuck Brown (DFL-Appleton).

The science museum project is considered by many as a crucial step in the effort to revitalize St. Paul's riverfront. The new facility would be built into the river bluff east of the Civic Center parking ramp in downtown St. Paul.

Peterson told members of the committee that the museum has outgrown its current downtown facility.

The new building would provide more space and more flexible space to accommodate changing uses. Outdoor walkways and plazas would more closely connect the museum to the Mississippi River and create new opportunities for programs associated with the river.

"It will become an attractive, engaging, and lively place for people to come and learn," Peterson said.

The museum also plans to spend \$5 million to build a parking ramp serving the new building, which would alleviate a common complaint about the current facility.

Rep. Henry Kalis (DFL-Walters), who chairs the committee, expressed concern that construction of a new museum will result in increased requests for future operating expenses.

Peterson said he expects enough revenue to be generated through membership fees, admission charges, and other sources to cover increases in operating costs.

Museum attendance is expected to jump from 900,000 visitors a year at the current site to as many as 1.5 million at the new facility.

The committee took no action on the museum's request. If the museum does receive state funding, construction at the new site of the new building could begin this fall and it could open in fall 1999.



BUSINESS

Playing our song

Copyright owners of songs would sing a new tune under a bill passed by the full House Feb. 19. The vote was 132-0.

Sponsor Rep. Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) said the bill puts some order in the

process in which performing rights societies, such as the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), enter into contracts with businesses that play their music for commercial gain.

Under federal copyright laws, there is a royalty charge for playing copyright-protected music for commercial gain in bars, hotels, restaurants, and other businesses. This charge and the manner of its collection has been the cause of many disputes over the years, according to business owners and artist representatives.

The bill (**HF732**) would prohibit societies from attempting to collect rates that are higher than those set forth in contracts. Under the bill, the copyright holders would have to provide the schedule of rates and the list of works that are covered by the contract at least 72 hours before entering a contract. Representatives of societies also would have to identify themselves to proprietors upon entering affected establishments.

The bill would not apply to contracts between copyright owners or performance societies and broadcasters licensed by the FCC or to contracts with cable operators, programmers, or other transmission services. Musical works for karaoke performances are exempt as well, according to the bill.

Pugh stressed that the legislation is a compromise between artists and bars, restaurants, and the hospitality industry.

HF732 now moves to the Senate.



CHILDREN

Amending adoption rules

Minnesota laws governing adoption would undergo a number of changes under a bill approved Feb. 16 by the House Judiciary Committee.

HF2069, sponsored by Rep. Linda Wejcman (DFL-Mpls), would:

- allow grandparents in stepparent adoption cases to petition the court for a visitation order. The court, in turn, would determine whether visits by a child's grandparents would be in the best interests of the child and would not interfere with the parent-child relationship;
- require that a birth parent who intends to give up a child for adoption give notice to the other birth parent either before the adoption or within 72 hours of placing the child. The birth parent who receives the notice would have 60 days after placement of the child to either consent or refuse to consent to the adoption;

- limit criminal background checks on prospective adoptive parents and everyone else 13 and older living in the home to the previous 10 years. When the Legislature made criminal background checks mandatory in 1994, the law included no time frame.

The background checks would seek to uncover substantiated cases of maltreatment of a child or a vulnerable adult and domestic violence information from law enforcement agencies, social services offices and district courts. For every person in the home younger than 25, juvenile court records would be examined;

- allow prospective adoptive parents to pay for transportation, meals and lodging related to payment of counseling, medical and legal fees, which are now permitted under state law. The bill also would remove a six-week limitation for paying pregnancy-related expenses of the birth mother;
- make adoption records public on the 75th anniversary of the granting of the adoption decree; and
- allow the state health commissioner to provide adoptees age 65 and older who were adopted before Aug. 1, 1982, with information contained in his or her original birth certificate, unless the birth parent has filed an unrevoked affidavit that they don't want the information disclosed.

Wejcman told lawmakers that **HF2069** is the product of a year of work by a task force charged with revising and updating the state's adoption laws.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), chair of the House Judiciary Committee, told members that, because of the work that went into the legislation and the compromises involved, the bill will be laid over until next session if other lawmakers attempt to amend it when it reaches the House floor.

HF2069 now moves to the House floor.



CONSUMERS

Protecting computer users

Minnesotans who subscribe to on-line computer information services would have greater privacy under a bill approved Feb. 16 by a House committee.

Under **HF2816**, sponsored by Rep. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins), purveyors of on-line services would be required to get a subscriber's permission before selling or disseminating any personal information about the subscriber.

Kelley's bill was approved by the House Judiciary Committee after Kelley offered an

amendment that narrowed the bill's focus.

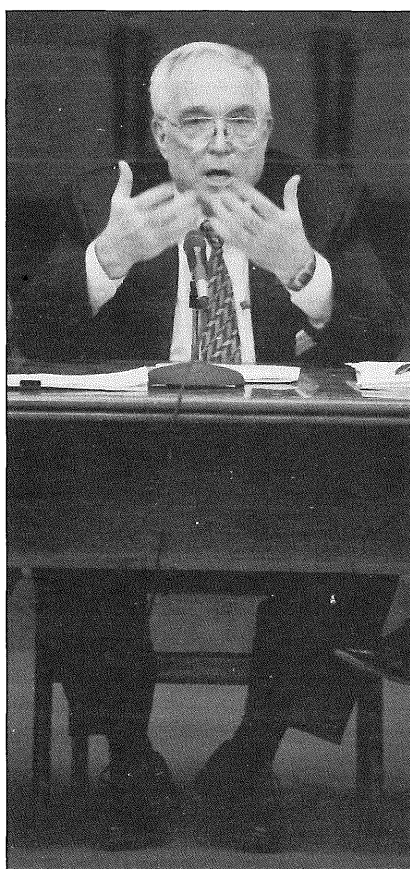
"We're talking here about a person who pays for an information service, not a person who purchases goods or services through it," Kelley told the Judiciary Committee.

Kelley compared **HF2816** to a bill passed by the 1994 Legislature that prohibits video rental companies from disseminating information about their customers and the videos they rent.

The owners and operators of on-line information services have the potential to amass a huge amount of information about on-line users' preferences in a variety of areas, according to Kelley.

Under Kelley's legislation, on-line service providers would be prohibited from disseminating information that identifies:

- a person by his or her home or electronic address or telephone number;
- a person as having requested or received specific materials or services from an information service;



Chuck Williams, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency commissioner, testified in support of a bill before the Environment and Natural Resources Committee Feb. 16 that would establish the Minnesota XL program. The program offers companies the flexibility needed to meet environmental standards beyond what the state currently requires.

- Internet sites visited by a subscriber; or
- any of the contents of a subscriber's data storage services.

HF2816 specifies that the only information an on-line service is allowed to seek by law is a subscriber's name, home telephone number, home address and electronic address. Any other requested information may be given at the customer's discretion.

The bill now heads to the House floor.

(See Feb. 16, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 7)

Protecting immigrants

A bill that requires notary publics hired by non-English speaking immigrants to advertise that they are not licensed attorneys passed the House Feb. 22. The vote was 132-0.

HF2478 was prompted by more than two dozen reported incidents of notary publics abusing their authority, often involving immigration paperwork cases, said sponsor Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul).

Because notary public means "super attorney" in Spanish, Mariani said many Spanish-speaking immigrants mistakenly believe notaries are the same as attorneys.

"This is a problem here in Minnesota and even more of a problem in other states," Mariani has said, adding that states with higher Spanish-speaking populations have seen thousands of cases of fraud by notary publics.

In addition to the advertising provision, the bill requires a written contract (in both English and the customer's native language) that explains services to be performed, all charges, and a statement that the documents provided by the customer cannot be kept by the notary public for any reason — not even to guarantee payment.

Besides stating that they are not attorneys, the signs posted by notary publics must be in every language in which the notary does business and state that he or she cannot give legal advice or accept money for legal advice. The signs must also state that the contract can be canceled within three working days.

Besides the ban on giving legal advice, the bill prohibits notary publics from stating they have special influence with immigration authorities and from using a title that implies they are a special immigration experts.

The bill carries a misdemeanor penalty for the first offense and a gross misdemeanor penalty for any subsequent offense within five years.

HF2478 now heads to the Senate.



CRIME

Penalizing domestic abusers

Minnesotans convicted more than once of domestic assault would be more severely penalized under legislation approved Feb. 16 by a House committee.

Under **HF2325**, sponsored by Rep. Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), anyone convicted of gross misdemeanor domestic assault would be sentenced to a mandatory minimum of 20 days in jail, with eight of them required to be served continuously.

Those convicted of felony domestic assault would be required to spend at least 45 days in jail, 15 of them continuously.

"I don't think I need to provide a lecture on the importance of addressing the problems of domestic assault and domestic violence," Pawlenty told members of the House Judiciary Committee.

Pawlenty said his research has found that prosecutors across Minnesota are concerned about "lenient or inconsistent" treatment of repeat domestic assault offenders.

Pawlenty was echoed by Sharon Hills, an assistant city attorney in Apple Valley, Minn., for the last five years. "I've seen the same faces come through our office repeatedly for domestic assault," she said. "And it's rare that a defendant with prior convictions receives any jail time whatsoever."

"I've become disheartened by this. A repeat drunk driver in Minnesota would see more time in jail than a person convicted of domestic abuse."

Current law mandates a minimum of 30 days in jail for repeat convicted drunk drivers, but no mandatory minimum jail term for Minnesotans convicted more than once of domestic assault.

One reason for that, Hills said, is that repeat drunk drivers are most often sentenced to home detention with electronic monitoring. For obvious reasons, those convicted of domestic assault are not eligible for home detention.

Research done by the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women has found that most residents convicted of domestic assault receive supervised probation sentences, with little or no jail time. The system is "failing to hold domestic abusers accountable," at the expense of battered women and their children, coalition spokeswoman Patty Schneider told the committee.

Schneider referred to last week's murder of Kami Talley, who was gunned down in her Twin Cities workplace. Police suspect her ex-

boyfriend, Louis Buggs, in the murder; Buggs, who served three months in the workhouse last year after beating Talley, remains at large.

"Minnesota women are not safe on our streets, in their workplaces and definitely not in their homes," Schneider said. "We need to make sitting in jail the consequence of choosing to assault again."

Committee members approved **HF2325** and referred it to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Offering drug treatment

Minnesota law officers would be able to knock on the doors of so-called crack houses and offer chemical dependency treatment to addicts under a bill considered by a House committee.

The House Judiciary Finance Committee approved **HF2038**, sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls), on Feb. 19.

The project, modeled after a similar program in New Haven, Conn., is specifically aimed at cleaning up a south Minneapolis neighborhood where a crack cocaine "epidemic" has been identified, Clark told lawmakers.

Technically, police officers already have the authority to offer such assistance. But Clark wants a "street outreach and assessment pilot program" to target the troubled area.

"We want to do strong intervention at the street level that hasn't been done before," she said.

Many of the people who spend their time in crack houses, particularly women with children, find themselves in an "intimidating" situation and don't know how to extricate themselves, Clark said. Sometimes elderly people have their houses taken over by crack users and become addicted themselves, but "don't know there's anyone out there who cares about them," she said.

Under the program, officers would be able to approach homes that have been identified as crack houses and offer to transport crack users to treatment programs. If they refuse, Clark said, the officers can come back a second time and arrest those who are using crack.

Clark's bill, originally intended to allow police or health officers to transport anyone "intoxicated by alcohol or controlled substances," was substantially amended after the crack emergency in south Minneapolis was identified.

"We need to do something to deal with this barrage of problems, and this is a good place

to start," Clark told the committee.

HF2038 will be considered for inclusion in the omnibus crime prevention and judiciary finance bill.

Suing a public nuisance

A bill that would allow a property owner or neighborhood group to file a civil nuisance suit and seek monetary damages against a drug dealer, prostitute, john, or other individual, passed the House Feb. 19. The vote was 132-0.

Under current law, only a prosecutor can file a nuisance action which usually involves trying to shut down a property or evict a tenant for two separate incidents in a 12-month period involving gambling, prostitution, or drug and firearms offenses outlined in law.

HF2204 proposes to open the door for citizens to sue, seek monetary damages, and combat "nuisance behavior" that is not necessarily tied to one specific building.

Under the bill, sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), to win a nuisance civil action it must be proven that the individual has two or more convictions within the previous 12 months for prostitution, illegal gambling, keeping a disorderly house, drug dealing, or another offense listed in the existing nuisance law. Or, "two or more separate behavioral incidents within the previous 12-months that would constitute a nuisance" under existing law must be proven.

If a suit is won, the court must permanently prohibit the perpetrator from continuing the activity and award actual damages or \$500, whichever is greater. In cases where a homeowner or neighborhood group wins, defendants would be forced to pay their attorneys fees. (See Feb. 9, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 6)

HF2204 now goes to the Senate.

Investigating physicians

Investigating Minnesota physicians accused of sexual misconduct would become a more open process under a bill approved Feb. 16 by a House committee.

HF2633, sponsored by Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls), would require a probable cause hearing to be held before an administrative law judge in cases where a doctor is accused of sexual misconduct.

Current law requires no such hearing.

If a judge determines that the physician is guilty of violating Board of Medical Practices rules governing such behavior, the notice of

and order for hearing filed by the board would become public, allowing other victims to come forward with new information for the board to consider.

"The major thrust of this legislation is to increase the ability of the board to inform the public," Robert Leach, the board's executive director, told the House Judiciary Committee.

Leach said the bill also would improve the board's ability to keep complainants and victims — who are not always the same in such cases — informed of the progress of an investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct.

Under current law, only the person filing the complaint can be given information about the status of an investigation.

HF2633 would provide that probable cause hearings be closed to the public. However, the board must make public a notice of the hearing; findings of fact, conclusions, and recommendations issued by the administrative law judge and arguments before the board in cases where the judge finds a violation of the state's sexual misconduct rules; and any final order of the board.

The bill would add a seven-year statute of limitations for all complaints filed with the Minnesota Board of Medical Practice except for sexual misconduct cases, which would be subject to no statute of limitations.

HF2633 now moves to the full House.

No cloning allowed

A bill to make it a crime to engage in cellular phone "cloning" was passed by the House Feb. 19. The vote was 131-0.

The bill (**HF2526**), sponsored by Rep. Chuck Brown (DFL-Appleton), addresses what phone company officials say has become an increasingly popular crime.

Cellular phone cloning — or counterfeiting — would be a felony under the bill, punishable by up to five years imprisonment and a \$10,000 fine. Current statute prohibits cellular phone eavesdropping but does not specifically address any other wireless phone violations.

"Cellular phone cloning is a \$500 million illegal industry. . . . This is a very, very serious issue, and I believe as a public policy it warrants our attention," Brown has said.

Cellular phone cloning occurs when someone acquires a phone identification number — assigned by the manufacturer — and alters it. Cloners either use the number or provide it to a computer network system for others to use. Some use a combination of

scanners, cables, computer chips, and software to create identification numbers themselves.

(See Feb. 2, 1996, *SessionWeekly*, page 8)
HF2526 now heads to the Senate.



EDUCATION

Omnibus education proposal

A \$26 million education spending proposal headed for the House floor aims to bolster technology in Minnesota's public schools and to provide new programs for the state's most needy students.

The omnibus education bill (**HF2156**), sponsored by Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park), was approved Feb. 21 by the House Ways and Means Committee.

The proposal does not include funding for some of Gov. Arne Carlson's education initiatives, and the bill would spend about half of what the governor recommended.

Left out were the \$15 million Carlson proposed to spend on a school voucher pilot program and money for computer hardware and other programs.

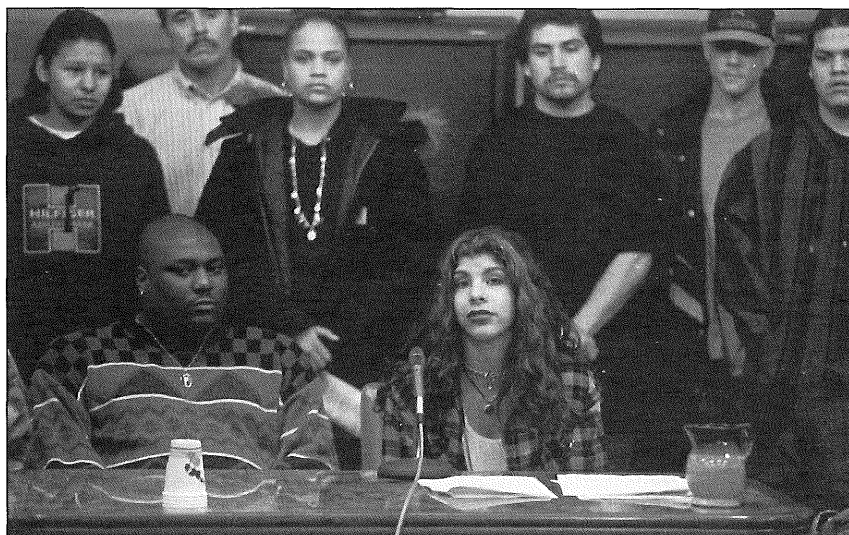
The bill would spend \$11 million to bolster the use of technology and would devote funds to after-school programs, full-day kindergarten, and other projects designed to help disadvantaged students. (See Feb. 16, 1996, *SessionWeekly*, page 17)

Here's a look at the bill's major provisions.

- A total of \$11 million would be spent on technology programs. Most of that money

— some \$8 million — would be used to expand Internet access in schools and libraries. Another \$1.4 million would be devoted to training teachers in the use of technology so they can pass on those skills to their students. Another \$1 million would be offered in grants to school districts, private schools, and community organizations that operate after-school programs giving children access to computers.

- Under the bill, \$3.2 million in grant funding would allow certain schools to offer full-day kindergarten or to provide half-day kindergarten for four-year-olds. Schools with the highest percentage of students on free and reduced-price lunch programs would be first in line to receive a share of the grant money.
- Children in some of the state's poorest areas would be the beneficiaries of \$2.5 million for after-school programs. Grants would support programs run by community organizations in three Minneapolis and three St. Paul neighborhoods that meet criteria to be set by the Department of Children, Families, and Learning. Up to 10 percent of the grant money would go to programs in neighborhoods outside of Minneapolis and St. Paul.
- School sites would have more authority to make budget and programming decisions. Under the bill, school site councils would control a small share of the per pupil revenue given to districts, and the site councils would be eligible to receive additional grant funding from the state.
- The bill includes \$1.7 million for continued



Veronica Zubiran, right, a student in the pre-apprentice carpentry program at the Youthbuild Skills School in Minneapolis, told the House Capitol Investment Committee Feb. 21 how important it is to offer youth job-training opportunities. Project leader Willy Wallace, left, once a student of the program, also testified before the panel along with other students and teachers.

development of the state's graduation rule, but the bill would narrow the scope of the graduation standards. Minimum proficiency tests would be limited to the subjects of math, reading, and writing. Assessment of performance in the other subjects would be shifted from minimum standards testing to the Profile of Learning, a broad analysis of each student's overall performance.

The House Education Committee on Feb. 16 deleted language in the bill that would have made it easier to expel students who step out of line at school.

The provision would have allowed schools to schools to expel students for violations of sexual, religious, or racial harassment policies or other school conduct policy.



EMPLOYMENT

Job training tax credit

Minnesota businesses that employ workers who are graduates of some job training programs would be eligible for corporate franchise tax credits under a bill considered Feb. 19 by a House panel.

HF3203, sponsored by Rep. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope), would allow participating Minnesota companies credits of up to \$20,000 per trainee, including placement and retention fees.

The House Taxes Committee's Sales and Income Tax Division took no action on Rest's bill, but will consider it for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

To qualify for the corporate franchise tax credit, training programs would be required to be certified by the state revenue commissioner to meet certain standards.

A program must be operated by a charitable organization and must spend at least \$5,000 on each of its graduates. Education and training must cover basic skills, thinking skills, and "personal qualities" and last at least six months.

Additionally, income supplements must be made available to cover the basic expenses incurred by trainees, who must be older than 18, have earned less than \$10,000 in income in the previous two years, and have less than \$5,000 in assets. They cannot be dependents of others.

The jobs in which graduates are placed must pay at least \$9 an hour in the first year and \$10 an hour in the second and third years.

Total available tax credits under the program would be limited to \$1.5 million over

five years.

Representatives of Twin Cities RISE! — a nonprofit job-training program that focuses on applicants who have long histories of unemployment — spoke in support of **HF3203**.

Jackie Copeland-Carson gave lawmakers a hypothetical example of the type of client who would benefit from the Twin Cities RISE! program: a 35-year-old American Indian man, employed between five and 10 years of his adult life, recently released from jail, earning minimum wage, and unable to support his family.

If accepted in the program, the man would undergo an intensive admissions process and would take tests to establish his achievement levels. He would work one-on-one with a coach to establish a development plan, and then would become involved in training while holding a part-time job.

"This is not just a job placement program; we give people the skills they need to get and keep a job," Copeland-Carson said. "Our long-term goal is to have an impact on poverty."

Livable wage

A bill requiring certain companies that receive \$25,000 or more in state aid to pay their employees at least \$7.21 per hour continues to progress through the House.

HF2562, sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls), was approved by the House Economic Development, Infrastructure and Regulation Finance Committee Feb. 21.

Companies affected by the bill are medium- and large-sized companies that receive \$25,000 or more in state aid through loans, grants, or tax increment financing (TIF). Also affected are large non-profit organizations with a salary ratio between the highest- and lowest-paid employee of 25 to 1 or greater. Exempt are other nonprofits, businesses employing 20 people or less, and companies that have received bonafide offers of financial assistance to relocate to another state.

The bill requires qualifying companies to pay wages equal to federal poverty level guidelines, now at \$7.21 for a family of four.

Chris Jacobs of the Jobs Now Coalition said the bill would set performance measures at a time when the trend is toward the creation of low-wage jobs.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) said she's worried about the effect the bill could have on outstate areas, stating that new businesses do more than pay wages; they also provide economic stimulation and revitalize communities.

According to Clark, the bill is an attempt to bring about accountability for corporate public assistance and a way to begin moving individuals off of public assistance.

The bill now heads to the House floor.



ENVIRONMENT

Omnibus finance bill

The environment and natural resources supplemental budget bill, which includes \$8.1 million in allocations, won approval from the Environment and Natural Resources Committee Feb. 21.

The governor's target for the committee's supplemental budget is \$2.7 million.

Big-ticket items in the proposal include \$850,000 for improved recreation areas for all-terrain vehicles on the Iron Range, \$689,000 for landfill clean-up, and \$410,000 for the acquisition and development of the Chippewa County regional trail.

Also included in **HF3231**, sponsored by Rep. Chuck Brown (DFL-Appleton):

Timber damage

Northern Minnesota would get \$313,000 in fiscal year 1996 for damage done by a pair of July 1995 thunderstorms, under the bill. The money would be used to reimburse costs incurred in timber damage, clean-up, reconstruction, and debris removal, among other things.

An estimated 250,000 acres in northern Minnesota were hit — including state, county, federal, and private lands. One hundred seventy-five miles of roads were destroyed in the process.

The storms ranged from an area west of Itasca State Park eastward through Clearwater County to south of Grand Rapids.

And while the 100 mph winds are no longer toppling, bending or snapping trees, they will cause problems in northern Minnesota for years.

One DNR figure puts a \$22.5 million price tag on the value of the timber that was lost or damaged. Nearly one-half of the annual wood supply needed by the state's forest industries was damaged or destroyed, the DNR has said.

Beaver damage

Local governments would share \$300,000 to study statewide beaver damage under the bill. The grant is contingent on \$80,000 in matching funds from the Beaver Damage Control Joint Powers Board.

Beaver dams in ditches, rivers, and coulees

have created flooding in the flat terrain up north.

Last year, Gov. Arne Carlson vetoed a \$150,000 appropriation for the Beaver Damage Control Joint Powers Board in northern Minnesota.

Frog study

A state study on deformed frogs and a statewide learning project at Hamline University would get \$200,000 under **HF3231**. Under Rep. Willard Munger's (DFL-Duluth) proposal, originally introduced as **HF2594**, the Pollution Control Agency (PCA) would get \$50,000 to study recently discovered deformed frogs as "indicators of environmental pollutants." Hamline University's Center for Global Environmental Education would get \$28,000 to launch statewide student participation in the study. The deformed frogs were discovered last summer by junior high students who attend the Minnesota New Country School near Henderson, Minn. Another \$123,000 would be appropriated under the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources for the frog study, to be conducted by the PCA.

Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) questioned why Munger's initial request for \$50,000 wasn't sufficient.

Munger, who was visited at the meeting by Henderson students, said PCA and University of Minnesota officials told him \$50,000 was needed to accomplish even a minimal study. PCA officials said the additional money would enable them to study sites that have been reported to them since the initial frog discoveries.

Chair Rep. Chuck Brown (DFL-Appleton) emphasized the importance of a "thorough" study.

"Our communities in rural Minnesota have sent us a message," he said. "And it's the chair's belief that when it's completed it ought to be thorough and ought to be well done. My concern is that the study is done properly."

River basin funding

The bill calls for \$100,000 in continued funding of the Minnesota River Basin Joint Powers Board. The 37-county board is charged with keeping the river clean through public education and local environmental projects. It was established more than a decade ago when the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) found that the river exceeded acceptable phosphorous and nitrate levels.

Osthoff asked why the joint powers board couldn't be financed by the 37 local municipalities instead of the state.

DNR officials said the state has a history of

financing joint powers boards, such as the North Shore Management Board. In addition, efforts by the 37 counties help hold sewage treatment costs down in the metro area, said Ron Nargang of the DNR.

Fighting river sedimentation

Morrison County would get \$100,000 to address water flow problems along the eastern shoreline of the Mississippi River. The University of Minnesota would use the money at its St. Anthony Falls laboratory to learn about and solve accelerated sedimentation in the river.

Save potatoes

The bill would expand a state study on potato blight. Under Rep. Ken Otremba's (DFL-Long Prairie) plan, originally introduced as **HF2746**, \$75,000 would go toward studying both the effectiveness of current treatments for potato blight and the development of disease-resistant spud varieties. The study, which is ongoing at Central Lakes Agriculture Center in central Minnesota, is aimed at curbing a problem that contributes to the use of \$12 million annually in fungicides, Otremba said.

Pest control

An urban, integrated pest management development and promotion program would be created with Metropolitan State University at a cost of \$75,000. The goal of the program is to promote integrated pest management in urban areas.

Environmental justice

The establishment of an environmental justice study, originally proposed by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls) as **HF1661**, would cost the state \$20,000. Such a study would explore the equitable or inequitable distribution of environmental efforts among different socioeconomic and ethnic groups. The measure includes a \$20,000 appropriation for the Environmental Quality Board to study the issue and report to the Legislature by Jan. 1, 1997.

About 38 other states are considering similar legislation in an effort to get federal funding for community-based projects that address environmental equity, Clark said. President Bill Clinton issued an Executive Order in 1994 urging states to explore the concept of environmental justice.

Minnesota resources

Projects aimed at preserving the state's resources would get \$4.4 million under the bill. The appropriations would fund \$1 million for acquisitions and renovations to metro-

area parks, \$1 million in state park and recreation area acquisitions and \$895,000 in local grants for the same purposes.

Also included in the \$4.4 million appropriation is \$750,000 for the Reinvest in Minnesota program, which aims to acquire and preserve wetlands and other conservation lands.

Additionally, the PCA and the DNR would get \$360,000 to develop a joint Internet program aimed at increasing public access to information. Also included in the Minnesota resources provision is \$57,000 for the Upper Mississippi River Assessment Project.

Improving scenic lands

A proposal increasing the maximum grant available to local governments and school districts to acquire and improve natural and scenic areas is also included in the bill. Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul) said his measure helps save prairie, shorelands, wetlands, and wooded areas that can't be acquired under the current \$50,000 matching grant program. The grant could reach \$200,000 under Trimble's proposal.

Home cookin'

Relaxed restrictions in the state's food licensing law would allow many small-time vendors to forgo paying \$100 or more for licensing. Under Rep. Bob Ness' (R-Dassel) proposal, introduced as **HF2031**, vendors selling home-baked foods at community events would not have to buy a license as long as they gross less than \$1,000 annually and do not sell their goods for more than 10 days a year.

Human waste

A provision brought forth by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), (introduced as **HF2260**) would restate current law which makes it a misdemeanor to discharge untreated waste into surface water is included in the bill. The bill aims to enforce "zero tolerance" for discharging human wastes into surface waters. Under current law, such a crime is punishable by up to 90 days in jail and a \$700 fine.

RIM program changes

A bill that supporters say will allow the state to better target wetlands and other lands for the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program won approval Feb. 22 in the House. The vote was 131-0.

Under the RIM program, landowners are paid to retire certain lands from agricultural production or place wetlands into conservation.

HF2282, sponsored by Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda), seeks to increase the flexibility of current laws governing water and soil resources.

The bill would eliminate minimum acreage requirements on lands included in the RIM reserve. Current law keeps land parcels out of the RIM program if they are less than five acres or more than 20 percent of the county's average farm size.

And the bill would allow the state to obtain "flowage easements" on lands adjacent to wetlands in the RIM program. The bill would allow a landowner who does not want to commit their land to conservation every year to commit just once every few years. Current law allows only perpetual easements.

Supporters consider the RIM program the state's best shot at fighting harmful soil erosion.

HF2282 now goes to the Senate.

Petrofund changes

Mom and Pop gasoline station owners would get some relief from expensive environmental clean-up costs under a bill unanimously passed by the House Feb. 21. The vote was 132-0.

HF2519, sponsored by Rep. Gene Pelowski (DFL-Winona), would make more clean-up projects eligible for the state's Petroleum Tank Release Cleanup program. The so-called Petrofund program, financed by a 2-cent-per-gallon fee on wholesale petroleum, was established by the 1987 Legislature to help the owners of storage tanks recover some of the costs of a site's cleanup.

The bill would make eligible for the program:

- a site where less than one million gallons was dispensed in each of the last three calendar years;
- sites owned by a person who owns no more than five sites in Minnesota; and
- a person who has discontinued operation of all petroleum tank sites in Minnesota.

An amendment by Rep. LeRoy Koppenhaver (R-Princeton) extends more limited financial relief to petroleum operators who are still in business. Under his amendment, 90 percent of the first \$250,000 and 100 percent of any amount thereafter would be reimbursed to anyone in the petroleum business if less than 600,000 gallons were dispensed in a year.

The bill, which now goes to the Senate, would be retroactive to June 4, 1987.



FAMILY

Expediting visitation

Minnesota parents who have been illegally denied visitation with their children would be able to more easily gain their rights under a bill approved Feb. 16 by a House committee.

HF2357, sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), was approved by the House Judiciary Committee and sent on to the full House for consideration.

Dawkins' bill would allow a parent who was illegally denied visitation to appeal to a visitation expeditor, a court official who serves as a mediator to help resolve such disputes. Under current law, both parties must request intervention by a visitation expeditor.

At an administrative hearing, which serves to ensure that court-ordered visitation schedules are followed, a mediator can mandate "compensatory visitation," additional visitation time to a parent who has been wrongly denied such privileges.

Under **HF2357**, a decision resolving a compensatory visitation motion would be handed down in five days or less after the final meeting with the parties in the dispute.

Should compensatory visitation be awarded, the decision must include a finding that visitation was wrongfully denied.

If a parent is illegally denied compensatory visitation after a decision has been issued, a law enforcement agency may be directed to deliver the child to the parent entitled to visitation.

Also under the bill, if a parent who is liable for past-due child support has made complete and timely payments for 36 consecutive months of the current support amount due plus court-ordered payment of past-due support, interest on the remaining past-due amount will stop accruing.

Dawkins told the committee that he had reworked his original bill so that it will not cost the state of Minnesota any additional money.

The bill was praised by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) as an example of "legislative courage."

"This is a most difficult, emotional and contentious issue," Bishop said. "I hope it proves to be blessed with wisdom [when it reaches the House floor]."



GAMBLING

Pulltab tax refunds

Minnesota charitable organizations that operate pulltab and tipboard games would be able to claim sales tax refunds on unsold pulltabs and tipboard tickets under a bill considered Feb. 19 by a House panel.

The House Taxes Committee's Sales and Income Tax Division laid over **HF3050**, sponsored by Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul), for possible inclusion in the omnibus taxes bill.

The division also will refer seven other identical bills to the full committee: **HF3075**, **HF3181**, **HF3182**, **HF3183**, **HF3184**, **HF3185** and **HF3186**.

Under current Minnesota law, the state's 1,575 organizations that operate pulltab and tipboard games pay a 2 percent tax on the projected gross revenues to distributors of such games, and are not allowed to claim refunds on unsold pulltabs and tickets.

The tax was originally imposed by the Legislature in 1989. A year later, legislators directed organizations to begin posting winners in pulltab and tipboard games, which alerted prospective gamblers to the odds of winning if they participated in those games.

The mandatory posting law was repealed in 1991, but customers still demand that winners be posted, according to King Wilson, executive director of Allied Charities of Minnesota. That means that once winners have claimed the prizes in a single game, customers have no interest in participating.

"It's a simple problem: We believe we've been unfairly taxed on unsold pulltabs and tipboards," Wilson told lawmakers.

Rep. Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon), noting that this is the only example in the state of taxes being levied on unsold items, called it a "most unfair situation" and expressed his support for Milbert's bill.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue estimates that **HF3050** would cost the state \$5 million in the 1996-97 biennium and \$10.2 million in the 1998-99 biennium.

The refund would be effective for pulltabs and tipboard tickets played on or after July 1, 1996.



GAME & FISH

Saving starving deer

A total of \$750,000 would be devoted to an emergency deer feeding program in northern Minnesota under a bill approved Feb. 19 by the House Ways and Means Committee.

HF2902, sponsored by Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook), aims to help a deer population that could be hurt by this year's unusually cold and snowy conditions.

Frigid temperatures and deep snow pose a serious threat to the deer herd in northern Minnesota, which is economically important not just to northern Minnesota, but to the entire state, according to Bakk.

Northeastern Minnesota has more than three feet of snow on the ground and has had record-breaking low temperatures this year.

The House passed a resolution (**HR11**) in January requiring the Department of Natural Resources to start an emergency feeding program in the northern one-third of the state (areas north of State Highway 210 and U.S. Highway 10).

Bakk's bill would provide the funding to carry out that order, requiring that \$750,000 from the state game and fish fund (which is funded by the sale of hunting and fishing licenses) be used for emergency deer feeding.

The DNR currently runs a deer feeding program in agricultural areas of northwestern Minnesota but hasn't fed deer in the forested areas of the northeastern part of the state since 1989. The department expects to use \$260,000 this biennium for deer feeding in northwestern Minnesota. (See Feb. 2, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 11)

DNR officials say it's very difficult to increase deer populations in the state's northeastern forest areas because the animals are hard to locate and difficult to reach by road.

"The deer are harder to access in the forested region, but there is a real army of volunteers that want to help," Bakk said.

The Ways and Means Committee rejected an amendment proposed by Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) that would have scrapped the emergency deer feeding plans and instead called for threatened deer to be hunted and donated to low-income people.

HF2902 now goes to the House floor.



GOVERNMENT

Tying funds to performance

Cities and towns could either increase or decrease their share of state aid under a bill that encourages the use of performance standards.

HF2801, sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), was approved by the House Taxes Committee Feb. 22.

Under the bill, homestead and agricultural credit aid (HACA) currently given to cities would be contingent on the city's establishment of "performance measures." Dawkins said performance measures aim to increase the accountability of local governments by requiring cities or towns to adopt goals and work toward them. Performance plans can range from a system that counts the number of city applications for library cards to one that measures individual progress and overall effectiveness of a juvenile crime prevention program, Dawkins said.

The bill would abolish the current HACA aid program which gives \$2 per capita to cities and counties (for a total of about \$197 million in statewide HACA aid). It makes that amount (plus an inflationary adjustment) available to cities and counties that indicate there are performance measures in place.

Under the bill, a form currently used by the Department of Revenue to determine a city or county's HACA appropriation would include a line to indicate the establishment of a performance program.

Cities could actually get more money than the current HACA program provides because Dawkins' bill includes a \$400,000 appropriation for inflationary adjustments. Revenue for HACA funds comes from income and sales taxes.

Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda) liked the bill.

"It does make a real good connection between the people who pay taxes for services and the government officials who are producing the services," Winter said.

Some legislators have suggested cities and towns could easily report that they've adopted performance measures when they haven't. Rep. Skip Carlson (R-Fridley) said he feared the measure could confuse cities that may also have a complicated waste management tax change to deal with this year (the so-called SCORE tax changes proposed in **HF2552**).

Dawkins said he would be working with the League of Minnesota Cities to help cities to understand the bill. He has also said the commissioner of revenue can investigate cit-

ies that aren't being honest about their program.

Many cities establish goals in their comprehensive development plans. But Dawkins said his plan would be "a quantum leap forward" in making cities accountable to taxpayers.

An amendment to the bill would redirect \$6.4 million in HACA funding now going to regional railroad authorities to criminal justice aid for counties. In offering the amendment, Rep. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope) mentioned a recent newspaper editorial that criticized the state for giving HACA to regional railroad authorities. The state originally based those HACA dollars on levies related to now-dormant light rail proposals. In all fairness, Rest said, the railroad authorities shouldn't be getting the HACA money.

The amendment reduces to zero the amount of HACA money going to railroad authorities. It does not change the amount of HACA funds going to counties, however, because railroad authorities are county entities.

HF2801 will be considered for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Recalling errant politicians

Minnesota voters would decide if they should have the right to recall errant lawmakers under a bill approved Feb. 19 by the House General Legislation, Veterans Affairs and Elections Committee.

HF343, sponsored by Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul), would place on the 1996 ballot a proposed constitutional amendment to allow voter-initiated recall of state officials.

If approved by voters, legislators, the governor, constitutional officers, and judges could be subject to recall elections.

Efforts to pass a recall bill this year have led to controversy.

As originally drafted, the bill would have allowed recall of only those officials determined by the Minnesota Supreme Court to be guilty of "malfeasance," willfully committing an unlawful act in the course of executing duties of the job, or "nonfeasance," failure to perform the duties of the position.

Critics said those conditions alone were too narrow and would not have allowed the recall of officials guilty of illegal or unethical acts outside of the prescribed role of the office.

Specifically, critics pointed to the shoplifting and spousal abuse charges recently leveled against state lawmakers. Such actions, critics said, should be considered reasonable grounds for a recall but likely would not

constitute "malfeasance" or "nonfeasance" in office.

In response, the bill has been broadened and clearly states that officials convicted of a serious crime or guilty of serious ethical misconduct could be subject to a recall vote.

"We were criticized for having it be too cryptic," said Rep. Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), a co-sponsor of the bill, "... so we opened it up."

If voters were to approve the proposed constitutional amendment, a recall effort could be prompted by filing a petition with the secretary of state.

That petition would have to specifically state the conduct that warrants a recall and would have to be signed by a number of eligible voters equal to 25 percent of the total that voted in the most recent election for the affected office.

If the Minnesota Supreme Court finds sufficient grounds for a recall, the governor would be required to schedule a vote. A recall election could not be held within the final six months of the targeted official's term.

A successful bid to amend the state constitution would allow Minnesota to join North Dakota, Wisconsin, and 15 other states that already have recall for state officials.

HF343 now goes to the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee.

Remembering suffrage

The women's suffrage movement, which observed its 75th anniversary last summer, would be commemorated in a memorial garden on the grounds of the Minnesota State Capitol under legislation approved Feb. 20 by a House panel.

The legislation, sponsored by Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls), was approved to become part of **HF3214**, the omnibus state government finance bill, now being assembled by the House Governmental Operations Committee's State Government Finance Division.

"This is a struggle that has not been adequately recognized by the state and the country," Kahn told division members, describing the proposed memorial garden as "a very nice, contemplative" addition to the Capitol grounds.

Plans call for the garden to be constructed on a 100-foot-by-150-foot section of land located immediately south of Constitution Avenue near Cedar Street, close to the location of the 1996 Winter Carnival ice slide, according to Paul Mandell, a planner with the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board.

As originally proposed to division members, the legislation called for an appropriation of \$150,000 for design and construction of the memorial garden. However, Mandell said, that was a preliminary budget number, and he estimated the actual cost of the completed project at between \$200,000 and \$250,000.

Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) moved to add another \$100,000 to the requested appropriation, pointing out that giving the project \$250,000 would bring it in line with previous appropriations for memorials to veterans of the Korean and Vietnam wars.

"It gives parity and equity to other displays in the capitol area," Osthoff said. "It's a fairness issue, if nothing else."

After further discussion, division members agreed to make the final \$50,000 of the state appropriation contingent on private efforts to raise \$50,000 in non-public matching funds. The private money will be used for plaques, benches, and educational materials to be distributed in connection with the memorial garden.

Clearing the backlog

Minnesota's human rights commissioner would be required to come up with a plan to eliminate a case backlog in the Department of Human Rights under legislation considered Feb. 20 by a House panel.

HF3083, sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), would direct Commissioner David Beaulieu to report back to the Legislature by Jan. 15, 1997, on how the office plans to clear up the backlog.

Members of the House Governmental

Operations Committee's State Government Finance Division laid over the bill, which will be considered for inclusion in the omnibus state government finance bill, **HF3214**.

Entenza called his bill a "simple and straightforward" recipe for trying to solve the Department of Human Rights case backlog, which was discussed at length in a report issued last month by the Office of the Legislative Auditor.

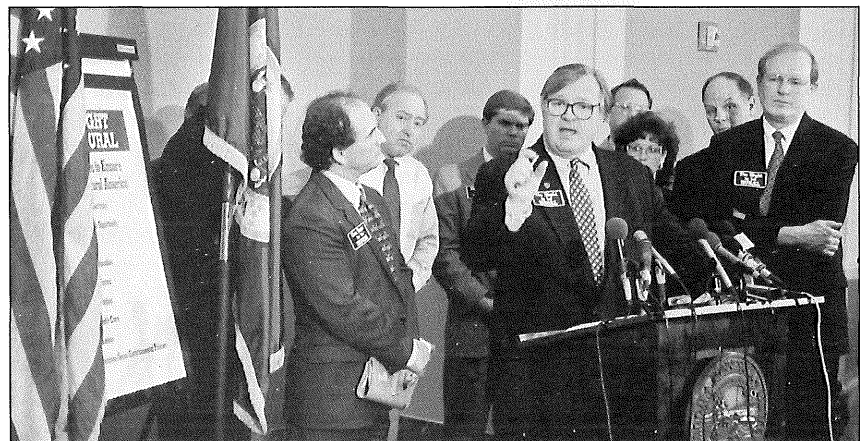
"Our study found that the department has not handled charges of discrimination in a timely manner and that there is a growing inventory of open cases," Legislative Auditor James Nobles wrote. "We also found that the department lacks the expertise to properly use its own case-tracking system and needs to show more tangible progress in developing the new system funded recently by the Legislature."

The most important recommendation contained in the study is that Beaulieu and the department "take whatever steps are necessary" to eliminate the backlog.

Beaulieu has criticized the report, saying it doesn't acknowledge that his department has, in the last four years, "increased its efficiency and is now doing more with fewer resources." He claims that the department has become more productive and that the restructuring moves he has taken have helped the department maximize the use of its resources.

HF3083 includes a \$100,000 appropriation for the department to prepare plans for clearing the case backlog, making probable cause determinations quickly using a minimum amount of department resources, and processing future cases on a timely basis.

Rep. Kevin Knight (R-Bloomington), a



U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone, left, and U.S. Rep. David Minge, right, listened Feb. 20 as Rep. Doug Peterson and other state lawmakers released nine principles they say are essential to protect "The Right to be Rural." As written, the principles are "a blueprint to bring the needs of rural areas to the forefront of public policy debate in St. Paul and Washington."

former member of a city human rights commission in Bloomington, acknowledged that Beaulieu's department is overburdened, but blamed part of that on the department's unwillingness to pass on complaints to individual cities.

"I've heard nothing but excuses from the human rights department and seen nothing but poor results from the commissioner," Knight said. "Until things are cleaned up at the Department of Human Rights, I don't think we should be giving them more money."

HIGHER EDUCATION

Omnibus budget bill

The House Education Committee approved \$10 million for campus-based technology, a pilot job skills program, and a statewide on-line information library Feb. 21.

Rep. Tony Kinkel's (DFL-Park Rapids) higher education budget bill (HF3239) now goes to the House Ways and Means Committee. It meets the target amount set for his committee.

Among the major appropriations:

Technology grants

The bill includes \$4.6 million for individual technology grants to campuses. The grants would be awarded to state colleges and universities on a competitive basis by a review panel. The review panel would include mostly faculty, students, and a member of the Minnesota High Technology Council.

Both the governor and lawmakers have established technological upgrades at educational institutions — at all grade levels — as a high priority.

Work skills curriculum

A pilot program at an unspecified technical college would get \$600,000 for a work skills program — \$300,000 for curriculum development and \$300,000 for the development of an on-line "demonstration site." Under the provision, initially proposed by Rep. Howard Orenstein (DFL-St. Paul), at least one technical college would develop a pilot program next year aimed at improving employability through a core group of classes. The program would be shared statewide through the on-line system.

Statewide on-line library

The bill includes \$150,000 for the establishment of a statewide, on-line library system for 1996-97. Rep. Steve Kelley's (DFL-Hopkins) proposal would fund a library plan-

ning task force whose goal would be to establish a statewide system for colleges, public libraries, and K-12 schools.

Law school reimbursement

The proposal marks \$50,000 to repay law school loans for graduates who practice in certain Minnesota communities and/or practice lower-paying public policy work. Rep. Becky Kelso's (DFL-Shakopee) proposal requires the private bar association to match the repayments.

Under HF 3239, any surplus in state grant appropriations would be transferred to the work study program. Under current law, surpluses go back into the general fund.

Tuition buy-down

A proposal to use \$50 million of the state's projected budget surplus to lower college tuition for students was cut to \$10 million by the House Higher Education Finance Committee Feb. 21.

Sponsored by Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls), HF2568 was subsequently approved by the Education Committee Feb. 22 and now heads to the Rules and Legislative Administration Committee.

Orfield, who had aimed to reduce tuition next year at all public post-secondary schools by about 12 percent, reluctantly accepted the modified bill.

"I'm ashamed we couldn't take a bigger step," he said. "My major intent was to lower tuition in public institutions . . . but I realize sometimes you have to compromise to keep ideas moving forward."

An amendment by Higher Education Finance Division Chair Rep. Tony Kinkel (DFL-Park Rapids) reduced the bill's funding to \$10 million and divided it equally between tuition reduction and targeted financial aid. The amendment responded to critics of Orfield's plan who said plan didn't reach the neediest of students. Orfield, citing Minnesota's above-average post-secondary school tuition, has argued that across-the-board reductions are necessary and need-based programs are politically risky.

The bill includes:

- \$5 million in grants targeted for both dependent students and independent students with a dependent child whose family incomes are less than \$20,000. About 27,000 students, many of whom already receive some aid, would receive around \$180 next year, under the provision;
- \$3.5 million for tuition relief at Minnesota's State Colleges and Universities. Recipients

would get less than \$50 under the provision;

- \$1.5 million for tuition relief at the University of Minnesota. Recipients would get less than \$50 under the provision.

Rep. Becky Kelso (DFL-Shakopee) questioned the division of tuition reduction dollars between students at the University of Minnesota and other schools. Under Kinkel's provision, University students get about one-third of the tuition reduction money, which reflects their percentage of total post-secondary students in the state (about 30 percent).

Kelso recommended they get a larger share of tuition relief because they pay higher tuition on average than other post-secondary students. The committee took no action on her suggestion.

Reps. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph) and Howard Orenstein (DFL-St. Paul) amended the bill to allow independent students with children to receive aid. Orenstein said offering the targeted grants to both dependent and independent students with children "gets to a population that really needs the help."

Debate over Orfield's bill was characterized by repeated references to the "bigger problem" of skyrocketing tuition. Tuition at all of Minnesota's higher education institutions is above average. University of Minnesota tuition is 24 percent above the national average, Orfield has said.

"I applaud this effort but I think it's a sad commentary," said Kelso. "The fact that there are unacceptable tuition increases simply indicates spending [at] our higher education institutions is going up faster than we're able to provide money to them. Unfortunately Orfield's bill is not the whole answer."

At least one of more than a dozen students who have testified on the bill agreed.

"We have a permanent problem with financial aid and we really need a permanent solution," said Dawn Hilliard of the Minnesota Technical Colleges Student Association.

Education savings bonds

Minnesota parents would be able to buy tax-free bonds to help pay for a child's college education under a bill approved Feb. 20 by the House Capital Investment Committee.

HF2058, sponsored by Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal), would require the Minnesota Department of Finance to establish a college savings bond program.

The bill aims to help middle-class parents pay for their children's education, Carlson said.

"The middle-income family that is neither wealthy enough nor doesn't qualify for vari-

ous forms of aid is kind of left out," Carlson said. "This would give them incentive to save."

Under the bill, the state would offer bonds attractive to parents saving for higher education expenses. Many specifics of the bond programs would be set by the finance department, but considerably more affordable bonds would be made available.

Currently, general obligation bonds are sold at a minimum \$5,000 denomination, the amount the bond is worth upon maturity. The bill would require denominations as small as \$500 to be made available. As with their more costly counterparts, the smaller bonds would be tax exempt.

Similar programs are already in place in 24 other states, according to Carlson.

The bill would require the finance department and the Higher Education Advisory Council to develop a marketing plan to inform parents about the bonds.

The bill would allow students to have up to \$25,000 in bonds without having it count against them in determining eligibility for state higher education grants.

The bonds would be available to parents, grandparents, and others. In fact, the bill does not call for enforcement to ensure the smaller bonds are purchased for college savings.

Also, there would be no penalty if a child decided not to seek a higher education.

The bill now goes to the Ways and Means Committee.



HOUSING

Detering illicit activity

Vacant houses in the inner city could lose their allure to criminals under a bill approved by the House Feb. 19. The vote was 115-16.

The bill (HF2039/SF1812*) would require that owners of vacant buildings pay for at least one of the following: external lighting; "no trespassing" signs; a resident caretaker; or an alarm system. The cost of securing the building would become a lien against the property if an owner couldn't be found.

Besides inviting the danger of drug dealing and prostitution, vacant buildings cost tax dollars in frequent police calls, lost homeowners, and increased refurbishing costs due to wire-stripping and plumbing removal, proponents argue.

While the bill applies to all cities in Minnesota, it's estimated there are about 400 abandoned houses alone in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis. That neighborhood —

home to bill sponsor Rep. Karen Clark's district — is bounded by Lake Street and Interstate 94 and Hiawatha Avenue and Interstate 35W.

"The city is going to save so much money . . . rather than letting buildings get broken into, ransacked, the plumbing stripped and architectural features taken," said Clark (DFL-Mpls). "This is a money-saving measure."

Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) said the bill penalizes mortgage holders. He also said it's a city — not a state — issue.

"This is a situation that should be handled in Minneapolis and not brought in front of the state of Minnesota," he said.

Rep. Dee Long (DFL-Mpls) agreed that Minneapolis City Council should be tackling the problem. But she said that doesn't justify the Legislature turning its back.

"It is a very, very needed measure and if we need to do it because (Minneapolis) City Council will not, I hope you will join me in passing it," she told Krinkie.

Current Minneapolis regulations require building owners to secure and sometimes board up property left vacant because it is condemned or foreclosed. But owners can be hard to find and unwilling to pay — a reality that costs.

The Minneapolis Police Department spent about \$30,000 last year to board up vacant buildings. Police have said that price is much cheaper than the legal costs of pursuing property owners.

(See Jan. 26, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 9)
HF2039/SF1812* now moves to the Senate.

Problem tenants

A bill that aims to help landlords and residents fight drugs and prostitution passed the House Feb. 21. The vote was 129-2.

HF2040, sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls), would make it easier for community members to get the names and addresses of suspicious drivers in the neighborhood. It also attempts to give landlords an easier route to both keeping out bad tenants and evicting drug dealers.

The bill's specific provisions include:

- waiving the \$1.50 fee required to obtain motor vehicle registration information. Community members who work to fight crime would be able to learn the identities of suspicious-looking drivers in their areas at no charge, Clark said. Neighborhood groups would use this information to send "notice" letters to the drivers which would

put them on alert that they are being watched. Minneapolis Police already do this, Clark said, but the bill would allow more letters to be sent by enlisting the help of community members;

- adding to lease provisions the "purchase" of a drug as grounds for eviction. According to Clark, community crime officers have said there is a loophole under current law that prevents landlords from evicting tenants due solely to a drug purchase. She said it is easier to evict when drugs are found in a tenant's apartment, for instance; and
- specifying that tenant screening agencies must get the full name and date of birth of those seeking housing. Full names and dates of birth are required by the FBI to do criminal history searches. Full names are also required to do an accurate background check on previous residences, Clark said. She said many landlords end up with problem tenants because they didn't get such information before offering the tenant a lease.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



HUMAN SERVICES

Omnibus human services bill

Hundreds of disabled Minnesotans who expected to be cut from a program that helps them live independently at home instead of in a state institution may be spared the budget ax.

A \$21 million Health and Human Services supplemental budget bill contains \$7.8 million to restore cuts made by the 1995 Legislature. It won approval from the House Health and Human Services Committee Feb. 22.

Last year, at the urging of Gov. Arne Carlson, lawmakers cut a program that provides in-home personal care attendants (PCA) for the disabled. The cuts were scheduled to go into effect July 1, 1996.

The 1995 law tightened eligibility requirements and limited some services. One section required that those receiving the help of a personal care attendant be capable of directing their own care or be cared for by family members or placed in an institution.

Another section directly affected mentally ill adults by eliminating services their PCA could provide. Specifically, the 1995 law cut what are called "prompting" and "monitoring" services. That meant mentally ill adults could no longer rely on a PCA to remind them to take medication, prepare meals, or help them get to and from the psychologist or doctor.

HF2818 restores PCA cuts by eliminating the requirement that recipients be able to direct their own care and by reinstating services such as prompting and monitoring.

Some argued these provisions were headed for trouble with federal health officials and may have been challenged in court.

According to the state Department of Human Services, federal officials expressed concern that the 1995 law may have discriminated against children because many cannot direct their own care simply because they are children and need help from adults. In addition, there was concern the law also discriminated against those with a mental illness who cannot direct their own care.

Below are some of the highlights from the supplemental budget bill.

Welfare reductions

Welfare programs would see a \$33 million reduction. These are not cutbacks, but savings. Forecasts used to put together the 1996-1997 two-year budget for human services last year overestimated how many people would participate in public assistance.

Reliance on welfare has lessened because Minnesota's job market is in good shape, according to state officials. Also, officials credit MinnesotaCare for keeping more people off welfare. MinnesotaCare is a state subsidized health plan that allows certain low-income families and individuals to buy health insurance at reduced costs.

The reductions in welfare costs can be found in the state's Aid to Families with Dependent Children, General Assistance, and other public assistance programs.

Criminal checks

The bill would spend \$54,000 to extend criminal background checks to all nursing home employees, including housekeeping staff and maintenance workers.

The provision expands current law which requires that state criminal histories be checked for employees in nursing homes, home care agencies, and boarding care homes who have direct contact with patients.

A 1995 law that increased penalties for people who neglect or abuse vulnerable adults required such background checks for some nursing home employees.

Since its passage, the Department of Human Services has initiated more than 8,100 background checks which uncovered 67 people who were disqualified from working in a nursing home.

Adoption assistance

More parents wanting to adopt children with disabilities or other special needs could see some financial help from the state. The state would set aside another \$1.5 million to help families adopt those children.

Senior nutrition

The bill marks \$500,000 to expand programs that offer meals and groceries to the elderly across the state. Committee members were told that good nutrition can help keep senior citizens out of nursing homes.

A portion of the money would go to the Minnesota Board on Aging to expand elderly food programs statewide. Another portion would be given to local agencies on aging to help pay for such elderly services as the home delivery of meals, groceries, and prescriptions; transportation to supermarkets and congregate dining sites; vouchers for meals at selected restaurants in isolated rural areas; food stamp outreach; and nutrition screening and counseling.

Senior citizens quickly suffer from dehydration and become malnourished if they don't eat properly, proponents said, adding that minor illnesses can worsen and broken bones take longer to heal due to poor eating.

Home delivery of meals to "shut-ins" as well as congregate meals at senior centers and other sites, are invaluable, they said, noting that they not only keep many seniors healthy, but the latter is especially helpful in getting seniors out and socializing.



Dan Cain, executive director of Eden Programs, a chemical dependency treatment center in Minneapolis, testified before the Judiciary Finance Committee Feb. 19 in support of a bill that would develop a public health approach to addressing the crack-cocaine problem and would connect community police officers with drug treatment specialists.

Child care

Money to train child care workers as well as help more parents afford child care is included in the supplemental budget bill.

Specifically, \$500,000 would be set aside to help train child care workers who work in centers and homes that serve low-income children. Another \$1.5 million would be set aside to help expand the basic sliding fee child care program which subsidizes child care costs for low- and moderate-income families, thus removing a barrier to their returning to work.

Lead poisoning

Money to help relocate families whose homes are affected by lead poisoning is also part of **HF2818**.

In all, \$150,000 would be appropriated to the Department of Health to help clean up lead. Part of the money would be used to help relocate families whose children or other members are experiencing lead poisoning stemming from sources such as nearby dirt, water, or paint chips. Affected residents would relocate while their old home undergoes a cleanup.

Another portion of the money would help fund a study of the legal responsibilities for landlords and tenants in the area lead poisoning and clean up.

Nursing home reimbursement rates

Medical Assistance reimbursement rates paid by the state to nursing homes and intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation would increase by 75 cents per resident per day.

The bill sets aside about \$7.3 million to accomplish this task and delay more severe reimbursement cuts slated for fiscal year 1997.

Currently, the statewide average reimbursement for nursing homes is \$95.56 per resident, per day. The statewide average for intermediate care facilities for persons who are mentally retarded is \$125.18 per resident, per day.

Birth defects registry

The bill would appropriate \$201,000 to develop a statewide birth defects registry to collect, analyze, and distribute information on birth defects. It would be up to the Department of Health to put the registry together.

According to the department, about 3 percent of babies are born with a birth defect and without a surveillance system, studies to establish causes are not possible.

The purpose of the registry is to monitor the trends in birth defects, investigate clusters of birth defects to address concerns with

scientific data, identify cases of birth defects for study to establish a cause, increase public awareness, and evaluate the effectiveness of certain prevention programs.

Restaurant license fees

Despite strong objections from the Department of Health, the supplemental budget bill contains a provision cutting back certain restaurant inspection license fees.

The bill would cut to \$125 the license fee for restaurants with 10 or fewer employees. The current average is about \$222, according to the department.

The department has said the reduction would have a "potentially devastating effect on inspection activities at the state level."

"Since over 90 percent of all establishments have 10 or fewer employees — and since it would be legally impossible to substitute other revenue sources — the loss of revenue for the state inspection program would be an estimated \$434,736," according to a department position statement.

The bill also contains a proposal to cut license fees for temporary food stands — those at fairs and similar events — that operate seven days per year or less. Those establishments would pay \$60 for an inspection compared to the current fee of \$130.

Currently, county and city health departments inspect food, beverage, and lodging establishments in 42 counties. The state Department of Health inspects those establishments in the remaining 45 counties.

Department concerns center on the spread of food-borne illness. Without a solid inspection program, the threat of food-related disease is greater, according to health officials. The agency typically evaluates more than 200 food-borne illness complaints every year and the volume is increasing. In 1995, the figure topped 250.



INSURANCE

Job protection

The House Feb. 19 passed a bill that attempts to help protect insurance agents from being fired after contacting the Legislature. The vote was 132-0.

Under current state law, insurance companies are prohibited from firing agents who contact a state agency or department about a problem.

HF3052, sponsored by Rep. Don Ostrom (DFL-St. Peter), would simply make it clear that the law protects agents who contact

anyone in the executive, legislative, or judicial branches.

Insurance agents Gary Kemp and Mary McClure claim they were trying to do the right thing when they backed legislation crafted to protect insurance consumers. It cost them their jobs.

Both long-time agents for American Family Insurance, Kemp of West St. Paul, and McClure of Mankato, became active in an effort to pass a legislative proposal that the company opposed.

The agents backed a measure to bar insurance companies from requiring agents to meet quotas on the sale of certain types or mixes of policies. The 1995 Legislature passed a law freeing independent agents from such quotas.

Kemp and McClure were pushing for lawmakers to extend the quota ban to cover agents who sell policies directly for companies such as American Family and State Farm.

Proponents of such measures argue quotas can put unreasonable demands on insurance agents and can be detrimental to the service consumers receive.

American Family said that Kemp and McClure engaged in "conduct prejudicial to the company." On Jan. 11, 1996, the agents were abruptly fired.

(See Feb. 9, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 14)

The bill now moves to the Senate.

Lyme coverage

A bill that would require insurers to cover the treatment for diagnosed cases of Lyme disease passed the House Feb. 19. The vote was 86-47.

The disease — a bacterial illness transmitted by the bite of an infected deer tick — affects the skin, joints, and other parts of the body. It can have serious results including chronic arthritis and neurological impairment.

Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown), sponsor of **HF219**, said some insurers won't pay for adequate antibiotic treatment for the disease.

"We know that antibiotics can kill it if you get enough [medication] for a long enough time," according to Barb Jones, a registered nurse who recently testified in support of Murphy's bill.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

(See Feb. 2, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 14 and Feb. 9, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 14)



LAW

Extending the statute

Minnesota hemophiliacs who were treated with HIV-infected blood products and became infected with the virus that causes AIDS would have an additional year to file lawsuits under legislation approved Feb. 16 by a House committee.

HF2453, sponsored by Rep. Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul), would extend the statute of limitations until June 1, 1997, for affected hemophiliacs.

Hemophilia is a hereditary disorder characterized by excessive, sometimes spontaneous, bleeding. A hemophiliac's blood doesn't carry the clotting factor that enables a non-hemophiliac to stop bleeding after a short time.

Pugh told members of the House Judiciary Committee that in the early to mid-1980s, some of the donated blood that is used to create the clotting factor to treat hemophiliacs was contaminated by the AIDS virus.

In Minnesota, about 110 hemophiliacs and their spouses have died of AIDS-related illnesses acquired through the tainted clotting factor, Pugh said.

Because it sometimes takes years to discover that a person is HIV-infected, the current six-year statute of limitations for filing lawsuits against companies that provided the contaminated clotting factor is not long enough, Pugh said. His bill adds one more year in those cases.

Not included in the statute of limitations extension are patients who were infected with the AIDS virus through direct blood transfusions. "Transfusion problems did affect certain hemophiliacs, but also society in general," Pugh told the committee. "We could more effectively narrow down on this group who used the clotting factor."

Pugh admitted that his bill has opponents, including companies that manufacture the clotting factor for use by hemophiliacs and question the statute of limitations extension on constitutional grounds.

Win Borden, an attorney representing the American Blood Resources Association, asked the Judiciary Committee to defeat **HF2453**, saying it is "manifestly arbitrary" and thus unconstitutional.

But Pugh quoted a letter written by Minnesota Assistant Attorney General Scott Strand, which says that in that office's view, the legislation does not run afoul of the state constitution.

The Judiciary Committee approved **HF2453** and sent it on to the full House.

Regulating veterinarians

The board that oversees Minnesota's veterinarians would be given powers and protections similar to the bodies that oversee other medical practitioners under a bill passed Feb. 19 by the House. The vote was 124-8.

HF2059, sponsored by Rep. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins), would alter provisions governing the State Board of Veterinary Medicine.

The board issues licenses for veterinarians and can take disciplinary action against license holders who run afoul of proper conduct.

The bill would grant board members and employees immunity from civil or criminal sanctions for actions performed in the course of their jobs. And immunity would be extended to people who make reports to the board or otherwise help an investigation.

Also, the disciplinary actions available to the board would be expanded. In addition to existing authority to suspend or revoke licenses, the board would have the new option of placing limits on a veterinarian's license.

The grounds for disciplinary action would be clarified. Existing law allows action against veterinarians for "conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude or conviction of a felony" and for, among other things, "chronic inebriety."

The bill would replace those provisions with measures allowing disciplinary action for conviction of a felony or gross misdemeanor or for being unable to properly practice because of illness, use of alcohol or drugs, or as a result of any mental or physical condition. (See Jan. 26, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 12)

The bill now goes to the Senate.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Pay up for permits

Anyone who seeks a city permit to remodel a home or business would need to have all outstanding taxes, penalties, or interest paid up under a bill the House passed Feb. 21. The vote was 131-1.

HF2355, sponsored by Rep. Dee Long (DFL-Mpls), allows town and county boards to require applicants for such permits to certify that all property and/or special assessment district taxes, penalties, and interest due are paid. Local governments would not be required to adopt the regulation.

The bill aims to collect long overdue taxes and fines. Under the bill, property owners who are appealing a tax levy or penalty are exempt.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



METRO AFFAIRS

Eliminating a perk

Prominent Minnesotans who for years have enjoyed free, heated, valet parking at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport would lose that privilege under a bill passed Feb. 21 by the full House.

HF2321, sponsored by Rep. Howard Orenstein (DFL-St. Paul), passed the House 129-3.

The action came after the House Ways and Means Committee's Government Efficiency and Oversight Division, which Orenstein chairs, questioned members of the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) last month on the reason for the free parking privileges.

About 100 people, including a handful of prominent Minnesota politicians, are on MAC's list of those who can park free in a heated underground garage anytime they have business that takes them to the airport.

Jeffrey Hamiel, MAC's executive director, told members of the Government Efficiency and Oversight Division that MAC intended to take up the free parking issue at its February or March meeting and discuss changing its policy.

However, Orenstein said on the House floor, MAC met Feb. 20 and apparently decided to table the issue and let the Legislature handle it.

"The Legislature was misled," Orenstein said. "The commission is not going to act to change these perks; under the circumstances, it's time for the Legislature to act."

Orenstein said it's grossly unfair for a "handful of the most powerful and wealthy Minnesotans" to park free in heated spots close to the airport terminal, while a mother with four children must park a mile away and shepherd her children and luggage through the cold.

Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center) told lawmakers that he was indignant to learn that his name was on MAC's free-parking list, since he had not requested the privilege, and urged the House to approve **HF2321**.

The bill now goes to the Senate. (See Feb. 2, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 14 and Jan. 26, 1996, *Session Weekly*, page 13)



SAFETY

Stopping for pedestrians

It's been more than five years since Phil McDonald's wife of 40 years was hit by a Metropolitan Council Transit Operations

(MCTO) bus while she tried to cross a busy St. Paul intersection.

McDonald's wife was doing nothing illegal on that September afternoon in 1990. She was in a crosswalk at the intersection of Cleveland Avenue and Ford Parkway when the bus slammed into her, swept her off the crosswalk and dragged her 30 feet.

She died two hours later. The bus driver was not cited.

Since that time, McDonald has become a tireless crusader on behalf of safer Minnesota crosswalks. On Feb. 16, with a framed picture of himself and his wife displayed on the witness table, McDonald implored members of the House Judiciary Committee to pass a law that would require Minnesota drivers to come to a full stop and yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in crosswalks.

The panel approved a bill (**HF2930**) to do that.

Under current law, drivers must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in crosswalks where there are no traffic signals or where signals are not operating, but they are required only to slow down or stop when necessary.

"What we're trying to do is change people's behavior," bill sponsor Rep. Jim Farrell (DFL-St. Paul) told lawmakers. "We have to bring people back to the concept of Minnesota Nice and start looking out for pedestrians in crosswalks."

In 1994, the most recent year for which statistics are available, three Minnesotans were killed as they legally tried to cross streets in crosswalks; another 245 were injured.

Farrell's bill would make failure to stop and yield to pedestrians in crosswalks a misdemeanor, which carries a maximum penalty of 90 days in jail and a \$700 fine. A driver who violates the law more than once within a year of a previous conviction would be guilty of a gross misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$3,000 fine.

"Our object is not to arrest people for this," Farrell said. "We just want to make crosswalks safer for pedestrians."

The bill now moves to the House floor.



TAXES

Liquor tax increase

A 3-percent increase in the sales tax levied on alcohol in Minnesota bars and liquor stores would be partially earmarked for chemical dependency treatment under a bill considered Feb. 19 by a House panel.

HF2814, sponsored by Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda), would increase the state sales

tax on liquor and 3.2 beer from 9 percent to 12 percent. The tax would apply to liquor sold by the drink and by the bottle.

Winter's bill provides that the additional revenues generated by the additional sales tax would be split among a newly created consolidated chemical dependency treatment account, which would pay for treatment of needy Minnesotans; the health care access fund (which funds MinnesotaCare); and the general fund for use in providing emergency services to battered women and children.

"This is not an egregious cost for the people of Minnesota to spend on people in need who are saddled with a dependence on alcohol," Winter told members of the House Taxes Committee's Sales and Income Tax Division. "I believe we need to make treatment available to people who can't get it."

Winter estimates that the additional tax would raise \$3.2 million a year. Currently, the state spends more than \$20 million a year on chemical dependency treatment for Minnesotans who can't pay for it themselves.

Some members of the division expressed concern about not only the prospect of raising taxes, but on the bill's non-specific wording of where the extra money will go.

"While I have great sympathy for what you're trying to do, I certainly don't support raising the tax," Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul), the division's chair, told Winter. "It's not a trivial step when you look at the impact it will have on the [liquor] industry."

Industry representatives were quick to agree.

"This is an economically regressive tax targeting those who can least afford to pay," said John Berglund, who represents the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association. "We don't deny that this is a problem that needs to be looked at, but this is a regressive tax for an industry that's already heavily burdened."

Between 1990 and 1993, the amount of liquor sold by the drink in Minnesota has dropped by 22 percent, Berglund said. He attributed part of the decrease to competition from Indian-run casinos, but said most of it is due to taxes.

For example, people who buy liquor in Minneapolis pay a total of 15.5 percent in taxes, which includes not only state sales tax but state and federal excise taxes and a city sales tax.

Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina) questioned why the proposed tax would also be spent on the state's health care access fund and services to battered women and children.

"If you look at the total picture of people who are chemically dependent, other family

members are affected as well," Winter replied. "They were included as a way to divide up the money between the actual needs of a chemically dependent person and those of their family."

Erhardt suggested eliminating those two recipients from the bill; Milbert said the bill will be debated by the House Taxes Committee, and advised Erhardt to offer his amendment then.

Division members laid over **HF2814** to be considered for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Changing the formula

Legislation to change the way Minnesota calculates excise taxes to be paid on low-alcohol distilled spirits was considered Feb. 19 by a House panel.

HF3143, sponsored by Rep. Jeff Bertram (DFL-Paynesville), would levy excise taxes only on the portion of the alcohol contained in the drink or product, including coolers and premixed cocktails containing 7.5 percent or less alcohol.

Bertram told members of the House Taxes Committee's Sales and Income Tax Division that he was prompted to sponsor the bill after a Minnesota-based company planning to produce a creme de menthe ice-cream bar sought a change in the excise tax calculation.

Currently, Minnesota law considers premixed drinks (and any other product containing alcohol) to be distilled spirits, subject to the full volume tax. That tax currently is \$1.33 per liter or \$5.03 per gallon on distilled spirits manufactured, imported, sold, or possessed in the state.

HF3143 would change that calculation to charge an excise tax only on the portion of low-alcohol products that contain alcohol.

Although the legislation would reduce some liquor excise taxes in Minnesota, representatives of the liquor industry testified against Bertram's bill, saying there are "monumental implications" in setting up a new tax category.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue estimates that the state would lose \$600,000 per year if **HF3143** were to become law.

Members of the Sales and Income Tax Division took no action on the bill, which will be considered for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.



TRANSPORTATION

Money-back guarantee

A bill to encourage the state to make obtaining a driver's license hassle-free won approval Feb. 22 from the House Economic Development, Infrastructure and Regulation Finance Committee. Under the proposal, if hassles were to ensue, applicants would be compensated for their frustration.

HF2895, sponsored by Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center), guarantees a refund of the fees paid by qualified applicants if they don't receive a driver's license, instruction permit, or Minnesota I.D. card within six weeks of application. Receipt would be defined as the day the license is mailed.

Gov. Arne Carlson vetoed similar legislation last year, saying the bill was unnecessary since the problems which prompted its passage were to be rectified within the Department of Public Safety. Hooking up to a federal computer system that cross-checks driver's license applications proved problematic last summer, creating a backlog.

Katherine Burke Moore, director of driver and vehicle services for the Department of Public Safety, spoke against passage of the bill, saying that past problems had been rectified, and that current applicants were receiving licenses within 15 days, soon to be two weeks.

According to Carruthers, testimony heard earlier this session in the House Ways and Means Committee's Government Efficiency and Oversight Division disputes Burke Moore's assertions, and the bill is simply an attempt to keep pressure on the department and serve the public.

Burke Moore said that the date a license or I.D. card is mailed out is currently recorded only on paper by the department, and that developing a dated tracking system to catalog the records electronically would cost approximately \$20,000 (the bill doesn't include an expenditure), or create a cumbersome, labor-intensive process of hand-checking the records.

According to Rep. Jim Rice (DFL-Mpls), committee chair, last year's committee appropriations bill included funding for the additional costs.

Carruthers said the department can't have it both ways; if the licenses are being mailed out in two weeks, then the department doesn't have anything to worry about, and additional expenses, or labor, won't be required.

The bill now heads to the Rules and Legislative Administration Committee.

Legislative coverage to be broadcast statewide

A lot of people are jealous of Chris Cowman. Specifically, they covet the equipment that Cowman, director of television services for the Minnesota House of Representatives, has at his disposal, and what he's able to produce with it.

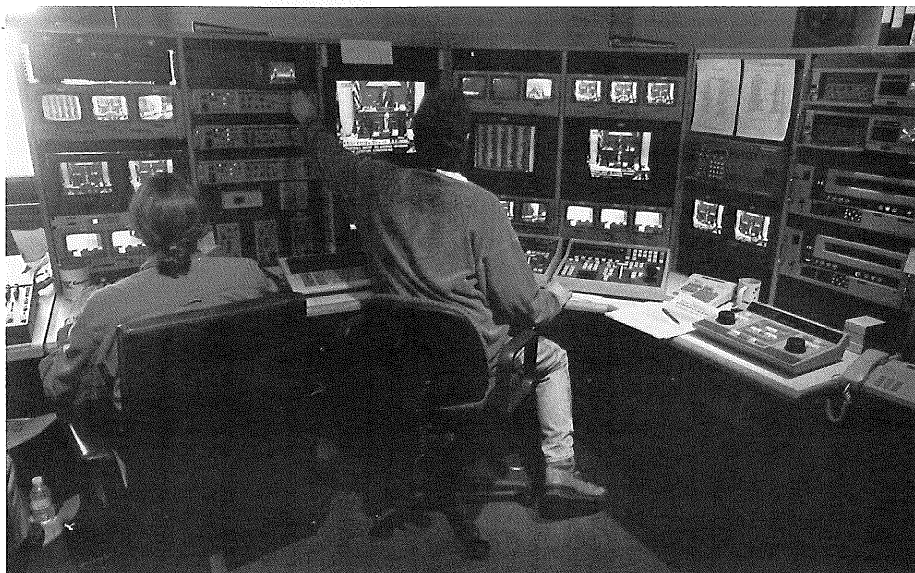
At a recent meeting in California of television services directors for legislatures in six states, Cowman's counterparts expressed envy over the Minnesota House's robotic cameras — and the fact that Minnesota has become the first-ever state to air legislative proceedings over broadcast television, rather than a cable channel.

"There are 10 states in the country that do a lot of legislative coverage," says Cowman, who has been House television services director since January 1994. "But we're the only state doing it over broadcast TV."

Beginning with this year's legislative session, coverage of the House and Senate began airing in the Twin Cities area on KTCI-TV, Channel 17. Previously, House and Senate sessions and coverage of committee hearings aired on metro-area cable Channel 6, and were available only to cable subscribers.

With the change, Cowman and his five-person staff (which includes one session-only employee) noticed an immediate difference.

The number of potential viewers more than doubled, from 1.2 million to 2.5 million, and the calls to the office's comment line increased dramatically: Since Jan. 16, when the 1996 Legislative Session began, more than 2,000



House Television Technical Services Director David Dittman, right, focuses one of the House chamber's remote-controlled cameras from the television control room during a Feb. 21 broadcast of the floor session. Production Assistant Matt Flick prepares to focus another camera on the next legislator to present a bill.

half-hour during legislative coverage in a small box on the lower portion of the screen.)

Since Feb. 22, the House has been broadcasting its business via satellite statewide. Outstate residents should check with local cable operators for time and channel information.

It's all pretty heady stuff for the television services staff, especially considering that the entire project began in mid-1993 with one staff member, Rebecca Balzer, and no equipment at all.

Cowman, whose arrival in January 1994

broadcasting floor sessions and committee hearings since 1988, the 1994 session was the first time that TV came to the House. Cowman and Balzer had only two weeks to finalize negotiations with Senate television personnel, but on the first day of the 1994 session, the House was on the air, using Senate equipment and the expertise of Senate staff.

In 1995, Cowman was allowed to hire more staff members. He developed a plan and a budget so the House could acquire its own broadcasting equipment instead of having to share with the Senate.

When the expenditures were approved, Cowman made arrangements for robotic cameras to be installed both in the House chamber and in Room 10 of the State Office Building, the largest committee room in the building.

Robotic cameras enable technicians in the House television control room (located across the street in the State Capitol) to push the appropriately numbered key and have the camera automatically zoom in to a House member's seat; although the camera settings in the House chamber change only when new members are elected, they change several times a week in Room 10 and must be reprogrammed each time.

But first he had to assure the Minnesota Historical Society that he wouldn't make any structural changes in the House chamber to

"There are 10 states in the country that do a lot of legislative coverage. But we're the only state doing it over broadcast TV."

—Chris Cowman, director of House Television Services

callers have registered their opinions.

Although most of the calls — 74 percent — are comments on issues that come before the Legislature, another 12 percent have come from viewers applauding the coverage and the switch to broadcast TV.

(Seven percent of the calls have come from confused viewers — apparently accustomed to watching Channel 17 for its continuous weather information before it began devoting eight hours every weekday to the Legislature — wondering where the weather went. Cowman says the weather's still there, appearing every

doubled the House television staff, had ample experience in television, including five-and-one-half years working for CNN's political unit, covering presidential and senatorial campaigns, and another five years at Conus Communications in St. Paul, the satellite division of Hubbard Broadcasting Inc.

In fact, Cowman says, this is the first presidential election year since 1984 that he hasn't covered the Iowa caucuses, the New Hampshire primary, and the national political conventions.

Although the Minnesota Senate had been

House TV continued on page 19

Introducing Ignatius Donnelly . . .

Lawyer, poet, fiery orator leaves mark on Minnesota

Ignatius Donnelly's name doesn't leap from the pages of Minnesota history like those of Alexander Ramsey or Hubert Humphrey.

There is no Donnelly Highway anywhere in the state, nor a building that bears his name. His statue doesn't stand on the grounds of the state Capitol. His name isn't commonly invoked in the halls of government.

Nevertheless, Ignatius Donnelly — Minnesota's second lieutenant governor, a lawyer, a poet and a fire-breathing orator, a believer in the legend of Atlantis and known by admirers as "the Sage of Nininger" — left his mark.

Donnelly, the son of Irish immigrants, was born in Philadelphia on Nov. 3, 1831. Following his graduation from public schools, he talked his way into a clerkship in the law offices of Benjamin Brewster, who later would serve as U.S. attorney general.

Donnelly got an unusually early start on his twin careers as poet and politician: He published his first book of poetry, *The Mourner's Vision*, at 19 and was admitted to the Pennsylvania bar at 21.

Although he would later use his law degree to distinguish himself in politics, Donnelly was far from a successful attorney. Clients found it remarkably easy to get credit from Donnelly, who found it correspondingly difficult to be a hard-nosed bill collector: "If you have the slightest wish ever to pay me, call and see me," he wrote timidly to one client.

In 1855, he married Catherine McCaffrey, much to the apparent displeasure of her mother, who spent the next 15 years avoiding all contact with her daughter.

Shortly after his marriage, Donnelly invested in a series of cooperative building association schemes. At some point during his involvement, but before any of the projects were completed, Donnelly decided to leave Philadelphia and take his family west; however, before he left, he came under attack by detractors who accused him of fraud and misappropriating funds. Although he volunteered to open his books to satisfy his accusers, the false rumors left permanent scars on the idealistic Donnelly.

Donnelly headed west to seek his destiny. As an avid abolitionist who made hundreds of speeches during the Civil War in support

of the Union, he ruled out making his home in Kansas because of slavery; he also decided against living in Iowa because of an unpleasant experience with stagecoach travel. But after a scenic steamboat trip to scope out the area, Donnelly and his family visited the booming Minnesota territory in 1857 and decided to settle there.

Donnelly soon formed a partnership with Minnesota entrepreneur John Nininger, acquired extensive land holdings and made plans to develop his dream town, Nininger

town, it never prospered due partly to the nation's economic woes and partly to the proximity of established towns like Hastings. Donnelly, however, built his family a home in Nininger in 1857 and lived there for the rest of his life.

Late that same year, Donnelly's aversion to slavery prompted him to switch political allegiances from the Democratic to the Republican Party. He unsuccessfully sought seats in the Minnesota Territorial Senate in 1857 and 1858, despite his burgeoning oratorical skills, which he utilized by resuming his practice of law in Dakota County.

In 1859, following Minnesota's admission to the union, Donnelly took another stab at politics, announcing his candidacy for lieutenant governor. The move worried his budget-conscious wife, who heard the news while visiting Philadelphia and wrote back wistfully, "Does the office pay? I wish it would, as that is my great anxiety."

Donnelly was just 28 when he was elected Minnesota's second lieutenant governor. Although many Republicans had opposed his nomination, his fiery speeches won over most of them, and in 1860, the state central committee bent its rules and offered to pay for Donnelly to accompany Gov. Alexander Ramsey on a trip around the state, promoting Republican candidates in the upcoming election.

In one debate that year with Willis A. Gorman, a former territorial governor, Donnelly illustrated what he believed would happen if Democrats won the election by telling a story of a man asking a boy for directions. "Well," the boy said, "if you take this road, you will wish you were in hell. If you take *that* road, you will wish that you took the first."

Donnelly won a second term as lieutenant governor in 1861, serving briefly as acting governor while Ramsey was back east.

In 1862, Donnelly made the jump from state to national politics, winning election to Minnesota's Second District seat in the U.S. House and becoming the youngest congressman in the nation at the age of 32. He was re-elected in 1864 and 1866.

But the Republicans, fearing that the in-



Ignatius Donnelly was a poet, novelist, and pugnatius politician in the early days of Minnesota's statehood.

Photo courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

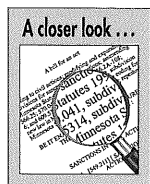
City, 17 miles south of St. Paul on the Mississippi River. It was a plan applauded by Nininger's wife, who remarked on the German-Irish affiliation: "Two heads are better than one, even if one should be a 'sour Kraut' and the other a 'Paddy.'"

Donnelly made trips back to Philadelphia to talk up Minnesota's advantages and encourage easterners to settle in Nininger. Although he worked tirelessly to promote the

Donnelly continued on page 24

A closer look . . .

Tackling tenure, scrutinizing the University



Concerns over academic freedom and the autonomy of the University of Minnesota prompted the House Education Committee to soften a proposal that would have tied state money to changes in the tenure code at the U of M.

Rep. Steve Kelley's (DFL-Hopkins) controversial provision, contained in **HF3238**, approved by the panel Feb. 22, would have made \$4 million in state money to the U of M's academic health center contingent on cost-saving changes in the school's tenure code, as determined by the commissioner of finance. That proposal was modified to allow U of M trustees — not the state — to manage changes in "personnel policies" — not the tenure code specifically.

"We make clear the Legislature's interest in the University adopting changes in the tenure code but we also include language that respects the internal process that's already begun," Kelley said.

Modifications to the proposal came after strong criticism from the U of M and other higher education officials who fear legislation mandating tenure code changes could lead to a loss of both the institution's autonomy and individual academic freedom.

The changes address some of those concerns. But by indirectly tying state funds to changes in personnel policies, Minnesota legislators have joined an increasing number of states that are focusing on tenure systems.

Arizona, Florida, and Wisconsin are looking at their tenure systems in an effort to increase efficiency and the quality of education, according to national education organizations.

Gov. Arne Carlson has said the tenure system not only needs examining, but needs changing. In his State of the State Address, Carlson said loosening tenure would spur better teacher performance and help keep the best teachers in the classroom.

Whether it's loosening the tenure code to save dollars or changing the criteria for tenure from research to teaching efforts, the issue is a hot one, said Robert Diamond, Syracuse University professor and director of the National Project on Institutional Priorities and Faculty Rewards.

"The public is saying, 'Hey you folks in the universities aren't doing a particularly good job. In the public universities you're given

money to do one thing and you're not doing it and in the private ones, the public is saying you're charging me three times the price," Diamond said.

Under the U of M's tenure code, it is very difficult to terminate or adjust the salaries of tenured faculty. The U of M has formed a committee to explore tenure reform but that committee — comprised primarily of professors — has recently voiced opposition to layoffs or pay cuts.

Established in the 1920s by the American Association of University Professors, tenure is used in many colleges and has been viewed as a prerequisite for academic freedom and expression. Most of the higher education officials who testified against mandating changes to the tenure code cited academic freedom and legislative "micromanagement."

But bill sponsor Rep. Becky Kelso (DFL-Shakopee) said academic freedom won't be affected by the bill, with or without Kelley's amendment. The bill now says that before

"When tenure reaches the point where it's job security, at that point it becomes something other than academic freedom. We need to know that when we're talking about taxpayer dollars," Kelso said. "The University of Minnesota has tremendous financial problems and I wouldn't be talking about this slight tenure change if I felt they had the ability to deal with their financial problems."

Kelso said the modified bill was a step in the right direction but a small one. She reminded the committee "the university's 'Let us do it — don't tell us how to do it' is not a new argument at all. . . . These are very everyday arguments we hear at the Legislature."

Several other legislators expressed concern over modifying the initial bill.

Rep. LeRoy Koppendray (R-Princeton) said changes to the tenure code will be forgotten under the new language.

"I don't know that I was as concerned about 'personnel policies' as I was with the tenure code, which is what straps the university with jobs that cost a lot of money," he said. "I don't see where this language is really going to change that."

Larry Litecky, of the Minnesota Community College Faculty Association, critical of what he called "micromanagement" by the

"We make clear the Legislature's interest in the University adopting changes in the tenure code but we also include language that respects the internal process that's already begun."

—Rep. Steve Kelley

getting the \$4 million for the health center, U of M trustees must certify "that changes have been made in the *personnel policies* for clinical faculty . . . which enable the U of M to alter clinical compensation and base salary and provide a streamlined due process procedure for separation . . . without infringing on academic freedom."

To support her bill, Kelso cited the surplus of tenured faculty members that resulted when the U of M closed its Waseca campus in 1991. Of the 26 tenured faculty affected by the closing, 20 were transferred to the U of M's main campus and six opted for a two-year salary termination package, according to the university.

state, suggested the U of M draw up a report on their progress on tenure reform.

Rep. Howard Orenstein (DFL-St. Paul) told Litecky that reports often don't equal action.

"I'd like to know why you think my job as a legislator is to give a lot of money to an institution and then not worry about what happens to it," Orenstein asked. "There is a frustration that the Legislature has no role to play except signing the check."

The Legislature has limited powers when directing the U of M due to its autonomy granted by the Minnesota Constitution. In many places in state statute, where other higher education systems are mandated to do

Tenure continued on page 24

Donnelly *continued from page 16*

creasingly popular Donnelly had his sights set on Ramsey's U.S. Senate seat, backed off in their support, and Donnelly lost his House seat in 1868. Although he failed to win re-nomination by the Republicans that year, he was nominated by an agrarian-oriented splinter group from the party; as a result of the split, both Republican candidates lost to the Democrat that year.

Donnelly then tried and failed to win Ramsey's vacant seat in the Senate, despite the help of his agrarian allies in the Legislature.

By that time, the Civil War was over and slavery had been abolished. Donnelly, who had been an ardent abolitionist, surprised many people by advocating lenient treatment of the former Confederacy and supporting liberal appropriations by Congress to feed the starving South.

"Government must rest upon the love of the people," Donnelly said in 1867. "I am sorry to hear these appeals made to the natural prejudices and natural bitterness which exists in our hearts. So I say now, in the presence of this suffering and death, I have not the heart to remember anything save only that these people are human, and being human, pitiable."

In 1873, Donnelly joined the Grange, an agrarian-rights group formed in Minnesota in 1868. He helped form the Anti-Monopolist Party, which combined the principles of the Democratic Party and the Grange, and ran successfully for the state Senate in 1873 as a member of the new party.

He held that office until 1878 as an anti-monopolist and a "greenbacker," one who advocated the use of inconvertible paper money. His last political victory came in 1886, when he won a seat in the Minnesota House of Representatives.

Donnelly combined his political career with one as a writer. In 1882 he published *Atlantis, the Antediluvian World*, a book that had 21 printings in the U.S. and 23 in England and was translated into French. The book was Donnelly's attempt to prove that the island of Atlantis once existed; he claimed that the destruction of Atlantis lay behind all the flood legends of mankind.

Donnelly published several more successful tomes. In 1883, his second book, *Ragnarok: The Age of Fire and Gravel*, went through 11 American printings. Five years later, *The Great Cryptogram; or Francis Bacon's Cipher in the Shakespeare Plays* earned him more acclaim. In the book, Donnelly sought to prove that Bacon was the real author of

some of Shakespeare's works.

Donnelly also wrote *Caesar's Column: A Story of the Twentieth Century*, which sold more than 60,000 copies in the U.S. within a month of its publication, and *The Huguet*.

In 1894, Donnelly's wife, Catherine, died. Historians believe it was his loneliness that led him to marry a 20-year-old Scandinavian woman, Marian Olive Hanson, four years later when he was 67.

Donnelly died on New Year's Day 1901.

—Betsy Gerboth

House TV *continued from page 17*

install the cameras. Cowman solved that dilemma by putting up brackets to hold the equipment; both cameras and brackets are removed each year at the end of a legislative session, preserving the chamber's historical integrity.

Another of the department's projects was to establish an interactive television site in Room 5 of the State Office Building. Connected to more than 40 sites throughout Minnesota, the technology allows members of the public to testify before the Legislature while in locations such as Duluth or Marshall, saving time and money by avoiding a trip to St. Paul.

Each day, Cowman meets with his Senate counterpart, Steve Senyk, director of Senate Media Services, to decide which committee hearings should be broadcast. Often, if two meetings conflict with each other, one will be broadcast live and the other taped to be aired later.

Cowman hopes to be able to install robotic cameras in at least one more hearing room this summer, and eventually he'd like to see more committee rooms and possibly a press conference room equipped with cameras.

Ultimately, he says, the main focus should be on the quality of what viewers see on Channel 17. "That's what we're mainly concerned about," he says. "Everyone who works here is really concerned about our on-air product."

—Betsy Gerboth

Tenure *continued from page 18*

something, the U of M is "requested" to do so. Such language reflects the unique status of the U of M.

Mankato State Professor Edgar Twedt issued a warning to lawmakers.

"I remember driving into Rochester and seeing the sign, 'Impeach Earl Warren,'" said

Twedt, expressing gratitude that the former chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court couldn't be removed because of lifelong tenure. "It ought to be difficult to get rid of an academic faculty member in order to preserve academic freedom . . . this is a slippery slope here."

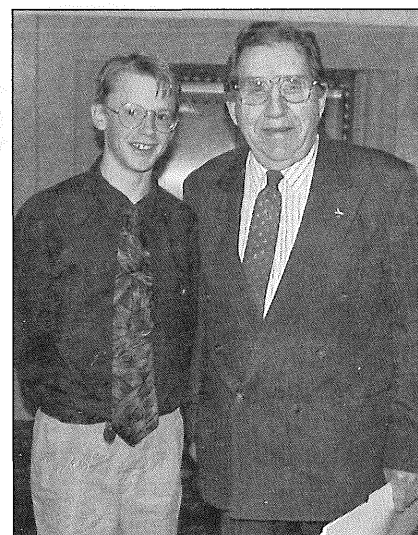
Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park) said tying funds in any way to the tenure system could discourage the U of M from awarding tenure.

"Why would the University grant tenure anymore because their funding could be tied to getting rid of it?" she said.

Because tenure systems vary widely from state to state, a state could put itself at a competitive disadvantage if it curbed its tenure program, said Diamond of Syracuse University.

Diamond, who has not reviewed HF3238 said it sounds like something legislators will be addressing more and more in the future, given dwindling public dollars and rising tuition costs.

—Kendall Anderson



Jeff Fish from the Minnesota New Country School in the LeSueur-Henderson School District and Rep. Willard Munger pose at a Feb. 19 hearing of the Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee. Though they represent different generations of "frog pickers," both are concerned about proposals involving research on deformed frogs. Munger said he used to "pick" thousands of frogs to sell for food when he was Jeff's age. Frogs aren't as bountiful now and some are deformed, he said. Fish, who calls himself "Mr. Hotheads," caught the first deformed frog while on a nature hike near Henderson, Minn., last summer. In testimony, he has said, "We're looking for frogs and answers." (See story, page 11)

Current U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich has proposed that all limits on campaign contributions be eliminated.

"One of the greatest myths of modern politics is that campaigns are too expensive," Gingrich recently told a House committee. "The political process, in fact, is not overfunded, it's underfunded."

While a state ethics panel convened by Gov. Orville Freeman in 1959 didn't say the campaign process needed more money, it did want to abolish all statutory limitations on campaign spending.

"Since it is an advantage to the state to have the voters hear and see the candidates, and since radio and television now make possible a much wider audience,

Do you know?

we think it is a matter of good public policy not to impose such unrealistic limits on expenditures for state candidates," the Governor's Committee on Ethics in Government wrote. It went on to say that any specific dollar limitation would be very hard to justify, "and would probably soon be out of date."

Even in 1959, the panel called the amounts spent on campaigns to be "truly staggering." This in itself was not a bad thing, the panel decided, as long as the money was spent to inform or educate the public.

Instead of limits on spending, the ethics committee wanted full disclosure of campaign contributions that would be open to public inspection. It wouldn't be until 1974 that such a state agency — the Ethical Practices Board — would be created to compile such data. At the same time, the federal government was refining its own tool for campaign law enforcement (the Federal Elections Commission) in the wake of Watergate.

And what about lobbyists? The 1959 ethics panel wanted them to register themselves, identify their clients, and reveal how much they were being paid for their services. Minnesota made that the law in 1974. The U.S. Congress passed similar requirements in 1995.

Minnesota House and Senate Membership

1 A • Jim Tunheim-DFL B • Tim Finseth-R Sen. LeRoy A. Stumpf-DFL	15 A • Tom Van Engen B • Roger Cooper-DFL Sen. Dean E. Johnson-R	29 A • Jerry Dempsey-R B • Mike Osskopp-R Sen. Steve L. Murphy-DFL	43 A • Tom Workman-R B • Barbara Sykora-R Sen. Edward C. Oliver-R	57 A • Walter E. Perl-DFL B • Sharon Marko-DFL Sen. Leonard R. Price-DFL
2 A • Bernie Lieder-DFL B • Edgar Olson-DFL Sen. Roger D. Moe-DFL	16 A • Joe Opatz-DFL B • Jim Knobloch-R Sen. David Kleis-R	30 A • Fran Bradley-R B • Dave Bishop-R Sen. Sheila M. Kiscaden-R	44 A • Steve Kelley-DFL B • Jim Rhodes-R Sen. Ted A. Mondale-DFL	58 A • James I. Rice-DFL B • Richard H. Jefferson-DFL Sen. Carl W. Kroening-DFL
3 A • Irv Anderson-DFL B • Loren Solberg-DFL Sen. Bob Lessard-DFL	17 A • LeRoy Koppendrayner-R B • Leslie Schumacher-DFL Sen. Dan Stevens-R	31 A • Don L. Frerichs-R B • Gregory M. Davids-R Sen. Kenric J. Scheevel-R	45 A • Ron Abrams-R B • Peggy Leppik-R Sen. Martha R. Robertson-R	59 A • John J. Sarna-DFL B • Phyllis Kahn-DFL Sen. Lawrence J. Pogemiller-DFL
4 A • Bob Johnson-DFL B • Anthony G. "Tony" Kinkel-DFL Sen. Harold R. "Skip" Finn-DFL	18 A • Jim Rostberg-R B • Loren Jennings-DFL Sen. Janet B. Johnson-DFL	32 A • Gene Pelowski Jr.-DFL B • Virgil J. Johnson-R Sen. Steven Morse-DFL	46 A • Ann H. Rest-DFL B • Lyndon R. Carlson-DFL Sen. Ember D. Reichgott Junge-DFL	60 A • Dee Long-DFL B • Myron Orfield-DFL Sen. Allan H. Spear-DFL
5 A • Tom Rukavina-DFL B • David Tomassoni-DFL Sen. Jerry R. Janezich-DFL	19 A • Mark Olson-R B • Bruce Anderson-R Sen. Mark Ourada-R	33 A • Arlon Lindner-R B • Rich Stanek-R Sen. Warren Limmer-R	47 A • Darlene Luther-DFL B • Phil Carruthers-DFL Sen. Don Kramer-R	61 A • Karen Clark-DFL B • Linda Wejoman-DFL Sen. Linda Berglin-DFL
6 A • Thomas Bakk-DFL B • Thomas Huntley-DFL Sen. Douglas J. Johnson-DFL	20 A • Robert Ness-R B • Tony Onnen-R Sen. Steve Dille-R	34 A • Steven Smith-R B • H. Todd Van Dellen-R Sen. Gen Olson-R	48 A • Bill Haas-R B • Alice M. Johnson-DFL Sen. Don Betzold-DFL	62 A • Lee Greenfield-DFL B • Wesley J. "Wes" Skoglund-DFL Sen. Carol Flynn-DFL
7 A • Willard Munger-DFL B • Mike Jaros-DFL Sen. Sam G. Solon-DFL	21 A • Jim Girard-R B • Richard Mulder-R Sen. Arlene J. Lesewski-R	35 A • Carol Molnau-R B • Becky Kelson-DFL Sen. Terry D. Johnston-R	49 A • Charlie Weaver-R B • Eldon H. Warkentin-R Sen. Gene Meriam-DFL	63 A • Jean Wagenius-DFL B • Edwina Garcia-DFL Sen. Jane B. Ranum-DFL
8 A • Mary Murphy-DFL B • Becky Lourey-DFL Sen. Florian W. Chmielewski-DFL	22 A • Ted Winter-DFL B • Elaine Harder-R Sen. Jim Vickerman-DFL	36 A • Eileen Tompkins-R B • Dan McElroy-R Sen. David L. Knutson-R	50 A • Tom Hackbarth-R B • Teresa Lynch-R Sen. Paula E. Hanson-DFL	64 A • Matt Entenza-DFL B • Howard Orenstein-DFL Sen. Richard J. Cohen-DFL
9 A • Kevin Goodno-R B • Marvin Dauner-DFL Sen. Keith Langseth-DFL	23 A • Barb Vickerman-R B • Howard Swenson-R Sen. Dennis R. Frederickson-R	37 A • Dennis Ozment-R B • Bill Macklin-R Sen. Pat Pariseau-R	51 A • Mike Delmont-DFL B • Doug Swenson-R Sen. Jane Krentz-DFL	65 A • Andy Dawkins-DFL B • Carlos Mariani-DFL Sen. Sandra L. Pappas-DFL
10 A • Bob Anderson-DFL B • Hilda Bettermann-R Sen. Cal Larson-R	24 A • John Dorn-DFL B • Don Ostrom-DFL Sen. John C. Hottinger-DFL	38 A • Tim Commers-R B • Tim Pawlenty-R Sen. Deanna Wiener-DFL	52 A • Skip Carlson-R B • Richard Pellow-R Sen. Steven G. Novak-DFL	66 A • Tom Osthoff-DFL B • Alice Hausman-DFL Sen. Ellen R. Anderson-DFL
11 A • Roxann Daggett-R B • Ken Oremba-DFL Sen. Dallas C. Sams-DFL	25 A • John Tuma-R B • Lynda Boudreau-R Sen. Thomas M. Neuville-R	39 A • Thomas Pugh-DFL B • Bob Gilbert-DFL Sen. James P. Metzger-DFL	53 A • Phil Krinkie-R B • Sherry Broecker-R Sen. Linda Runbeck-R	67 A • Jim Farrell-DFL B • Steve Trimble-DFL Sen. Randy C. Kelly-DFL
12 A • Kris Hasskamp-DFL B • Stephen G. Wenzel-DFL Sen. Don Samuelson-DFL	26 A • Bob Gunther-R B • Henry J. Kalls-DFL Sen. Tracy L. Beckman-DFL	40 A • Mark P. Mahon-DFL B • Kevin Knight-R Sen. Phil J. Rivenness-DFL	54 A • Mary Jo McGuire-DFL B • Mindy Greiling-DFL Sen. John Marty-DFL	
13 A • Chuck Brown-DFL B • Doug Peterson-DFL Sen. Charles A. Berg-DFL	27 A • Ron Kraus-R B • Robert Leighton Jr.-DFL Sen. Pat Piper-DFL	41 A • Alice Seagren-R B • Ken Wolf-R Sen. William V. Belanger Jr.-R	55 A • Harry Mares-R B • Betty McCollum-DFL Sen. Kevin M. Chandler-DFL	
14 A • Steve Dehler-R B • Jeff Bertram-DFL Sen. Michelle Fischbach-R	28 A • Gary D. Worke-R B • Steven A. Sviggum-R Sen. Dick Day-R	42 A • Ron Erhardt-R B • Erik Paulsen-R Sen. Roy W. Terwilliger-R	56 A • Mark Holsten-R B • Peg Larsen-R Sen. Gary W. Laidig-R	

Unofficial list as of February 12, 1996

Bill Introductions

HF3214-HF3239

Monday, Feb. 19

HF3214—Rukavina (DFL) Governmental Operations

State government debt collection enterprise placed under the authority of the Department of Revenue.

HF3215—Rest (DFL) Taxes

Obsolete tax laws and references removed.

HF3216—Bishop (R) Capital Investment

Local voter-approved bond proceed use requirements specified.

HF3217—Olson, E. (DFL) Ways & Means

Corrections, human services, natural resources, transportation, and veterans affairs departments claims payment provided.

HF3218—Sykora (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Airport construction restricted, noise mitigation plan inclusion and soundproofing provided, transitway construction required, met center purchase authorized, and money appropriated.

HF3219—Macklin (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Airport construction restricted, noise mitigation plan and soundproofing provided, transitway construction required, met center purchase authorized, and money appropriated.

HF3220—McCollum (DFL)
Transportation & Transit
Wild and scenic river bridge construction restrictions provided.

HF3221—Schumacher (DFL)
Judiciary
School notification of juvenile incidents by law enforcement agencies provisions modified.

HF3222—Peterson (DFL)
Education
Collaborative telecommunication plan development provided, and money appropriated.

Wednesday, Feb. 21

HF3223—Dawkins (DFL)
Taxes
Police and Firefighter Relief Association state aid provisions modified.

HF3224—Tompkins (R)
Health & Human Services
Disabled and elderly services regional planning and development established.

HF3225—Vickerman (R)
Taxes
Property tax prepayment discount authorized.

HF3226—Johnson, V. (R)
Taxes
Alternative fuel powered motor vehicle registration tax reduction provided.

HF3227—Seagren (R)
Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs
Airport construction restricted, noise mitigation plan inclusion and soundproofing provided, transitway construction required, met center purchase authorized, and money appropriated.

HF3228—Smith (R)
Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs
Airport construction restricted, noise mitigation plan inclusion and soundproofing provided, transitway construction required, met center purchase authorized, and money appropriated.

HF3229—Holsten (R)
Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs
Airport construction restricted, noise mitigation plan inclusion and soundproofing provided, transitway construction required, met center purchase authorized, and money appropriated.

HF3230—Kelley (DFL)
Taxes
Commercial-industrial property tax class rate reduction provided in certain areas.

Thursday, Feb. 22

HF3231—Brown (DFL)
Ways & Means
Omnibus environment and natural resources, and agriculture appropriations bill.

HF3232—Farrell (DFL)
Judiciary
Peace officer disciplinary procedures extended to include correctional officers.

HF3233—Smith (R)
Financial Institutions & Insurance
Insurers required to pay an annual subrogation and indemnification claim assessment.

HF3234—Bakk (DFL)
Taxes
Taconite concentration tax proceeds appropriated to the University of Minnesota natural resources research institute.

HF3235—Pawlenty (R)
Taxes
Dependent child income tax credit allowed.

HF3236—Hausman (DFL)
Regulated Industries & Energy
Nuclear waste dry cask storage property tax provisions modified, and money appropriated.

HF3237—Larsen (R)
Taxes
MinnesotaCare tax rate reduced for persons providing dental services.

HF3238—Kelso (DFL)
Ways & Means
University of Minnesota board of regents appropriated money.

HF3239—Kinkel (DFL)
Ways & Means
Omnibus higher education appropriations bill.

Minnesota State Agencies

State Information	296-6013
Agriculture	297-2200
Commerce	296-4026
Corrections	642-0200
Education	296-6104
Employee Relations	297-1184
Job Information	296-2616
Finance	296-5900
Gaming	
Gambling Control Division ...	639-4000
MN State Lottery Division	635-8100
Toll Free	1-800-475-4000
MN Racing Commission	341-7555

Health	623-5000
Human Rights	296-5663
Toll Free	1-800-657-3704
Human Services	296-6117
Economic Security	296-3711
Labor and Industry	296-6107
Military Affairs	282-4662
Natural Resources	296-6157
Public Safety	296-6642
Driver and Vehicle Services ..	296-6911
Fire Marshal	643-3080
Liquor Control	296-6159
State Patrol	297-3935

Pollution Control	296-6300
Public Service	296-7107
Revenue	
Taxpayer Assistance	296-3781
Toll Free	1-800-652-9094
Trade and	
Economic Development	297-1291
Office of Tourism	296-5029
Transportation	296-3000
Veterans Affairs	296-2562
House Information	296-2146
Senate Information	296-0504

Coming Up Next Week . . . Feb. 26 - Mar. 1, 1996

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.
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MONDAY, Feb. 26

8:30 a.m.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Henry Kalis
Agenda: "Must Do" list.

9 a.m.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ann H. Rest
Agenda: Omnibus Tax Bill.

10 a.m.

WAYS & MEANS

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Loren Solberg
Agenda: Transportation Finance Division Bill.
Economic Development Infrastructure &
Regulation Finance Committee Bill.
Other bills to be announced.

11 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mike Jaros
Agenda: Economic development opportuni-
ties for women: MN and worldwide connec-
tions. Aviva Breen, executive director, Legisla-
tive Commission on Economic Status of Women.
Nazrin Jewell, professor of economics, College
of St. Catherine. Mary Jo Czaplewski, National
Council on Family Relations. Jan Stevens, MN
Rural Futures. Report on MN women-owned
businesses: An Analysis of Access to Capital,
Bob Isaacson and Christi Petersen, Department
of Trade and Economic Development.

12:15 p.m.

RULES & LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

118 State Capitol
Chr. Rep. Phil Carruthers
Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

TUESDAY, Feb. 27

8:30 a.m.

Permanent School Fund Advisory Committee

300N State Office Building
Rep. Lyndon Carlson
Agenda: Update on Permanent School Trust
Fund, Jim Heidelberg, State Board of Invest-
ment. Land exchange item.

WAYS & MEANS

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Loren Solberg
Agenda: Health & Human Services Finance
Division Bill.
State Government Finance Division Bill.
Other bills to be announced.

10 a.m.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ann H. Rest
Agenda: To be announced.

10:30 a.m.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Henry Kalis
Agenda: To be announced.

12:15 p.m.

RULES & LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

118 State Capitol
Chr. Rep. Phil Carruthers
Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

After Session

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Henry Kalis
Agenda: To be announced.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 28

8:30 a.m.

WAYS & MEANS

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Loren Solberg
Agenda: Judiciary Finance Bill (Murphy).
Tax bill.
Other bills to be announced.

12:30 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

THURSDAY, Feb. 29

8 a.m.

EDUCATION

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Lyndon Carlson
Agenda: Report from Vocational High School
Planning Council.

8:30 a.m.

WAYS & MEANS

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Loren Solberg
Agenda: To be announced.

10 a.m.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ann H. Rest
Agenda: To be announced.

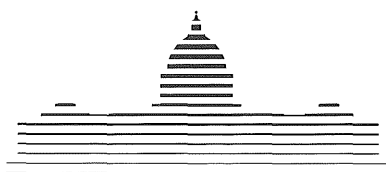
12:30 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

FRIDAY, March 1

9 a.m.

The House meets in Session.



MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
175 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
ST. PAUL, MN 55155-1298

Speaker of the House: Irv Anderson
Majority Leader: Phil Carruthers
Minority Leader: Steven A. Sviggum

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota State Fair

State representatives who volunteered to work at the House of Representatives booth at the 1995 Minnesota State Fair	40
Amount the 1885 Legislature appropriated to the state Agricultural Society for buildings at what is now the permanent fairgrounds site (formerly the Ramsey County Poor Farm)	\$100,000
Dollars the state has appropriated to the state fair since 1949	0
Dollars the state appropriated in 1949 for the building of the Hippodrome, or present-day Coliseum	\$400,000
Year the Legislature passed a resolution asking that the State Fair be closed on Sundays	1921
Length of time Minnesotans stood politely in 90-degree heat before they interrupted then-Vice-President Calvin Coolidge, forcing him to abandon his speech on America's economic state in 1922, in minutes	45
Cities where the fair has been held outside of St. Paul or Minneapolis (Owatonna, Red Wing, Rochester, Winona)	4
Shade trees and shrubs planted on the fairgrounds in 1892	1,000
Year that gas lighting first made evening events at the fair possible	1899
State Fair speeches canceled by Teddy Roosevelt due to laryngitis, 1912	1
Pies, cookies, and cakes exhibited at the 1918 State Fair (due to wartime sugar rationing)	0
Visitors to the 1995 State Fair, most in fair history	1,673,312
Dollars taken in from gate receipts, 1995, in millions	\$6.5
Receipts from the 1895 State Fair	\$49,775
Ribbons awarded for State Fair competitions, 1995	29,848
Piglets born during the fair's run, 1995	32
Rides at the Midway and Kidway	67
Tree carvings now present on the fairgrounds	28
Plastic cups recycled during the fair, in millions, 1995	3
as a percentage of all cups used during the fair	67
Gallons of milk served at the American Dairy Association's "All the milk you can drink" stand, 1995	20,000
Pounds of butter used to sculpt the likenesses of 11 dairy princesses, 1995	990
Different foods on a stick available at the 1995 State Fair (including gefilte fish, cheesecake, and walleye)	25
Tons of sand used to create the 1995 sand sculpture	380
Vehicles formerly owned by Marilyn Monroe on display in 1995 (a 1955 coral pink Lincoln Capris)	1

Sources: *Minnesota State Fair, January 1996*, Minnesota State Agricultural Society; *Minnesota State Fair: The History and Heritage of 100 Years*, Ray Speer, Harry Frost.

For more information



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House Information Office
(612) 296-2146 or
1-800-657-3550

To obtain a copy of a bill, call:
Chief Clerk's Office
(612) 296-2314

To find out about bill introductions or the status of a specific bill, call:
House Index Office
(612) 296-6646

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