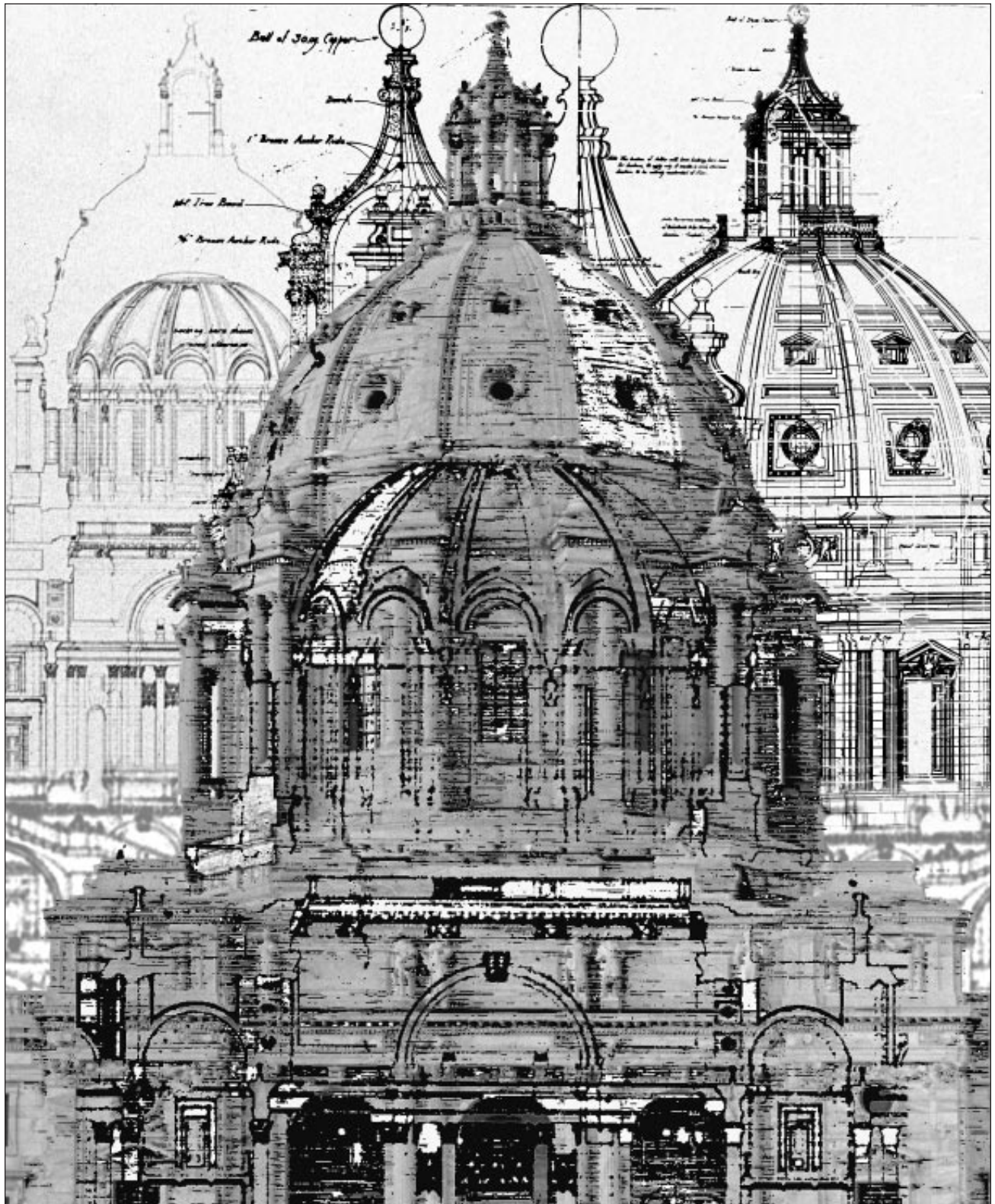


SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ February 21, 1997 ♦ Volume 14, Number 7



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Update

The Legislature has taken on more of an academic atmosphere this session. A quest for information has been influenced by the need to have more detailed knowledge about the important issues introduced in the form of bills and discussed in committee hearings.

Walk into a committee meeting, and likely, you will think you are in a college classroom. Depending on the committee, you may find yourself listening to an academic discussion or a question and answer discourse on the state of prisons, welfare, highways, school recidivism, or why frogs with abnormal bodies are being found in south central Minnesota.

For members and staff, a recent increase in what is being learned about the many aspects affecting our lives, is for the most part, a direct influence on an increase in the amount of information offered throughout the complex.

As reported in the Jan. 31, 1997, *Session Weekly*, page 15, a new source for learning is a five-part Capitol Forum series, "Discussing Minnesota's Future," sponsored by Minnesota Technology Inc. and the McKnight Foundation. Topics already explored by lawmakers are "Transforming the Face of Minnesota's Workforce" and "Thinking in the Future Tense."

Other experts have assisted with extending the knowledge of individuals in the Capitol complex through seminars, lectures, hearings, and fact-finding tours. Those participating have been informed and advised on a variety of issues yet to come before the Legislature.

In the last three weeks, continuing education around the complex embodied reshaping Minnesota's welfare program; how a shift in the use of public tax dollars can change economic development for the state; and the implications of universal access in the 1996 U.S. Telecommunications Act.

Other lectures, reported in this issue of the *Session Weekly*, involved a four-hour crime prevention issues forum, and a joint gathering of the House and Senate on closing the learning gap among rich and poor youth throughout the state.

Legislators are showing much seriousness as they scurry from a seminar to a committee hearing and then to session. A dedication to an increase in knowledge by lawmakers and some staff is obvious. For most, the end result will be personal development. The lawmaking process will benefit.

According to the educator, John Dewey, "Development emphasizes the need of . . . extensive acquaintance . . . with a view to mastering the way of dealing with the problems of experience, not [just] the piling up of information."

—LeClair Lambert

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On the cover: a photo illustration using images from Cass Gilbert's original Capitol blueprints.

—by Andrew Von Bank

Blueprint images courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

Highlights

Rush City prison . . .

Revised plan uses double-bunking to meet budget

The House Judiciary Committee approved a bill Feb. 17 that would transform the design of the prison scheduled for construction in Rush City, Minn., this spring. The new plan calls for double-bunking in the majority of the prison cells. Originally, most cells would have held a single prisoner.

HF268 would repeal a statute that requires inmates to be placed in separate cells whenever space allows in prisons at a security level of the planned Rush City prison. Higher security prisons, such as Oak Park Heights, would not be affected by the proposal. The bill also reverses an earlier requirement specific to the Rush City prison that it be designed with mostly single occupancy units. The bill now requires the opposite — the new facility must provide multiple occupancy cells “to the greatest extent possible.” The result is that only one-seventh of the cells at Rush City will house a single prisoner.

“The main difference between this and the 1996 bill [authorizing the prison to be built] is that it allows the facility to be double-celled,” said Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown), the bill’s sponsor.

The corrections department had asked for \$100 million for the prison; the Legislature approved \$89 million in its bonding bill last session.

The department’s new plan calls for three



Minnesota’s only maximum security prison, Oak Park Heights, *shown above*, will not be affected by legislation that would allow the new prison in Rush City to be built with double occupancy cells.

According to projections compiled by Minnesota Planning Criminal Justice Center, Minnesota youths age 15 to 19 had the highest arrest rates for violent and nonviolent crimes in 1995, the year of the study. Minnesota’s population in the 10- to 24-year age group is expected to climb in the seven-county metro area from 470,760 in 1995 to 552,210 in 2005, when it reaches its peak. In Minnesota’s remaining 80 counties,

are expected to exceed prison capacity.

While double-bunking enables the prison to be built within budget and adds to its capacity, it raises other concerns. Much debate has centered around safety issues for both inmates and personnel. The solution, according to prison officials who testified before the committee Feb. 17, is to provide the necessary staffing and activities for state inmates. The intention is for prisoners to be in their cells only at night.

“The bottom line is that there’s an interconnection between staff, programming, double-bunking, inmate security, and guard security. If that isn’t addressed by the legislation, we’ll have problems,” said John Beer of AFSCME, which represents the union to which many prison personnel belong. “With adequate staffing, remarkable things can be done to manage institutions.” Beer said there is a correlation between assaults and inadequate staffing, but the role of double-bunking in the equation was not known. He said that AFSCME has “not taken a hard and fast position” on double-bunking.

Still, his points raised the question from Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights) as to how much money double-bunking saves

***“We’re doing this for money
and only money.”***

—Rep. Michael Paymar

‘pods,’ or living sections, with 136 double-occupancy cells in each, and one pod with 136 single-occupancy units. The double-occupancy cells will measure 84.2 square feet. The new design increases the facility’s capacity to 952 inmates, up from 800.

The earlier plan had called for six single-occupancy pods. The two pods not requested in the new proposal could be added later if needed.

that population will peak in the year 2000 at 489,040, according to the study. Crime statistics reveal those populations to be over-represented in the state’s prison population. Further, the overall adult male prison population in Minnesota is expected to increase from 5,043 in 1997 to 6,282 in 2005. An additional 346 adult females are also expected to be behind bars. Both populations

if it increases staff and program requirements.

"We're not prepared to say how much money the new plan will save, but we think it will create some efficiencies," Benson said. "We'll have to add some staff," but not so much it will drive up costs, he added.

And Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) questioned the wisdom of any policy that forces prisoners into close quarters.

"I'm speaking against this policy in the strongest terms," he said. "I think we'll see an increase in assaults and lawsuits. The issues of the safety of the staff and inmates have not been adequately addressed by the committee. . . . This is cost-driven, folks," he added. "We're doing this for money and only money. While we have a fiduciary responsibility, this is shortsighted."

Paymar also expressed doubt at Deputy Commissioner Dennis Benson's assertion that only one confirmed rape has occurred in more than 10 years within the prison population. The prison environment precludes the reporting of such crimes, Paymar suggested.

No study has been conducted on the policies other states follow on prison double-bunking. Minnesota is thought to be among a minority with laws on the books in this regard. On the federal level, only one prison — a "super-maximum" security facility in Colorado — has exclusively single-occupancy units throughout the facility.

The department also outlined for lawmakers a new classification system in which all prisons will be assigned a number between one and six, with six referring to the highest security facilities, and one, the lowest. Rush City's prison will be classified as a level four, which is the highest number in which double-bunking will be allowed. The prison at Oak Park Heights is a maximum security, or level six; Stillwater and St. Cloud correctional facilities are level five; the correctional facilities at Lino Lakes, Moose Lake, and Faribault are level three; Brainerd's facility is a two, and Willow River, Red Wing, MSU/Stillwater, and Shakopee correctional facilities are level one.

HF268 now moves to the House Capital Investment Committee.

— Celeste Riley



AGRICULTURE

The price of ethanol

Minnesota's burgeoning ethanol industry was the subject of criticism and praise during a Feb. 14 House Agriculture Committee hearing focused on a recent legislative auditor's report on state ethanol programs.

The report, released in early February, questions the benefits of Minnesota's promotion of ethanol in gasoline, but some committee members and other officials were unbending in their support for the ethanol industry.

"Ethanol production is one of those things that is a bright star out there," said Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison).

According to the report, the ethanol industry has helped small, rural communities by providing high-wage jobs and a market for corn growers.

However, the report also notes that the state has paid a high price to support ethanol, and the product has driven up gasoline prices and reduced gas mileage.

The report estimates that Minnesota consumers pay an extra 2- to 3-cents-per-gallon for ethanol-blended fuel, creating a total statewide cost of about \$42 million annually.

However, a Department of Agriculture official argued that ethanol is not responsible for higher prices at the pump.

"We dispute that," said Jerry Heil, director of agriculture marketing and development for the department. "We disagree with the methodology used to draw that conclusion."

The state requires the use of ethanol or similar products to reduce harmful automobile emissions, but the report states there is no clear link between the use of ethanol-blended fuel and reduced carbon monoxide in the atmosphere.

"As far as the environmental issues are concerned, it's a question mark," Legislative Auditor James Nobles said. "It's not so much a negative statement as it is a question mark."

Not so, according to Heil, who said there is "no doubt" ethanol has had an effect on reducing pollution.

State law requires that gasoline sold year-round in the Twin Cities area contain a certain amount of oxygen. Beginning in October 1997, the oxygen requirement will be extended statewide. (Use of ethanol is not mandated, but the product, which is derived from corn and other agricultural products, is the oxygenation agent regularly used in Minnesota.)

There are now eight ethanol plants oper-

ating in the state, and three more are under construction. All but one of the plants are farmer-owned cooperatives, and most of them were constructed after the state initiated the producer payment in 1987.

The producer payment provides a 20-cent-per-gallon subsidy for ethanol. The federal government contributes an additional 54-cent-per-gallon subsidy.

The report estimates the industry's total economic impact statewide to be \$211 million to \$327 million annually. But, the report says, the industry costs Minnesotans a significant sum in state subsidies, higher gas prices, and reduced fuel efficiency.

Gov. Arne Carlson is advocating increased state support for ethanol. The governor's budget proposal calls for the state to spend \$49 million on ethanol subsidies during the 1998-1999 biennium, double the amount spent during the current two-year spending period.

Tax-free farm equipment

Minnesota farmers would not be required to pay state sales tax on the agricultural machinery necessary to their industry, under a bill approved Feb. 17 by the House Agriculture Committee.

HF118, sponsored by Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar), would permanently lift the state sales tax on both new and used farm machinery.

"There's no tax along the rest of the food chain right now," Juhnke said. "Why should we tax it in the beginning?"

Current state law includes a temporary sales tax exemption for used farm machinery, but it is set to expire June 30, 1997. Without the exemption, farmers buying used machinery would be required to pay 2.5 percent sales tax, the same rate currently applied to new farm machinery purchases.

The exemption for used farm machinery has been in place since 1994, when a law was passed allowing the exemption for a period of one year. Subsequently, lawmakers have twice voted to extend the sunset date of that law.

"I don't see any reason why we should be back here every year doing this," Juhnke said. "It ought to be permanent."

The bill originally affected only the sales of used farm machinery, but the committee approved an amendment to exempt new machinery as well.

It is estimated that the tax exemption for used machinery would cost the state about \$3.4 million in lost revenue during the 1998-

99 biennium. Adding new machinery to the equation would push the total to \$26.2 million in lost tax revenue during the two-year period.

The exemption would apply to machinery used directly and principally for production of crops, livestock, and other agricultural goods. That includes anything from milking machines to tractors.

Farmers would continue to pay full sales tax on related equipment, such as pickup trucks and snow blowers.

HF118 now moves to the House Taxes Committee.



CHILDREN

Adoption reimbursement caps

A bill to allow the state to reimburse adoption agencies up to \$16,000 when placing certain children with adoptive families won approval from the House Governmental Operations Committee Feb. 20.

The bill (HF374) will affect special needs children who are eligible for the state's adoption assistance program. Most of the children are in the foster care system and have suffered from neglect or abuse. (See Feb. 14, 1997, *Session Weekly*, page. 4.)

Reimbursement for agency costs is currently capped at \$4,000 per child, a figure that hasn't changed since 1980. Costs for the placements now average between \$8,000 and \$13,000. One reason for the increased cost is the need for extensive follow-up services for special-needs placements.

Bill sponsor Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud) said there are 813 children currently in foster care whom the new law will effect. Their average age is eight, he said. An unknown number of other children are currently in various stages of adoption.

Knoblach's original proposal left the reimbursement figure open-ended, limited only to "reasonable and appropriate costs." But several committee members expressed concern that a cap is needed to prevent costs from rising dramatically.

"We need a cap or costs will rise to the maximum people think they can get," said Rep. Tony Kinkel (DFL-Park Rapids).

HF 374 now moves to the House floor.

Check your local listings to watch the House committee and floor sessions on TV.



Carol Holmes of Plymouth holds her daughter, Laura, while listening to U.S. Sen. Paul Wellstone and others speak at a PTA rally in honor of the organization's 100-year anniversary. The event took place in the Capitol rotunda Feb. 17.



EDUCATION

Alcohol-free drivers

School bus drivers would be disqualified from their job if caught with even a trace of alcohol in their system, under a bill approved Feb. 19 by the House Transportation and Transit Committee.

HF506, sponsored by Rep. Doug Swenson (R-Forest Lake), would make it illegal for a school bus driver to be on the job "when there is physical evidence present in the person's body of the consumption of any alcohol."

Current state law makes it a crime for a school bus driver to operate a bus with a blood-alcohol concentration of .04 percent or more. The .04 percent limit applies to all commercial drivers. The legal limit for other drivers is .10 percent.

Under Swenson's bill, school bus drivers or Head Start bus drivers would face a misdemeanor charge if caught with alcohol in their system. And violators would lose their commercial license for one year on the first offense.

The alcohol-related provision is part of a larger school bus safety bill that would make numerous technical changes in the law in order to update state standards for school bus equipment.

Swenson's bill is based on recommendations from the School Bus Safety Advisory Committee, a 17-member panel including

bus drivers and officials from state departments, the state patrol, school districts, and other organizations.

The provision tightening the alcohol limit for school bus drivers was included in the bill to "create a not-a-drop environment," said Dennis Lazenberry, pupil transportation safety director for the state patrol and a member of the advisory committee.

The bill also would make some minor changes to existing state law regarding bus safety education for students.

A 1994 law requires school districts to designate the first week of each school year as school bus safety week. During that week, each district is required to provide K-12 students with bus safety training.

Swenson's bill would move school bus safety week to the third week of the school year and would lift the requirement that students be trained in bus safety during that week.

Lazenberry said the proposed changes aim to give school districts more flexibility during the busy days at the beginning of the school year.

Members of the committee deleted a separate, potentially controversial provision from the bill.

The provision would have mandated that school bus drivers walk the aisle after each route to check for sleeping children or other stragglers, and it would have made failure to do so a misdemeanor.

Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) said such checks are "a good practice," but that it is not

necessary to threaten bus drivers with a misdemeanor penalty.

HF506 now goes to the House Judiciary Committee.



ELECTIONS

Keeping track of voters

Under a bill approved Feb. 17 by the General Legislation, Veterans Affairs and Elections Committee, the Office of the Secretary of State will acquire change-of-address lists from the U.S. Postal Service. The lists will help the Secretary's office maintain accurate and updated records of registered voters.

About 25,000 Minnesotans change residences each year, but the Secretary of State's office has no way of tracking them. "We don't even know they've moved until a voter attempts to register or vote again," said Joe Mansky, director of the Secretary of State's Elections Division. "Our records can be inaccurate for up to two years."

The Secretary of State's office will collect the lists about once a month. It has the full cooperation of the postal service, Mansky said. "Now we can update our database on an ongoing basis so it's always correct."

The office will send a postcard to each resident who moves within Minnesota, informing them of the location of their new polling place.

HF294, sponsored by Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins), now moves to the House floor.



ENVIRONMENT

Snowmobile funding

As Minnesota's 1997 snowmobile-related death toll rose to a record of 28, legislators introduced yet more proposals addressing snowmobile safety, trail maintenance, and funding issues.

Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) brought a bill (HF407) to the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee Feb. 19 that seeks additional revenue to help pay for the snowmobile initiatives that other bills are proposing.

"We need an influx of money into the system," Bakk told the panel. "I support many of the policy issues that are being brought forward. But without funding, we won't be able to enact these new policies."

Bakk's bill would increase the snowmobile registration fee from the current \$30 every three years to \$45. The measure would

raise an additional \$1.25 million annually, Bakk said. Other bills under consideration by the Legislature, including one the committee approved last week, would double the fee to \$60.

Bakk also proposed that snowmobilers be required to purchase \$10 permit stickers in order to use state-owned trails. The 2,000 miles of state trails constitute the backbone of Minnesota's 18,000-mile snowmobile trail system, Bakk said. The other 16,000 miles of trails are locally owned and maintained, often with state grants. The sticker fee would generate another \$3 million annually, according to Bakk, without penalizing those who don't use the system, such as farmers who just use snowmobiles to do chores on their own property. Sticker fees would also allow the state to collect from out-of-state riders who use Minnesota's trail system, Bakk said.

In addition, the bill provides that 1 percent of the state's gasoline tax revenues be designated for snowmobile-related purposes. About 1 percent of gasoline sold in the state goes into snowmobiles.

The bill also would appropriate \$1 million annually from the state general fund in 1997 and 1998 for local trail maintenance. For the

past few years, snowmobile clubs, which maintain local trails with state grant-in-aid funds, have run out of money before the end of the season and had to ask the Legislature for emergency appropriations. Most clubs have already exhausted this year's trail maintenance funds.

HF407 was approved and now moves to the Transportation and Transit Committee.



HOUSING

Accessibility loans

Foster parents wanting to take in a disabled child will be eligible for the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency's accessibility loan program, under a provision in a bill (HF517) approved by the House Economic Development and International Trade Committee's Housing and Housing Finance Division Feb. 18.

Accessibility loans are typically used to pay for construction of wheelchair ramps and other special adaptations needed by disabled people. Under current law, only disabled individuals or their families are eligible for the loan program. HF517 would allow loans to households if someone residing in



Linda Wolford, Minneapolis, and other Metro Mobility riders attended a rally in the Capitol rotunda Feb. 19 to support full funding for the system and to talk about issues such as the increase in trip denials.

the household has a permanent physical or mental disability.

"The present law is too restrictive," said Tonja Orr, director of government affairs for the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. "Foster parents who want to care for a disabled child are being excluded."

The bill also drops a restriction that defines disability as a condition that would otherwise require hospitalization or skilled nursing care facilities.

HF517 contains several other provisions and will eventually become the omnibus housing funding bill. The bill will stay in the Housing and Housing Finance Division until it is completed later in the session.



INSURANCE

Direct OB/GYN access

A bill to forbid health insurers from requiring women to receive a referral in order to see an obstetrician or gynecologist won approval Feb. 19 from the House Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee.

HF447, sponsored by Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown), would require that insurance companies and health maintenance organizations (HMOs) allow female enrollees direct access to obstetricians and gynecologists.

Under the bill, women would have to be allowed to schedule appointments with an obstetrician or gynecologist without prior approval from the insurer or a referral from a "gatekeeper" primary care physician.

"Why shouldn't I be able to see that person without having to [first] see a physician I don't even know?" Murphy said.

The bill would require that women be given direct access to an obstetrician or gynecologist for annual examinations, any subsequent treatment deemed necessary by the specialist, maternity care, and treatment of acute or emergency conditions. Companies would be barred from charging women extra for direct access.

The bill is necessary to protect women's "traditional right" of direct access, said Dr. Jan Strathy, the legislative liaison for the Minnesota Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists/Minnesota Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Strathy stressed that the bill would not mandate any new coverage; it would simply ensure that women are not waylaid by ever-changing "gatekeeper" policies.

"Women should be able to choose the type of physician that will attend to their most intimate medical needs," Strathy said.

Nineteen states already have laws guaranteeing direct access to obstetricians and gynecologists. Proposals similar to HF447 are being considered in several other states, according to Strathy.

Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) told members of the committee that she was once charged by her insurer for an visit to an obstetrician/gynecologist because she had not received a referral.

"It's one thing to be able to choose out of your provider network," Boudreau said. "It's another thing to have to get permission from a gatekeeper to see a specialist."

The bill now moves to the House floor.

More coverage for diabetics

Health plans would be required to provide coverage for training and education to assist diabetics in managing their disease, under a bill headed for the House floor.

HF653, sponsored by Rep. Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul), was approved Feb. 19 by the House Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee.

The bill would expand a 1994 law requiring medical insurance companies and health maintenance organizations (HMOs) to provide coverage for syringes, blood-testing devices, and other equipment diabetics need.

Pugh said his bill would help to ensure diabetics know how to use the medical equipment and how to monitor their own condition. Medical nutrition therapy would be

required to be included in health coverage, under the bill.

Dr. Richard Bergenstal, executive director of the International Diabetes Center, urged lawmakers to support the bill.

If unchecked, diabetes can lead to blindness, kidney failure, amputation, and other serious concerns, Bergenstal said. But, he added, early education and effort to control the disease can help diabetics "at a stage when we can prevent many of these devastating complications."



LABOR

Temporary work restrictions

Thousands of Minnesota companies, large and small, have come to depend on temporary workers to perform a wide variety of jobs. A bill (HF155) now before the House Labor-Management Committee seeks to limit employer use of temporary workers.

In a Feb. 17 hearing, bill sponsor Rep. Mike Jaros (DFL-Duluth) said that his intent is to limit temporary employment in the same position to 600 working days in a consecutive three-year period. There would be an exemption for companies with fewer than 20 employees.

"I'm not against temporary agencies or their employees; they are needed for work overload situations," Jaros said. "But from my study, temporary workers are often used by employers to bypass giving employment



On Feb. 20, one-year-old Elizabeth Krinkie, daughter of Rep. Phil Krinkie, decided that the bills on her dad's desk needed more work.

benefits. Employees with permanent jobs will be happier.”

The committee took no action on the bill.

The one witness Jaros had lined up to speak for the bill, AFL-CIO President Bernard Brommer, did not attend the meeting.

Seven witnesses did speak in opposition to the bill.

Neil Clark, president of Minnesota Technical Services Association, gave the panel a handout listing myths and facts about temporary employment. “There is a misconception that temporary employees get lower wages,” he said. “But we must compete for employees in the same market as everyone else.”

Clark said that some of his technical employees have earned from \$40 to \$60 per hour working temporary assignments. He also stressed that many temporary agencies offer employees such benefits as paid holidays and vacations, health care, and 401k retirement plans.

“Our industry and workers are very opposed to this bill,” said Jackie Engmark, president of Minnesota Association of Temporary Services and owner of an employment agency. “It will severely damage the temporary industry in Minnesota.”

Engmark said that 55 percent of her workers wind up finding permanent employment by working temporary jobs. She added that, for a variety of reasons, some workers prefer to work temporary jobs.

One such person is Ingrid Pasko, who has worked for Engmark’s agency for more than three years. Pasko told the panel that, because of her family, she needs the flexibility that temporary work offers more than the benefits that go with a permanent job. “My husband’s health benefits cover us,” she said. “Working temp allows me to take off when I need to for my kids.”

Employers hire temporary workers for the flexibility and to be more honest with their commitments to employees, said Rob Reinhardt of the Minnesota Employers Council. “I’ve been listening and have yet to hear what problem is being addressed by this legislation. Thoughtful employers don’t want to engage in layoffs so they use temporary workers to fill in. The alternative is to hire more people than you need and then have to lay them off.”

Committee Chair Rep. Richard Jefferson (DFL-Mpls) appointed a six-member working group on HF155 to revise the bill and report back to the panel.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Police benefits

A bill to ensure that peace officers disabled in the line of duty continue to receive health coverage for themselves and their families won approval from a House panel Feb. 20.

“This is an initiative that came out of the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association,” Dennis Flaherty, executive director of the MPPOA, told the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee. “It is near and dear to our members.”

There are currently 54 former Minnesota peace officers receiving retirement pensions after becoming disabled by duty-related injuries. Though they are eligible for pensions, many of these officers lost their health care benefits once they could no longer serve as peace officers.

HF333, sponsored by Rep. Jim Farrell (DFL-St. Paul), would require their previous employers to provide health care coverage. It also would extend the same coverage to the dependents of those killed in the line of duty.

A recent survey of registered voters commissioned by the MPPOA indicated that 95 percent of Minnesotans support such benefits for injured officers, according to Flaherty. Continuing health benefits for the families of officers killed in the line of duty was supported by 82 percent of the respondents.

Minneapolis currently provides such coverage under a negotiated contract with the Minneapolis Police Federation, said Joel Jamnik of the League of Minnesota Cities. St. Paul provides similar coverage to the families of officers killed in the line of duty.

“The League does not support this bill,” Jamnik said. “These matters should be dealt with in collective bargaining agreements in each individual city.”

“While I am sympathetic to the intent of this bill, when you get right down to it, what you have here is an unfunded mandate for cities and counties,” Jamnik said. “If you are going to pass this you should also provide funding.”

An average of three officers per year lose their lives in the line of duty in Minnesota, Flaherty said.

Several committee members also criticized the bill for creating an unfunded mandate for local governments. An amendment by Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph), which failed, would have allowed the state to reimburse local governments for compliance with the law.

Rep. Ron Kraus (R-Albert Lea) asked why others who risk their lives for the public such as fire fighters and emergency medical technicians aren’t included in the bill. Farrell responded that those groups could each bring forth their own legislation.

HF333 now goes to the House floor.

Potential government savings

A bill designed to save local governments some money in publishing legal notices won approval from a House panel Feb. 18.

For a variety of reasons, cities, townships, and counties must publish legal notices in local newspapers. The ads serve as public notice for land sales, class action lawsuits, and other government actions.

Under current law, local governments can only publish such notices in newspapers whose primary offices are within the government’s jurisdiction.

But that limitation can cost local governments more than necessary when nearby newspapers charge substantially less for ad space.

HF356, sponsored by Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville), would allow local governments to officially designate any newspaper with at least 25 percent of its circulation within the government’s jurisdiction.

A letter from the Roseville City Council detailed the problem for members of the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee.

“The council designated the *Roseville Review* as the official newspaper for 1996, based on substantially lower cost.” But the letter of the law required the city to select the *Roseville Focus*, based on the paper’s office location. The restriction will cause Roseville to pay approximately 75 percent more, or about \$4,500, for legal notices in 1996.

Joel Jamnik of the League of Minnesota Cities told the committee that his group supports the bill. “It will potentially reduce costs to cities while still providing for adequate public notice,” he said.

Mark Anfinson, the Minnesota Newspaper Association’s attorney, said that he is generally supportive of the measure, while his organization has yet to take an official position.

The bill now moves to the House floor.



TAXES

Cutting property taxes

The House Taxes Committee's Property Tax and Tax Increment Finance Division took the first steps on the road toward reforming the state's complex property tax code Feb. 19.

The division approved HF126, sponsored by Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul), which would draw on Minnesota's projected budget surplus to buy down the property tax rates on commercial, industrial, and utility properties.

Currently, the first \$100,000 of such properties is taxed at 3 percent, with the remaining value taxed at 4.6 percent. HF126 would extend the 3-percent bracket to \$200,000. Commercial-industrial property in an enterprise zone, now assessed at 2.3 percent rate on the first \$50,000 and 3.6 percent between \$50,000 and \$200,000, would be taxed at 2.3 percent on the first \$200,000. Property values over that amount would be assessed at the 3.6-percent rate.

The state government would offset the loss of revenue to local governments, estimated at \$26 million per year, by increasing the amount provided through Minnesota's Homestead Agriculture Credit Aid (HACA).

HF126 would provide a 21-percent cut in property taxes to small businesses, Milbert said, although all businesses would feel some relief.

"The property tax on small business is particularly high — onerously high," Milbert said, noting that small companies account for 94 percent of the state's total number of firms. "This move will increase the success rate of small businesses."

The division sent the bill, with no recommendation, to the full Taxes Committee for consideration as part of the 1997 omnibus tax bill.

The division also approved two separate proposals: HF427, a bill sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) that would make permanent the joint Ramsey County-St. Paul property tax advisory committee, and HF306.

HF306, sponsored by Rep. Edgar Olson (DFL-Fosston), would reduce the tax rate on some rural residential apartment units from 3.4 percent to 2.3 percent.

The division sent both bills to the full committee.



TECHNOLOGY

Electronic signatures

The House Commerce, Tourism and Consumer Affairs Committee brought Minnesota businesses one step closer to the digital age Feb. 20, endorsing a plan to give electronic signatures the full force of legal protection.

"This bill is going to revolutionize business," Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) said of HF56 after hearing Katie Engler of the Secretary of State's office describe the digital encryption system.

HF56, sponsored by Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) and modeled after a law set to take effect in Washington state in January 1998, allows for the full authentication of documents transmitted between computers. The process relies on a set of two cryptographic key codes built around one-of-a-kind mathematical formulas known as algorithms. One key, held privately by the user, encodes documents with a digital signature; the other is held in trust by a public certification authority and used by recipients to verify an encoded document's integrity.

The bill defines the rules of the digital authentication system and mandates that the Secretary of State set up a transitional public certification authority until private sector firms, which would be licensed and regulated by the secretary's office, can step in and take over the verification process. HF56 also defines the range of liability assumed by the system's subscribers and provides penalties for acts of fraud.

Perhaps most importantly, Kahn said, the entire electronic signature system would remain voluntary. Businesses would not be required to participate. Moreover, the state would not assume any financial burden because the cost of doing business would be assumed by the private sector firms — who could set whatever price the market could bear — when they take over as certification authorities.

Committee members, though, did not approve the bill without questioning the degree of security provided by the encryption codes.

"The whole bill is a question to me," said Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley). "My concern is that I know how often I read in the paper that some brilliant hacker has just cracked somebody's code."

It seems, she continued, that every time a bold, new technological innovation comes along, some ne'er-do-well rises to the challenge and finds a way to beat the system.

Other representatives felt the bill linked the process to technology that may be state-of-the-art today, but obsolete in a few years.

Both concerns, Kahn said, could be addressed either by the private sector firms as they keep abreast of the developing technology or by amendment.

HF56 now moves to the Governmental Operations Committee.



TRANSPORTATION

Seat belt bill fails

A proposal to give police authority to pull over motor vehicles carrying juveniles who are not buckled up has stalled in the House.

HF221, sponsored by Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park), would have required motor vehicle occupants under age 18 to be wearing seat belts. The measure failed to win preliminary approval Feb. 20 on the House floor. The vote was 80-48 against the bill.

A provision in the bill making violations of its requirements a primary offense — giving a new power to police officers — was the focus of criticism from several members of the House.

"Do we want to add an additional reason why a peace officer in this state can pull over a motor vehicle?" Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) asked.

Once a vehicle is pulled over, Abrams said, police can write tickets for any offense, including the failure of adult passengers to comply with seat belt laws.

Current law requires all vehicle occupants between the ages of 3 and 11 to wear seat belts. Rhodes' bill would have extended the requirement to include anyone between the ages of 3 and 18.

(Children under age 4 are required to be secured in child car seats. Occupants 18 or older must wear seat belts only when in the front seat.)

Violation of seat belt requirements for occupants older than 3 is now a secondary offense. That means police can issue citations only after a vehicle is stopped for a moving violation or another violation involving the vehicle's equipment.

The bill would have allowed police to stop any vehicle in which any occupant between 3 to 18 years old, whether in the front seat or back, was not using a seat belt.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) argued against giving police new powers to stop vehicles just because they suspect juve-

Continued on page 19

Roots of violence lie in shame, economic disparity

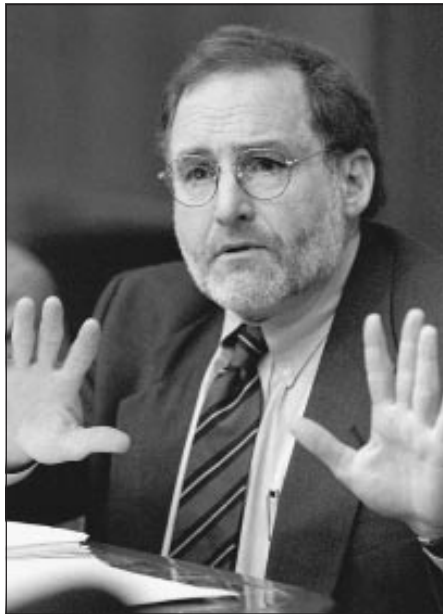
It may be that there is no single or simple way to determine the causes of crime and violence, which, according to Dr. James Gilligan, are of epidemic proportions in American society. But Gilligan, a psychiatrist from the Harvard Medical School who has written a book, *Violence: Our Deadly Epidemic and Its Causes*, said there is a little-understood, overriding factor that is highly effective in predicting the likelihood of violent behavior in individuals.

Crime and violence are propelled by shame, Gilligan said. All of the known triggers — poverty, lack of education, child abuse, discrimination, drug abuse, out-of-wedlock births, lack of role models — play a role in what is governed by feelings of shame, rejection, humiliation, and degradation. “That’s the pathogen,” Gilligan said. “When a person is overwhelmed by those feelings, everything else follows from that.”

Gilligan visited the Capitol on Feb. 17 and 18 to address meetings of the House Judiciary Committee and its Judiciary Finance Division, and a House-Senate meeting on the Statewide Violence Prevention Media Campaign. His visit was at the invitation of Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights).

Gilligan said he first learned of the importance of shame in provoking criminal activity in his extensive work with violent inmates in correctional facilities. When asking prisoners why they had committed violent acts against others, the consistent answer was, “He disrespected me.” When Gilligan asked one extremely violent inmate what he wanted so badly that he was willing to sacrifice everything for it, the inmate told him “dignity and respect.”

Social factors explain a big part of the problem. “The biggest societal factor that leads to violence is ‘relative deprivation or poverty,’ in which an individual suffers when compared to others in the environment who have much more,” Gilligan said. There is a strong correlation between the size of the income gap between social and economic classes and the respective rates of crime and violence. The United States, among industrial nations, he said, has by far the biggest gap between the rich and poor and vastly exceeds all other industrialized countries in crime and violence. And, he added, the gap is growing. Further, the numbers don’t bode well for the youngest generation of Americans. The U.S. has the highest rate of child poverty of any industrialized country.



Dr. James Gilligan, author of *Violence: Our Deadly Epidemic and Its Causes*, spoke before the House Judiciary Committee Feb. 19 on the issues of crime and violence.

The trend bears out in examination of many countries. Consistently, Gilligan said, the bigger the income disparity, the more crime and violence a country experiences. Sweden and Japan, for example, where economic disparity is minimal, have correspondingly low crime rates.

A second societal factor: “Exposing people systematically to humiliation and shame through discrimination — particularly racial discrimination,” Gilligan said. The effects of systemic discrimination are compounded by a lack of access to other sources of pride and self esteem, such as education. “That’s why education is so important. The recidivism rate among prisoners who have been given a college education during incarceration is far lower than that of those who haven’t [had a college education],” Gilligan said.

Gilligan offered no easy solutions, but approaches crime and violence with a public health metaphor. If people are getting sick from contaminated water, it’s more effective to clean up the water than to continue treating only the sick individuals, he said. “The key is to alter social and economic conditions. There simply is no more important principal than an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. By the time an individual becomes violent, it’s too late, and a lot more expensive.”

Prisons, Gilligan said, are useful as a means

to quarantine dangerous offenders. As punitive devices, however, they only lead to more violent individuals. “Nothing is more useful at stimulating violence than punishment,” he said, while acknowledging society’s justifiable outrage at violent crime. “We haven’t made up our minds as a country on whether prisons are for rehabilitation and violence prevention or for punishment and shame.”

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) asked Gilligan for specifics on how his ideas can translate into policy.

Every legislative act is related to crime and violence either directly or indirectly, Gilligan said. “You can’t pass a law on taxes which isn’t simultaneously a law on violence,” he said. Tertiary solutions — such as changes within prisons — are the easiest, Gilligan said. In the middle are secondary changes, such as creating programs aimed at high-risk individuals and populations. Primary solutions — making change at the societal level — are hardest.

“The problem is extremely complex. There simply is no one program or panacea,” Gilligan said. “The major solutions, however, are going to come from people like you, not me.”

— Celeste Riley

Minnesota’s troubled kids

In 1994, 58,900 juveniles were arrested in Minnesota, ranking the state tenth in juvenile arrests, according to state information compiled in *Minnesota Crime in Perspective, 1996*. Of those, 2,159 were for violent crimes, including 34 murders, 216 rapes, and 1,253 aggravated assaults.

Juveniles were arrested 656 times for robbery; 17,143 times for property crimes; 2,136 times for burglary; 12,637 times for larceny and theft; and 2,127 times for motor vehicle theft, according to the study.

Wellstone urges lawmakers to close 'learning gap'

Children living in poverty face substantially more hurdles when it comes to learning than do their better-off peers, Sen. Paul Wellstone said to a joint session of the Minnesota Legislature Feb. 17.

"These children start life already behind," Wellstone said of the nearly 200,000 Minnesota kids living at or near the poverty level. "Their test scores are 11 to 25 points lower . . . and they are 11 times more likely to drop out of school than their more affluent classmates."

This growing "learning gap," Wellstone said, threatens not only Minnesota's economic well-being and criminal justice system, but the very fabric of the American Dream. He challenged policymakers to promote the growth of an educational environment that builds on a partnership between the classroom, the community, and the family.

Wellstone spoke at the invitation of House Speaker Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Park). Focusing primarily on K-12 education, Wellstone endorsed statewide testing and discouraged legislators from using public dollars to support private schools. He also called on educators to teach a curriculum of values that reflects the "underpinnings of our democracy."

"I don't think anybody should be defensive about standards," or values, Wellstone said, adding that merely installing standardized tests should not allow lawmakers to relax their commitment to education. "We need to do everything possible . . . so children can meet or exceed those standards. . . . It can't just be a technical fix."

Wellstone also said the federal gov-



Speaker Phil Carruthers, rear, listens as U.S. Sen. Paul Wellstone tells a joint meeting of the Legislature that they must do more to educate children. The event took place in the House chamber Feb. 17. Sen. Rod Grams also has been invited to address legislators at a later date

ernment must do a better job of funding early childhood development efforts, including programs such as Women, Infants and Children that provide for basic nutrition before children start school. Moreover, he said, initiatives such as Head Start don't reach all eligible children. Minnesota, he said, should be proud of its Early Childhood Family Education program, but should not rest on its laurels. Every child should

have the basic tools of learning — know the alphabet and numbers, recognize colors, etc. — before they start kindergarten.

Wellstone congratulated legislators on restoring the more than \$300 million in educational funding cuts that were scheduled to take effect this year, but pointed out that the move was not a windfall for Minnesota schools. No new money has been added, he said, but the current budget surplus provides an excellent opportunity to give schools a bigger slice of the fiscal pie.

He also lauded legislators for trying to simplify the complex education funding mechanism and, although he endorsed the creation of charter schools, disagreed with the idea of public dollars going to private schools, either in the form of vouchers or tax credits.

Ultimately, Wellstone challenged the Legislature and the citizens of Minnesota to become national leaders in closing the learning gap.

"Minnesota should be the first state to ensure that kids come to kindergarten ready to learn," he said. "Minnesota has the opportunity to light a candle and lead the way. We ought to be first in the nation to move on this agenda."

Afterwards, many legislators expressed agreement with Wellstone's remarks, although several pointed out that in many communities, churches and other private-sector institutions have already implemented some of his ideas.

U.S. Sen. Rod Grams also has been invited to address the Legislature, but a date has not yet been set.

— F.J. Gallagher



Bonnie Eversman, an advocate for battered women at the Women's Shelter in Rochester, listened to the testimony of several battered women during the "Battered Women's Action Day" in the Capitol rotunda Feb. 14.



During a Feb. 17 discussion of a bill that would make it a crime to play a car stereo too loudly, Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls) posed a question important to anyone in the political world.

"I'm wondering about the loudspeaker systems that I've used in campaigns," Anderson said. "Would that be included?"

Indeed, the bill would prohibit the blaring of political slogans from speaker systems mounted on a motor vehicle. So ends an era in grassroots campaigning. (See related story on page 19.)

Economists oppose public financing of new stadium

A trio of prominent economists brought their perspectives to bear on the debate surrounding the proposed public financing of a new stadium for the Minnesota Twins Feb. 14.

"Professional sports are indeed a business, and a good business . . . but that doesn't answer the question of who should pay for a new stadium," said Prof. Edwin Mills of Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Business, adding that business investments in America have traditionally been a private-sector function. "Sports should be exactly that."

Mills appeared in the state Capitol with Prof. Emeritus Wilbur Maki, of the University of Minnesota's Department of Applied Economics, and Dennis Zimmerman, a specialist in public finance at the Congressional Research Service in Washington, D.C. Their remarks were part of an effort organized by Fans Advocating iNtelligent Spending Inc. (FANS Inc.), to oppose public financing for a new Twins stadium.

Gov. Arne Carlson, Twins owner Carl Pohlad, and Metropolitan Sports Commissioner Henry Savelkoul recently unveiled a plan to build the ball club a new stadium, complete with a retractable roof, at an estimated total cost of \$350 million. The project would be financed almost completely with public dollars, mostly derived from a proposed new cigarette tax (subject to the approval of the Legislature).

Pohlad has said that without the new stadium, the Twins cannot remain financially competitive in Major League Baseball and would be forced to move out of Minnesota. Carlson has called the Twins a vital part of Minnesota's economy, well worth the public investment.

The economists, though, disputed the idea that professional sports are worth

such a massive public investment, primarily because the public doesn't benefit from a new stadium.

"It's my conclusion that most of the benefits of a new stadium accrue to those who attend the events," Zimmerman said. Any funding decision for a stadium, he said, should reflect "the benefit principle" — that is, those who would benefit by the construction should pay for it. Zimmerman suggested raising most of the revenue from stadium-related activities such as ticket taxes, concessions, and parking. A tax on cable TV premium sports packages would tap those fans who watch the games at home.

If the beneficiaries of the stadium are able to shift some or all of the costs to others, Zimmerman said, there is a temptation to ask for too much. "If you don't have to pay for ice cream, you will probably eat too much," he said.

As cities around the country have built new stadiums with public dollars, Mills said, a number of studies have been done purporting to show that the efforts have brought substantial economic benefit to the communities footing the bill. These studies, he said, are deeply flawed because they don't take into account repayment of the public subsidy. Citizens pay more taxes to cover construction, he said, so they have less money to spend on other things, "and the benefits are just about washed out to zero."

For his part, Maki pointed out that the entertainment industry already generates billions of dollars. Building a new stadium, he said, would merely transfer money from one sector of the industry to another — in this case, the Twins.

"The proper stand is to refuse to build the stadium," Mills said.

—F. J. Gallagher



A recently unveiled plan to build the Minnesota Twins a new stadium, complete with a retractable roof, is estimated to cost \$350 million, according to officials. Economists discussed the plan at the state Capitol Feb. 14.

Minnesota State Agencies

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| 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 |
| State Information | 296-6013 |
| House Information | 296-2146 |
| Senate Information | 296-0504 |

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(612) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

This nonpartisan office provides: committee meeting schedules, legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* newsmagazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

Most of what this office publishes can be viewed on the Legislature's World Wide Web page. To connect, point your web browser at: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us>

Rifenberg looking to address tax, family issues

Maybe it was predictable that Rep. Michelle Rifenberg (R-La Crescent) would one day wind up in the Legislature. As a child she was drawn to politics and the political process.



Rep.
Michelle Rifenberg

Her choice of television program was often political in nature, and she remembers being glued to the national conventions when she was just 11 years old. Even today she can hardly get enough of politics.

"I'm a political junkie," she said. "I've always enjoyed intellectual debate and political discussions."

But just ingesting the world of politics wasn't enough for Rifenberg, especially when she would read something in the local papers that touched a nerve. "I used to be one of those people who would fire off letters to the editor."

She then decided to take her principles a step further and successfully won election to the District 32B seat, replacing 14-year veteran Virgil Johnson of Caledonia, Minn. Her overall outlook?

"I consider myself a mainstream conservative Republican. That means fiscally and socially conservative."

While she's political in nature, she also sees herself as a reflection of her constituency, which she feels may be one of her greatest qualifications for being a lawmaker. "I believe in a citizen Legislature," she said.

"It's important for people to know what they can do to serve community. I enjoy serving people."

For about 12 years before coming to the Legislature, Rifenberg also was active in the Republican party, serving as county party chair for three of those years.

She also campaigned for former state representative, now Congressman Gil Gutknecht. "I learned I enjoyed campaigning. I also learned it takes lots of physical energy. In my own campaign I never worked on anything harder," she said.

In the process, she learned a few things about her district, she said, which includes parts of Fillmore, Houston, and Winona counties. Part of her mission is to change how people are taxed.

"The people I talked with work hard for a living. They care very much about their families. They feel frustrated. The harder they work, the more the government takes," Rifenberg said. "My husband and I have set goals. We've worked hard to meet them. Taxes and government regulation make it difficult."

She promises to work for some form of family tax relief. "I particularly want to see some of that budget surplus returned to families," she said.

Second on her list of four legislative goals is improving the climate for small businesses in rural Minnesota. A third has already been completed: removing current statutory caps on K-12 school funding. Schools in rural

areas, she noted, are especially hard hit because of the smaller property tax base. Finally, Rifenberg wants to make Minnesota a better place to raise a family. She hopes these items will be her legislative legacy, she said.

Rifenberg's son, John, 14, "thinks it's pretty cool" to have mom in the House of Representatives, she said. When not preoccupied with the demands at the Capitol, the Rifenberg family, including husband, Robert, a laboratory supervisor at the Heileman division of the Stroh Brewery, enjoys taking family vacations and going to movies, she said.

Today, she said, she's learning to feel at home in the House, is happy with her committee assignments, and feels optimistic about the session ahead.

"The new members have had a good chance to settle in, learn the process, and feel like they belong," she said. Most of all, "it's exciting."

— Celeste Riley

District 32A

1996 population: 33,777

Largest city: La Crescent

County: Fillmore, Houston, Winona

Location: southeastern Minnesota

Top concern: "Family tax relief. That's based on feedback from going door to door. It's part of assuring a good quality of life. I also have a lot of small businesses in the district, who, along with agriculture, are feeling particularly burdened."

— Rep. Michelle Rifenberg

Frequently called numbers

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol 296-0271

Voice mail/order bills 296-2343

Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate

110 Capitol 296-2887

Index, House

211 Capitol 296-6646

Information, Senate

231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House

175 State Office Building 296-2146

Committee Hotline, Senate ... 296-8088

Committee Hotline, House 296-9283

Sergeant at Arms, Senate

Senate Chamber 296-7159/6-1119

Sergeant at Arms, House

45 State Office Building 296-4860

Counsel and Research, Senate

G-17 Capitol 296-4791

Research, House

600 State Office Building 296-6753

Legislative Reference Library

645 State Office Building 296-3398

Revisor of Statutes

700 State Office Building 296-2868

Governor's Office

130 Capitol 296-3391

Attorney General's Office

102 Capitol 296-6196

Secretary of State's Office

180 State Office Building 296-9208

Capitol Security

B-4 Capitol 296-6741

Emergency 296-2100

TTY*, Senate 296-0250

Toll free 1-888-234-1216

TTY*, House 296-9896

Toll free 1-800-657-3550

New members . . .

Kubly vows to shepherd property tax, campaign reform

It has been said that the best way to avoid an argument is to stay away from the topics of politics or religion. For Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls), that could be tough:



Rep. Gary Kubly

The first-term legislator is also an ordained Lutheran minister.

"I asked the congregational president if he thought the congregation would approve of its pastor running for office, and he asked me with which party," Kubly said, chuckling. "I told him — and he said he thought it would be all right."

In fact, Kubly said, his congregations in rural southwest Minnesota reacted favorably when he announced his candidacy for the District 15B seat. What's more, their support transcended partisan politics, he said, with many parishioners donating time and money to his campaign.

The first-term representative is a product of rural life. He grew up on an Iowa farm near the Minnesota border, just south of Albert Lea, Minn., where he learned firsthand about the rigors that come with earning a living from the land. And although Kubly came to the Twin Cities in 1970 to go to the seminary, he has spent his professional life serving a rural flock — precisely what he hopes to accomplish as a legislator, particularly with regard to property tax reform.

The conventional wisdom, Kubly said, is that rural Minnesotans will have to shoulder a larger share of the property tax burden. He doesn't quite see it that way. The first-term legislator, though, enters the House as a

strong advocate for his district.

"Over my dead body," he said with an air of quiet determination. "Nobody in my district would support that . . . [property tax reform is] not metropolitan versus rural; it's what's fair for everybody."

Kubly's predecessor, former Rep. Roger Cooper, (DFL-Bird Island) held the seat for five terms and was instrumental in passing a number of programs that benefited Greater Minnesota constituents, including MinnesotaCare, tax breaks for ethanol plants, and better training for rural health care workers. Kubly, who has worked closely with farmers over the years, campaigned — and won — as a man who would pick up where Cooper left off.

Election to the Minnesota House of Representatives is not Kubly's first foray into the political realm. He challenged incumbent state Sen. Dean Johnson (R-Willmar) for the District 15 seat in 1992, coming within a few percentage points of beating the Senate minority leader. Indeed, in the 15B area, Kubly actually finished ahead of Johnson. Yet Kubly won his House seat in 1996 by an even narrower margin, finishing just 1.3 percent — a mere 202 votes — ahead of his Republican challenger.

The contest, Kubly said, turned ugly as the campaign drew to a close. In the days leading up to the election, the minister found himself on the business end of a series of mass mailings that allowed him no time to respond. Kubly also became the subject of a series of negative advertisements that aired well beyond the Minnesota border.

"I'm sure people in Wisconsin were wondering what was going on when they heard

political ads for this race in rural Minnesota," he said.

As a result of the negative campaign, Kubly has come to believe campaign laws need to be changed to prevent similar occurrences. A law could be written, he said, to prohibit a candidate from running any new advertisements 10 days before the election to ensure that the person targeted would have adequate time to respond.

"I still believe in free speech," Kubly said, but something needs to be done.

Although his faith serves as the foundation for his political ideology, Kubly said, a belief in "a beneficent Creator — God and what has been done for us" — shouldn't preclude the debate surrounding any issue. It's vital, he explained, that legislators allow one another the latitude to disagree, regardless of their religious views.

"I'm not sure there is a 'Christian' position," Kubly said. "It bothers me when someone says, 'This is the Christian position.' I don't think that there is a Christian position on most things, anyway. There are just Christians who hold views."

— F.J. Gallagher

District 15B

1996 population: 32,513

Largest city: Granite Falls

Counties: Chippewa, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Renville, Yellow Medicine

Location: south central Minnesota

Top concern: "I think rural parts of the state need some representation when it comes to bonding."

—Rep. Gary Kubly



Richard Laurion, *right*, used sign language to interpret comments and questions from members of the House Education Committee for Bruce Hodek, *middle*, assistant director of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division, Department of Human Services Feb. 18. Hodek testified in support of a bill that calls for American Sign Language to be given equal status with other linguistic systems in the state's schools. Rep. Ruth Johnson, *left*, is sponsoring the bill.

Do you know?

Once a stopping point for voyageurs and fur traders, Minnesota's arrowhead region is home to one of the state's two national monuments.

Grand Portage, on Minnesota's northeastern tip, has always attracted travelers. In the 1700s, its location on Lake Superior's North Shore near the mouth of the Pigeon River made Grand Portage — or “great carrying place” — the entry point for a network of waterways and portage trails stretching deep into Canada. Along that route, trappers brought furs from the west and north to trade for money and manufactured goods from the east.

By the 1780s, Grand Portage had become the headquarters of the famous North West Company, a British-owned commercial network that extended from London to Alaska. In those colorful days, French “voyageurs” manned 36-foot freight canoes from Montreal to mingle with Indians and trappers at a lakeside “rendezvous” each summer at Grand Portage.

After passing ownership from one government or business interest to the next for more than a century, Grand Portage was finally ceded to its Indian inhabitants in the Treaty of 1854. The Ojibway community that had originally settled in the area as fur traders during the 1600s became the Grand Portage

Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe with their own 51,000-acre reservation.

The band struggled on the edge of poverty for decades. With the opening of Minnesota Trunk Highway 1 in the 1920s, Indian leaders realized that the historic location of their village could attract tourist dollars. But the band lacked the capital necessary to develop the site. Depression-era relief programs

1950s.

The reservation council finally decided to cede land for the historic site to the federal government. In 1958, Congress approved the land transfer, and in 1960, the Grand Portage National Monument was formally established. The first park superintendent arrived that year, charged with “major restoration projects to transform the monument to its appearance of 200 years ago.”

Today, Grand Portage is a popular tourist stop that includes a reconstruction of the old palisades, Great Hall, kitchen, and a number of other buildings, tents, and Indian lodges. Costumed interpreters describe life in the old trading post and help children try on voyageur clothing. Local Ojibway arts and crafts are sold and demonstrated at the site.

The Radisson Hotel that opened nearby in 1975 was taken over by the reservation council in

1980. The band added a marina, campgrounds, and ski trails. After gaming was introduced in 1990, the facility was renamed Grand Portage Lodge and Casino. Each summer Grand Portage again plays host to a stream of travelers and fortune seekers, just as it did over 200 years ago.



The Great Hall, reconstructed in 1974 on the basis of research into the design of the original building, is one of the attractions at Grand Portage National Monument.

Photo courtesy *The Grand Portage Story* by Carolyn Gilman, Minnesota Historical Society Press.

brought in some resources, and the North West Company depot was reconstructed in 1938 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. But by 1950, that project had fallen into disrepair.

Realizing that their lack of financial resources was causing the tourism potential of the site to be wasted, the band turned to the National Park Service for help. In 1951, the U.S. Department of the Interior designated Grand Portage a National Historic Site. But little government funding followed and the area continued to languish throughout the

For detailed site information, visit the Grand Portage National Monument home page at: <http://www.nps.gov/grpo>



When Minnesota State Auditor Judith Dutcher presented her office's 1997-98 budget to the House Governmental Operations Committee's State Government Finance Division Feb. 19, she noted that the request

contained an initiative to add a local area network administrator, along with some supportive hardware and software. It was, she said, the first technological initiative the auditor's office had ever put forth.

“I think when Gov. Carlson was auditor,” Dutcher said, “they were still using the abacus.”

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls), though, corrected Dutcher, pointing out that she recalled a move to update the office's technology under Carlson.

“Yeah, they got a new abacus,” said Rep. Richard Jefferson (DFL-Mpls).

Bill Introductions

HF742-HF889

Monday, Feb. 17

HF742—Kahn (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources
Incinerator mercury emission testing requirements modified.

HF743—Jennings (DFL)

Regulated Industries & Energy
City public rights-of-way management provided related to telephone service providers.

HF744—Garcia (DFL)

Taxes
Apartment property improvements provided valuation exclusion for property tax purposes.

HF745—Wejcman (DFL)

Economic Development & International Trade
Workforce service areas designated, and local workforce councils established and duties specified.

HF746—Pugh (DFL)

Judiciary
Corrections department service contract limitations and conditions provided, and inmate work standards adopted.

HF747—Kahn (DFL)

Governmental Operations
State High School League Governing Board appointing authority provisions modified.

HF748—Tunheim (DFL)

Agriculture
University of Minnesota appropriated money for wheat and barley scab research.

HF749—Farrell (DFL)

Judiciary
St. Paul Police Department communications and surveillance equipment purchase provided, and money appropriated.

HF750—Bradley (R)

Health & Human Services
Autism advisory task force established.

HF751—McCollum (DFL)

General Legislation, Veterans Affairs & Elections
Candidates in violation of the Fair Campaign Practices Act required to return public subsidies, early voting permitted at polling places, candidate conduct regulated, and penalties imposed.

HF752—Tomassoni (DFL)

Education
Independent School District No. 701, Hibbing, grant authorized for expenses due to fire, and common teacher retirement date established.

HF753—Kubly (DFL)

Financial Institutions & Insurance
Financial institution facsimile or electronic filings and certifications authorized, special purpose banks defined and regulated, and technical and conforming modifications provided.

HF754—Knoblach (R)

Judiciary
Deadly force; mandatory minimum term of imprisonment provided when deadly force is used in assaults against peace officers.

HF755—Otremba (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources
Sauk River Watershed District levy authorized.

HF756—Hilty (DFL)

Governmental Operations
State demographer population estimate procedures modified.

HF757—Harder (R)

Education
School district debt service equalization eligibility requirements modified, and money appropriated.

HF758—Long (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
State mandates on local units of government regulated.

HF759—Mulder (R)

Health & Human Services
Swimming pool operator training requirement eliminated.

HF760—Wejcman (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources
Motor vehicle emission inspection waivers issued to disabled persons upon request.

HF761—Wejcman (DFL)

Commerce, Tourism & Consumer Affairs
Cordial and liqueur brand labels prohibited from containing cartoons and caricatures, mandatory minimum civil penalty provided for sales of alcoholic beverages to minors, and home delivery of alcohol regulated.

HF762—Wejcman (DFL)

Judiciary
Youth community service grant program pilot project established in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, and money appropriated.

HF763—Tunheim (DFL)

Economic Development & International Trade
Norman County Zion Lutheran Church and Cemetery designated as a historic place.

HF764—Winter (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources
Lewis and Clark rural water system developed, and money appropriated.

HF765—Dawkins (DFL)

Governmental Operations
Metropolitan Council transit operations employee retirement refund repayment permitted.

HF766—Tunheim (DFL)

Health & Human Services
Nursing Home Geographic Group III expanded to include Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Marshall, and Roseau counties.

HF767—Anderson, I. (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources
St. Louis County state land sale authority repealed.

HF768—Westrom (R)

Transportation & Transit
Farm work driver's license permit possession requirement exemption provided.

HF769—Schumacher (DFL)

Education
Omnibus K-12 education policy bill.

HF770—Hasskamp (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources
Joshua Renken/Stacy Schlosser Snowmobile Safety Act; registration fees modified, liability insurance and safety education required, night speed limit established, local snowmobile speed control provided, and money appropriated.

HF771—Long (DFL)

Economic Development & International Trade
Contamination cleanup grant program requirements modified, redevelopment and job creation grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF772—Evans (DFL)

Education
Health and safety revenue program expanded to include indoor air quality, school construction project information requirements modified, indoor air quality task force established, and money appropriated.

HF773—Murphy (DFL)

Taxes
Aggregate material removal taxes authorized in Carlton and St. Louis counties.

HF774—Murphy (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources
Mahtowa in Carlton County state land sale authorized.

HF775—Huntley (DFL)

Education
Student opportunity grants established to provide financial support to students of low-income families, state lottery proceeds dedication provided, constitutional amendment proposed, and money appropriated.

HF776—Huntley (DFL)

Education
Student opportunity grant program established to provide financial support to students of low-income families, and money appropriated.

HF777—Lieder (DFL)**Education**

Independent School District Nos. 561, Goodridge, and 600, Fisher, health and safety revenue use provisions modified.

HF778—Clark (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Complementary medicine study required, and money appropriated.

HF779—Lieder (DFL)**Agriculture**

Hybrid tree management research funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF780—Clark (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

Naturopathic physician licensure provided, and penalties prescribed.

HF781—Rukavina (DFL)**Labor-Management Relations**

Workers' compensation temporary partial disability time limit increased, and permanent total disability definition modified.

HF782—Dawkins (DFL)**Taxes**

Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF783—Larsen (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Metropolitan Council, Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission, Metropolitan Radio Board, and Metropolitan Mosquito Control District abolished, duties transferred, and money appropriated.

HF784—Leighton (DFL)**Commerce, Tourism & Consumer Affairs**

Unclaimed property uniform act adopted.

HF785—Carruthers (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Brooklyn Center appropriated money for Brookdale Center development.

HF786—Hilty (DFL)**Judiciary**

Human rights alternative dispute resolution mediation deadline suspended.

HF787—Hilty (DFL)**Labor-Management Relations**

Human Rights Department employer definition expanded to include certain temporary placements.

HF788—Workman (R)**Commerce, Tourism & Consumer Affairs**

Professional engineer licensure requirements modified.

HF789—Hasskamp (DFL)**Education**

Property tax rate reductions provided for commercial industrial property and for certain senior citizens, state aid increased for education, and money appropriated.

HF790—Wejcman (DFL)**Economic Development & International Trade**

Citizenship promotion program established, and money appropriated.

HF791—Carruthers (DFL)**Economic Development & International Trade**

Community rehabilitation program concentrated multi-unit rental housing improvements provided, and money appropriated.

HF792—Biernat (DFL)**Education**

Cigarette and tobacco product sales tax increased, and revenue dedicated to tobacco and drug use prevention programs.

HF793—Jaros (DFL)**Economic Development & International Trade**

Natural Resources Research Institute funded, and money appropriated.

HF794—Rest (DFL)**Commerce, Tourism & Consumer Affairs**

Minnesota Professional Firms Act adopted.

Thursday, Feb. 20**HF795—Koskinen (DFL)****Education**

Child care sliding fee program assistance priority provisions modified.

HF796—Delmont (DFL)**Governmental Operations**

MSRS; deferred compensation governance provisions modified.

HF797—Clark (DFL)**Education**

Early childhood learning and protection facility grant limitations clarified.

HF798—Dehler (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Unpaid municipal judgement penalty established.

HF799—Winter (DFL)**Regulated Industries & Energy**

Wind energy conversion system property tax provisions modified.

HF800—McElroy (R)**Governmental Operations**

Legislative Capital Investment Commission established, and duties specified.

HF801—Garcia (DFL)**Governmental Operations**

Employment law application extended to include legislative employees.

HF802—Carruthers (DFL)**Education**

Higher education institution gift income tax credit allowed.

HF803—Seifert (R)**Environment****& Natural Resources Finance**

Marshall flood control project funded, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF804—Milbert (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Municipal building permit fee amount regulated.

HF805—Swenson, D. (R)**Education**

Youth intervention program grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF806—Dehler (R)**Agriculture**

Agricultural product definition expanded to include fish for property tax purposes.

HF807—Olson, E. (DFL)**Taxes**

Property tax receipt, refund, investigation, local government performance aid eligibility, and aid reduction provisions modified.

HF808—Long (DFL)**Taxes**

Income, withholding, sales and use, and MinnesotaCare tax policy provisions modified, tax collection policy modified, and civil penalties provided.

HF809—Winter (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Regional economic development commissions regulated.

HF810—Wolf (R)**Labor-Management Relations**

Employment search firm bond requirements modified.

HF811—Entenza (DFL)**Governmental Operations**

Minnesota Futures Fund appropriated money to provide technical assistance to nonprofit organizations.

HF812—Dawkins (DFL)**Local Government****& Metropolitan Affairs**

Municipal and school district local performance aid eligibility requirements modified.

HF813—Huntley (DFL)**Health & Human Services**

St. Louis County adolescent compulsive gambling prevention and education project grant provided through lottery proceeds, and money appropriated.

HF814—Koskinen (DFL)**Labor-Management Relations**

Unfair employment discriminatory practice reprisal provisions modified.

HF815—Rest (DFL)**Local Government****& Metropolitan Affairs**

Tax increment financing fiscal disparities contribution requirements modified.

HF816—Finseth (R)**Local Government****& Metropolitan Affairs**

East Grand Forks tax increment financing district duration extended.

HF817—Mariani (DFL)**Education**

Foodshelf program appropriated money.

HF818—Milbert (DFL)**Taxes**

Coin-operated car wash services provided sales and use tax exemption.

HF819—Wagenius (DFL)**Education**

First-grade preparedness program eligibility provisions modified, and money appropriated.

HF820—Dehler (R)
Education

Public school guidance and counseling services provided at nonpublic schools.

HF821—Dehler (R)
Regulated Industries & Energy
Retail liquor establishment gambling prohibition modified related to dice.

HF822—Pugh (DFL)
Judiciary
Employer reference check civil liability immunity provided.

HF823—Jennings (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Nursing home short stay private pay rate provisions modified.

HF824—Dorn (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Comprehensive health association status clarified related to medical assistance and general assistance medical care, and money appropriated.

HF825—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services
Medical savings account federal income tax provisions adopted.

HF826—Jennings (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Audiologists and speech-language pathologists exempted from hearing instrument dispenser certification and requirements.

HF827—Tomassoni (DFL)
Education
University of Minnesota grape and wine research center established, and money appropriated.

HF828—Huntley (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Health technology advisory committee role redefined, and money appropriated.

HF829—Solberg (DFL)
Governmental Operations
Government meetings permitted via electronic means, and criteria established.

HF830—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Health professional peer review data use provisions clarified.

HF831—Biernat (DFL)
Education
Alternative education program equitable funding ensured.

HF832—Pugh (DFL)
Judiciary
Professional malpractice action expert review certification required.

HF833—Biernat (DFL)
Judiciary
Guardian ad litem appointment required in certain cases, and spouse debt liability provisions clarified.

HF834—Clark (DFL)
Economic Development & International Trade
Youthbuild grant funding limit eliminated, and money appropriated.

HF835—Delmont (DFL)
Health & Human Services
County operated day training and habilitation program audit exception provided.

HF836—Evans (DFL)
Economic Development & International Trade
Microenterprise loan technical assistance and loan administration provided, and money appropriated.

HF837—Munger (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Toxic pollution prevention plan requirements modified.

HF838—Dehler (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Municipal annexation regulation provided.

HF839—Dehler (R)
Judiciary
Marijuana or drug paraphernalia possession in a school zone provided misdemeanor penalty.

HF840—Wagenius (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Petroleum tank release cleanup program reimbursements authorized.

HF841—Dehler (R)
Transportation & Transit
Firearms safety training designation provided on drivers' licenses and identification cards.

HF842—Orfield (DFL)
Transportation & Transit
LUTRAQ; land use, transportation, air quality connection analysis required for any metropolitan area highway expansion project.

HF843—Clark (DFL)
Economic Development & International Trade
Lead hazard reduction advisory task force established, and money appropriated.

HF844—Rest (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Birth defects information system established, criminal penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF845—Leighton (DFL)
Judiciary
DWI; felony penalty provided for repeat driving while intoxicated offenses.

HF846—Leighton (DFL)
Judiciary
Sexual abuse statute of limitations delayed discovery rule provisions clarified.

HF847—Entenza (DFL)
Education
School lunch program funded, and money appropriated.

HF848—Dehler (R)
Judiciary
Sentencing to service programs expanded, and money appropriated.

HF849—Weaver (R)
Judiciary
Emergency vehicle operation requirements modified.

HF850—Weaver (R)
Education
Compulsory education age requirement increase eliminated.

HF851—Folliard (DFL)
Health & Human Services
New Chance program established to provide services to young parents in Hennepin County who have dropped out of school and are receiving public assistance, and money appropriated.

HF852—McGuire (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Ramsey County environmental education consortium developed, and money appropriated.

HF853—Clark (DFL)
Regulated Industries & Energy
Telephone assistance program expanded to provide assistance to low-income families with children.

HF854—Clark (DFL)
Regulated Industries & Energy
Telecommunication services purchasing cooperative establishment authorized.

HF855—Dehler (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Municipal board property owner definition modified.

HF856—Dehler (R)
Governmental Operations
Legislators' retirement law coverage provisions modified.

HF857—Rhodes (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Metropolitan Council cost allocation system for wastewater services modified.

HF858—Huntley (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Health plan cost containment goals regulated, and disclosure requirements provided.

HF859—Opatz (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Dental goods and services exempted from MinnesotaCare provider tax.

HF860—Dawkins (DFL)
Judiciary
Corrections Department required to reimburse counties for apprehension and confinement of certain individuals.

HF861—Delmont (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Part-time psychology practitioner and emeritus registrant licensure requirements established.

HF862—Delmont (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language service medical assistance reimbursement rates increased.

HF863—Macklin (R)
Judiciary
Joint and several liability apportionment regulated.

HF864—McGuire (DFL)
Health & Human Services
Social work board provisions modified, and civil penalties provided.

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| HF865—Schumacher (DFL) Judiciary Joint and several liability apportionment abolished in certain cases. | HF871—Hilty (DFL) Governmental Operations Electronic conduct of state business provided, and administration department approval of digital signatures authorized. | HF878—Bettermann (R) Education Omnibus higher education appropriations bill. | HF884—McElroy (R) Education School districts permitted to include attendance information on secondary student transcripts. |
| HF866—Milbert (DFL) General Legislation, Veterans Affairs & Elections Legislature reduced in size to 50 senators and 100 representatives. | HF872—Seagren (R) Education Pupil Fair Dismissal Act provisions modified. | HF879—Seagren (R) Education Adult basic education revenue formula modified, and money appropriated. | HF885—Greenfield (DFL) Health & Human Services Physical therapy board established, and license requirement provided. |
| HF867—Delmont (DFL) Health & Human Services Medical assistance nursing facility provisions modified. | HF873—Pugh (DFL) Transportation & Transit Major transportation projects fund established, and eligibility requirements prescribed. | HF880—Hausman (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Minnesota Nuclear Responsibility Act of 1997 adopted, and money appropriated. | HF886—Milbert (DFL) Health & Human Services Optician licensure requirement established. |
| HF868—Anderson, I. (DFL) General Legislation, Veterans Affairs & Elections Persian Gulf War veteran bonus program established, penalties imposed, bonds issued, and money appropriated. | HF874—Knoblach (R) Environment & Natural Resources Water quality standards review procedures modified, and money appropriated. | HF881—Seagren (R) Financial Institutions & Insurance Health maintenance organizations permitted to provide coverage supplemental to medical savings accounts. | HF887—Anderson, I. (DFL) Taxes Golf course property tax classification provisions modified. |
| HF869—Rest (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Municipal board member per diem reimbursement increased. | HF875—Tunheim (DFL) Financial Institutions & Insurance Health plan enrollee health care services provider choice required. | HF882—Dawkins (DFL) Education Neighborhood organizations provided stipends for the delivery of services to children and families, and money appropriated. | HF888—Peterson (DFL) Education Independent School District No. 378, Dawson-Boyd, adult farm management levy provided. |
| HF870—Kahn (DFL) Governmental Operations Public employee equipment use permitted for electronic communication. | HF876—Erhardt (R) Taxes Property tax statement refund notice provisions modified. | HF883—Stang (R) Governmental Operations Melrose Hospital and Pine Villa employees provided retirement options. | HF889—Evans (DFL) Economic Development & International Trade Mobile home park owner rights modified. |

Continued from page 9

nile occupants are not wearing seat belts.

"To me, it's kind of frightening the way we have been chipping away at the personal freedoms we've had in this country for two centuries," Rukavina said.

Rhodes urged House members to consider the potential benefits of the bill.

"If this bill saves one child from being

Turn down the volume

A booming bass line could bring motorists a costly fine, under a bill approved Feb. 17 by the House Transportation and Transit Committee.

Bill sponsor Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), a Minneapolis police officer, said loud car stereos frequently disturb the peace in many neighborhoods.

"I hope strict enforcement of this [proposed] statute will help curtail this problem," he said. "This is one of those quality-of-life issues that I think is an excellent use of police resources."

Stanek's bill (HF86) would allow police to ticket motorists who play their car stereos at a volume that "unreasonably disturbs the peace and quiet of a person nearby."

Specifically, a violation would occur if sound from a radio, tape, or compact disc player is "plainly audible" at a distance of 50 feet or more from a vehicle. Violators would face a petty misdemeanor charge, which carries a fine of up to \$200.

Stanek said the residents of the neighborhoods where he works frequently complain about the racket coming from passing cars, regardless of the motorists' taste in music.

"I'm not going to discriminate between

rap and country music," Stanek said. "I'll tag equally for both."

Excessively loud car stereos can also create a hazard on the road, according to Stanek.

"If you've got that car stereo turned up, sometimes you can't hear an emergency vehicle as you are traveling down the roadway," he said.

Several cities, including Minneapolis and St. Paul, already have ordinances related to loud car stereos. Stanek's bill would provide a statewide standard for car stereo use, but it would not prohibit cities from enacting tougher ordinances.

The bill also would provide exceptions for devices producing loud but necessary sounds, such as car alarms and police sirens.

Committee members voted 20-2 to send the bill to the House floor.

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

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All meetings are open to the public.

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MONDAY, Feb. 24

8 a.m.

Economic Development Finance Division/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Trimble

Agenda: Briefings: Department of Public
Service; and Budget Books/Department of
Finance.

Higher Education Finance Division/EDUCATION

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gene Pelowski

Agenda: Instructional technology:
presentations by Marvin Marshak, senior
academic vice president, University of
Minnesota; Rick Peifer, assistant director,
General Biology Program, University of
Minnesota; Sandra Balli, College of
Education and Human Development,
University of Minnesota; James Bensen,
president, Bemidji State University; David
Laird, president, Minnesota Private College
Council; John Slorp, president, Minneapolis
College of Art and Design; and Anedith Nash,
Associate Academic Dean, Minneapolis
College of Art and Design.

K-12 Education Finance Division/ EDUCATION

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Becky Kelso

Agenda: Discussion of debt service
equalization aid. Overview of governor's
budget recommendations-Article 2, Special
Programs.

8:30 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Osthoff

Agenda: Budget hearing: Department of
Natural Resources.

Property Tax & Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Edgar Olson

Agenda: HF230 (Erhardt) Senior citizens'
property tax deferral program adopted, and
money appropriated.

HF595 (Rhodes) Senior citizens provided
property tax rate freeze.

HF633 (Murphy) Senior citizens' property
tax deferral program adopted, and money
appropriated.

HF732 (Rifenberg) Senior citizens' property
tax deferral program adopted, and money
appropriated.

10 a.m.

Joint AGRICULTURE/ ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

200 State Office Building

Chrs. Rep. Stephen Wenzel,

Rep. Willard Munger

Agenda: Hearing on environmental impacts
of feedlots/manure handling facilities in
Minnesota. Testimony from Department of
Agriculture; Department of Health; Pollution
Control Agency; technical experts; and
environmental and agricultural organizations.

Health & Human Services Finance Division/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Lee Greenfield

Agenda: Presentation of the governor's
recommendations for Department of
Human Services health care programs and
operations.

JUDICIARY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Wes Skoglund

Agenda: HF254 (Skoglund) Juvenile court
open hearings and records provided in
certain cases involving children in need of
protection and delinquency.

HF252 (Skoglund) Juvenile court open hearings
and records provided in certain cases.

HF253 (Skoglund) Juvenile court open
hearings and records provided in certain
cases involving children in need of protection,
and delinquency.

State Government Finance Division/ GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

400S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Rukavina

Agenda: Budget reviews: Veterans of Foreign
Wars; Military Order of the Purple Heart;
Disabled American Veterans; and
Department of Veterans Affairs.

12:30 p.m.

Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Division/EDUCATION

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tony Kinkel

Agenda: Child care: governor's
recommendations.

GENERAL LEGISLATION, VETERANS AFFAIRS & ELECTIONS

Basement Hearing Room,

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Milbert

Agenda: HF297 (Jennings) National guard
member tuition and textbook
reimbursement grant program provisions
modified.

HF287 (Bakk) Hastings, Luverne, and Silver
Bay veterans homes improvements provided
through the use of donated funds.

HF444 (McCollum) Persian Gulf War
veteran bonus payment program established,
criminal penalty imposed for false
application, and money appropriated.

LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Richard Jefferson

Agenda: HF787 (Hilty) Human rights
department employer definition expanded
to include certain temporary placements.

HF271 (Rukavina) Employer wage reporting
requirements modified related to re-
employment insurance.

HF781 (Rukavina) Workers' compensation
temporary partial disability time limit
increased, and permanent total disability
definition modified.

TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jean Wagenius

Agenda: HF387 (Wagenius) Transportation
department claim payment provided and
liability provisions modified, and eminent
domain provisions modified.

HF458 (Juhnke) Highway service sign
placement provisions clarified,
transportation department exempt rules
preserved, highway related definitions
modified, and obsolete references corrected.
HF591 (Boudreau) Faribault highway
easement transfer required from
transportation department.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

After Session

**Working Group on Technology/
K-12 Education Finance Division/
EDUCATION**

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Johnson

Agenda: Presentation on the governor's technology bill. Technology proposal, Rep. Alice Johnson. Presentation from Office of Technology. Presentation from Mark Manning, Department of Children, Families, and Learning.

WAYS & MEANS

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Loren Solberg

Agenda: Staff agency performance reports.

TUESDAY, Feb. 25

8 a.m.

EDUCATION

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Lyndon Carlson

Agenda: Conceptual overview and demonstration of technology applications and Internet, Elizabeth Butler, Microsoft Corporation.

HF302 (Greiling) Learning year program approval required by State Board of Education.

HF130 (Carlson) Gopher state bonds; college savings bond program established, marketing plan development required, and bond sale authorized.

HF446 (Biernat) Driver's license issuance prohibited to persons under age 18 who have failed to receive a passing score on the state high school graduation test or meet other educational requirements.

**Judiciary Finance Division/
JUDICIARY**

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mary Murphy

Agenda: Agency budget presentations: Private Detectives Board, Rep. Mary Murphy; POST Board, Rep. Michael Paymar, Rep. Sherry Broecker; Ombudsman for Corrections and Crime Victim's Ombudsman, Rep. Doug Swenson. Effect of Cambridge Bank settlement on agency fees for 1997-98 budget, Department of Finance. Use of electronic monitoring and evaluation of Intensive Probation. New results from Delinquent Under Ten Project, Janet Wiig, Hennepin County Attorney's Office. Report on Victim's Roundtable, Rep. Mary Jo McGuire.

**Transportation & Transit
Finance Division/**

TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bernie Lieder

Agenda: Budget overview by Department of Transportation.

HF337 (Marko) Motor vehicle sales and registration tax proceeds dedicated to the Minnesota transportation fund, and constitutional amendment proposed.

8:30 a.m.

**ENVIRONMENT &
NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE**

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Osthoff

Agenda: Continuation of Feb. 24 agenda.

Sales and Income Tax Division/TAXES

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Johnson

Agenda: Discussion of the Sales Tax Advisory Council's Final Report (STAC Report), Rep. Ann H. Rest.

10 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Phyllis Kahn

Agenda: HF647 (Jefferson) Public pension benefit accrual rates increased, defined contribution early retirement options authorized, homestead and agricultural credit aid modified, and money appropriated (informational hearing).

Discussion of executive branch charges for information.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. John Dorn

Agenda: HF185 (Sykora) Child welfare and children's mental health collaborative provisions modified, privatization of adoption services for children under state guardianship provided, pilot projects established, and money appropriated.

HF402 (Huntley) Health maintenance organization regulatory provisions modified.

HF403 (Huntley) Speech-language pathologist, unlicensed mental health practitioner, alcohol and drug counselor, and hearing instrument dispenser licensure requirements modified.

**Housing & Housing Finance Division/
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &
INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Karen Clark

Agenda: Governor's budget review. Performance review: Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, Kit Hadley, commissioner.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dee Long

Agenda: HFXXXX (Long) Department of Revenue policy bill.

12 Noon

Joint

**CAPITAL INVESTMENT/
State Government Finance Division/
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS/
Senate**

**GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS
& VETERANS/
Senate**

**GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS
BUDGET DIVISION**

123 State Capitol

Chrs. Rep. Henry Kalis,

Rep. Tom Rukavina, Sen. James Metzen, Sen. Leonard Price

Agenda: Report from SGS Group/ Architectural Alliance on Department of Revenue Building.

12:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on

**Business Regulation/
COMMERCE, TOURISM
& CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Al Juhnke

Agenda: HF180 (Goodno) Moorhead liquor license issuance authorized.

HF193 (Murphy) Municipal off-sale intoxicating liquor sale time of day restrictions modified.

HF365 (Swenson, D.) Liquor sale practices restricted between 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. to prohibit discounted prices, multiple drinks, and increased alcohol volume or percentage.

HF524 (Tunheim) Malt liquor importation permit required.

HF525 (Tunheim) Liquor retailer liability insurance requirements modified.

HF721 (Paulsen) Municipalities allowed to authorize on-sale of 3.2 percent malt liquor at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT &
METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ann H. Rest

Agenda: HF217 (Opatz) Land use mandatory comprehensive planning provided, capital improvement program established, and money appropriated.

REGULATED INDUSTRIES & ENERGY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Loren Jennings

Agenda: HF704 (Ozment) Electric power generating plant certificate of need proceeding exemption provided.

HF589 (Goodno) Moorhead telephone exchange construction vote required.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 26

8 a.m.

Economic Development Finance Division/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Trimble

Agenda: Briefings: Department of Labor and Industry budget.

Higher Education Finance Division/EDUCATION

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gene Pelowski

Agenda: Testimony from University of Minnesota students. Presentation on the allocation model, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU); faculty groups; and student groups.

K-12 Education Finance Division/ EDUCATION

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Becky Kelso

Agenda: Overview of governor's budget recommendations-Article 8, Nutrition Programs, Mary Begalle, Department of Children, Families and Learning.
HF652 (Johnson, A.) Targeted breakfast grant program established to analyze the nutritional components of school meals, and money appropriated.
HFXXXX (Entenza) School lunch funding.

Property Tax & Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Edgar Olson

Agenda: HF456 (Milbert) Real estate tax notice service provided.
HF497 (Rest) Proposed property tax notice and truth in taxation advertising provisions modified.
HF627 (Rest) Low-income housing property tax class uniform rules established, apartment and nonhomestead residential property tax class rates reduced, penalties imposed, rulemaking authorized, and money appropriated.
HF660 (Kelso) Proposed property tax notice provisions modified.

8:30 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Osthoff

Agenda: Continuation of Feb. 24 agenda.

10 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Willard Munger

Agenda: HF419 (Tunheim) Watershed district project cost payment through tax levy authorized.

HF317 (Huntley) Municipal wastewater infrastructure eminent domain action authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.
HF244 (Bishop) Individual sewage system requirements modified, and Pollution Control Agency rule compliance authority granted.

HF711 (Munger) Soil and water conservation districts provided annual funding allocation.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS & INSURANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Irv Anderson

Agenda: HF645 (Tomassoni) Health plan mental health coverage minimum standards provided for determining medically necessary care.

HF740 (Juhnke) Insurance companies and agents regulated.

Health & Human Services Finance Division/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Lee Greenfield

Agenda: Continuation of Feb. 24 agenda.

JUDICIARY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Wes Skoglund

Agenda: HF92 (Skoglund) Tattoo removal pilot grant program established, and money appropriated.

HFXXXX (Entenza) Access to government telephone records.

State Government Finance Division/ GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

400S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Rukavina

Agenda: Budget reviews: Department of Military Affairs; Capitol Area Architectural Planning Board (CAAPB); and Office of Administrative Hearings.

12:30 p.m.

Civil & Family Law Division/JUDICIARY

400S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Andy Dawkins

Agenda: HF683 (Lieder) Civil action judgment creditor affidavit information requirements expanded.

HF440 (Chaudhary) Family support uniform interstate act enforcement provisions modified.

HFXXXX (Chaudhary) Relating to landlord tenant nuisance.

HF695 (Entenza) Child support enforcement provisions modified, financial institution data match system established, and civil penalties provided.

Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Division/EDUCATION

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tony Kinkel

Agenda: Child care: governor's recommendations.

TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jean Wagenius

Agenda: To be announced.

1 p.m.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mike Jaros

Agenda: HF409 (Solberg) Direct reduction iron processing facility developed, and money appropriated.

HF422 (McCollum) Contaminated land industrial development provided, and money appropriated.

Economic Development - Past, Present and Future, Carl Kroening.

2:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Land Sales/ ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

400N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Hausman

Agenda: HF551 (Sekhon) State land boundary line and trust sale provisions modified, property tax payment by natural resources commissioner provided, and public land sales authorized.

HF767 (Anderson, I.) St. Louis County state land sale authority repealed.

HF299 (Bakk) State park additions and name changes provided.

Subcommittee on Gaming/ REGULATED INDUSTRIES & ENERGY

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mike Delmont

Agenda: HF285 (Delmont) Gambling device manufacturer inspection cost funding mechanism established.

HF471 (Delmont) Gambling Control Board granted license issuance and renewal authority.

HF495 (Osskopp) Gambling lawful purpose expenditures to include acquisition of property to replace property under threat of acquisition by eminent domain.

HF667 (Macklin) Lawful gambling separate tax refund and credit account requirement eliminated.

4:30 p.m.

Anoka County Delegation

546 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Satveer Chaudhary,
Rep. Kathy Tingelstad

Agenda: Local bills: Andover hazardous waste clean up, Fridley-Locke Lake Dam, Coon Rapids, Highway 10. Fiscal disparities bill, Rep. Myron Orfield. Anoka County update.

THURSDAY, Feb. 27

8 a.m.

Economic Development Finance Division/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Trimble
Agenda: Briefings on brownfields.

EDUCATION

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Lyndon Carlson
Agenda: HF446 (Biernat) Driver's license issuance prohibited to persons under age 18 who have failed to receive a passing score on the state high school graduation test or meet other educational requirements.

Judiciary Finance Division/ JUDICIARY

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mary Murphy
Agenda: Agency budget presentations: Courts-District Court, Court of Appeals, and Supreme Court, Rep. Thomas Pugh, Rep. Sherry Broecker, and Rep. Peg Larsen. Public Safety-Emergency Management and Fire Marshall, Rep. Michael Paymar; Gambling Enforcement & Liquor Control, Rep. Andy Dawkins.

8:30 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Osthoff
Agenda: Continuation of Feb. 24 agenda.

Sales and Income Tax Division/TAXES

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Johnson
Agenda: HF43 (Sviggum) High School League tournament admission sales tax exemption provided.
HF118 (Juhnke) Used farm machinery sales tax exemption extended permanently.
HF173 (Mahon) Aspirin substitute sales and use tax exemption provided.

10 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Phyllis Kahn
Agenda: Continuation of Feb. 20 agenda.
Rule 5.10 referral:
HF156 (Slawik) Secretary of State filing fees and procedures regulated.
HF450 (Rest) Legislative Audit Commission membership provisions modified.
HF610 (Macklin) Legislative Audit Commission membership provisions modified.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. John Dorn
Agenda: HF487 (Greenfield) Hospital medical assistance surcharge tax eliminated, and hospital MinnesotaCare surcharge tax increased.
HF556 (Greenfield) Health care provider unique identifier implementation and identification provisions modified.
HF513 (Koskinen) Human services nonentitlement grant program consolidation authority provided.
HF209 (Vickerman) Human services child placement heritage or background provisions modified.

Housing & Housing Finance Division/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Karen Clark
Agenda: Continuation of Feb. 25 agenda.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dee Long
Agenda: To be announced.

11:30 a.m.

The House meets in session.

12 Noon

The House and Senate meet in joint session.

After Session

Hennepin County Legislative Delegation

200 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Ron Abrams,
Rep. Linda Wejcman
Agenda: Health care.

12:30 p.m.

COMMERCE, TOURISM & CONSUMER AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Tunheim
Agenda: HF431 (Mullery) Corporation and limited liability company provisions modified, and domestic corporation and limited liability company mergers permitted.
HF379 (Abrams) Small corporate securities offering registration and regulation provided.

REGULATED INDUSTRIES & ENERGY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Loren Jennings
Agenda: To be announced.

FRIDAY, Feb. 28

8 a.m.

Higher Education Finance Division/EDUCATION

Tour
Chr. Rep. Gene Pelowski
Agenda: Tour of University of Minnesota-Twin Cities.

K-12 Education Finance Division/ EDUCATION

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Becky Kelso
Agenda: Overview of governor's budget recommendations-Article 2, Special Programs.

Transportation & Transit Finance Division/ TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bernie Lieder
Agenda: Implications of future revenue and expenditures projections on the transportation system, Department of Transportation.

10 a.m.

Health & Human Services Finance Division/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Lee Greenfield
Agenda: Continuation of Feb. 24 agenda.

Subcommittee on Data Practices/ JUDICIARY

400N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mary Jo McGuire
Agenda: Overview of the Minnesota Data Practices Act, Don Gemberling, Department of Administration.

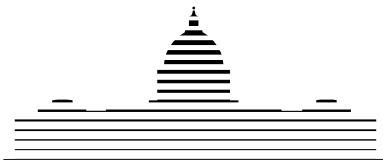
Subcommittee on School Facilities/EDUCATION

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Geri Evans
Agenda: HF772 (Evans) Health and safety revenue program expanded to include indoor air quality, school construction project information requirements modified, indoor air quality task force established, and money appropriated.

1 p.m.

Subcommittee on DWI/ JUDICIARY

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Satveer Chaudhary
Agenda: Presentation on DWI law enforcement procedures/policies including use of intoxilyzers, PBTs, and field sobriety testing, Lt. Mark Peterson, State Highway Patrol. DWI law overview, Steve Simon, University of Minnesota Law School.



MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Minority Leader: Steve Sviggum

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota prisons and prisoners

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Prison bed capacity of the new Rush City prison, under revised | |
| Department of Corrections plan | 952 |
| Number of cells | 544 |
| Bed capacity under original prison design | 800 |
| Additional beds that could be added later under prison expansion | 544 |
| Prison cost, in millions, as allocated by the 1996 Legislature | \$89 |
| Cell size, Rush City prison, in square feet | 84.2 |
| Cell size, Stillwater | 60 |
| Cell size, St. Cloud | 48.2 |
| Cost for environmental studies required before the Rush City prison could be built | \$318,246 |
| Budgeted amount for "furniture, fixtures, and equipment," in millions | \$2.6 |
| Budgeted amount for on-site construction, in millions | \$75 |
| States that imprison more people than Minnesota, per state resident | 48 |
| Daily cost per Minnesota prisoner, fiscal year 1995 | \$83 |
| Percent of prison expenditures consumed by inmate work, education, and treatment programs | 13 |
| Percent of Minnesota inmates participating in such programs, October 1996 | 70 |
| Rank of employment among most common inmate activities | 1 |
| Prisoners working at least 10 hours per week, October 1996 | 2,130 |
| As a percentage of all prisoners | 42.4 |
| Prisoners not working due to the institution's lack of work assignments | 422 |
| Percent of prisoners involved in some form of education program at least 10 hours per week | 28.7 |
| Percent of Minnesota offenders released in 1992 who entered prison without a high school degree or equivalent training | 35 |
| Number of Minnesota's eight prisons that provide education services for inmates | 8 |
| Prisoners earning their GED in fiscal year 1995 | 309 |
| Amount that inmates are paid for participating in educational programs, per hour | \$0.40 - \$1 |
| Amount that most inmates get paid for working, per hour | \$0.40 - \$1 |
| Wage for inmates with a telemarketing job at Lino Lakes, per hour | \$7 |

Sources: Minnesota Department of Corrections; *Recidivism of Adult Felons, January 1997*, Office of the Legislative Auditor.

For more information



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