

SESSION WEEKLY

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Reflections



Charles F. Ward

Charles F. Ward will retire at the end of this the 80th Legislative Session. For those who don't know "Charlie," he is the person who watches the door and keeps uninvited guests out of the House chamber. He has performed his duties for the past 11 years, and worked for the House since 1982. Once you get to know Charlie, you won't forget him.

Charlie will be missed as a fixture in the chamber. Those who know him and know his stories will remember his dry wit. His classic one-liners will not be forgotten either. Charlie says, "I've got a good memory, but it's short."

When legislators are not in the chamber, Charlie is sometimes the brunt of a harmless practical joke such as a far-fetched phone call prank.

"Anything that comes from the Front Desk, I gotta believe," he says. "The people who have really been good to me are the Chief Clerk and his entire staff."

If you ask him about himself, Charlie will tell you that he is "79 years old and proud of it." He adds that "God has blessed me with a wonderful wife of 49 years. She is my life. And my six children and 11 grandchildren are great, too." In typical Charlie fashion, he says, "Life has been good!"

As the House doorkeeper, Charlie stands outside the chamber to check out anyone he thinks does not have the credentials to enter. Over the years, Charlie has questioned governor's staff, new journalists, senators, former legislators, and new members about entering the chamber if he didn't know them. "But I do have great respect for the representatives on both sides of the aisle," he says.

Before session, Charlie stands outside the 15-foot high sliding double doors that serve as the chamber's main entrance. Honoring House protocol, he opens a door only for members and special guests. Inside the chamber, Henry Erdman, assistant sergeant-at-arms, only opens the other door for those leaving. Charlie will tell you that "the lobbyists know better. They don't even test me by climbing that first step up to the entrance."

Charlie sits at the chief sergeant's desk inside the open chamber door when the House is not in session. On occasion, he will give a brief talk to tourists and constituents about the chamber. Otherwise, protocol dictates that a sergeant be present in the chamber at all times.

A large clock hangs high above and behind the desk. The timepiece was returned to its place of honor during the 1990 restoration of the chamber. This same clock years ago would be covered at midnight on the last night of a two-year legislative session so that legislative business could continue. Too bad the tradition cannot be resurrected for Charlie.

Something will be missing from the House chamber on the first day of the 81st Legislative Session — Charles F. Ward's presence.

But, Charlie says, "My time here has been wonderful, and that's damn good."

— LeClair Grier Lambert

INSIDE

| | |
|--|----|
| Highlights | 5 |
| A Closer Look: Light rail transit | 13 |
| Stepping Down: Rep. Eileen Tompkins | 15 |
| Governor's Desk (CH305 - CH337) | 16 |
| Bill Introductions (HF3853 - HF3858) | 22 |
| Committee Schedule (March 30- April 3) | 22 |

On the cover: A crowd begins to gather outside the House chamber as session draws near.

—Photo by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

Minnesota Wild . . .

Lawmakers, city officials face off on arena proposal

By Grant Martin

Members of a House-Senate conference committee on this year's bonding bill are struggling to find middle ground following an intense review of the St. Paul RiverCentre hockey arena proposal March 26.

The proposed state contribution of \$65 million has become one of the major points of contention between the two sides in conference committee. The House bill would fund the project; the Senate bill would not.

Legislators got an opportunity to question representatives of the Minnesota Wild hockey team and St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman regarding the highly publicized and sometimes controversial plan to bring NHL hockey back to Minnesota.

The hearing followed the recent revelation that the construction firm awarded a contract for the project had contributed to the Minnesota Wild's NHL application fee. The Minnesota Wild has since returned the fee to the construction company.

Sen. Gary Laidig (R-Stillwater), addressing Mayor Coleman, said that these transactions demonstrate the need for further oversight of the project.

"I am disturbed by this and apparently you are not," Laidig said.

Coleman defended the Minnesota Wild and the construction company brought into question. He said that the construction firm was one of many private companies that contributed money to help bring hockey back to Minnesota.

"It is absurd," Coleman said. "It is absurd to insinuate that a premier construction company with experience in building sports facilities [and] with experience building convention centers did anything improper."

However, committee members appeared to be more interested in the details of the arena plan and the possibility of finding middle ground between the House and Senate versions of the bonding bill.

The \$130 million arena proposal is, in fact, a done deal. The city has already negotiated a lease agreement with the Minnesota Wild and the NHL, and has a plan in place to fund the construction. The arena will be built with or without state support.

The question that remains is will the state support the plan and if so, how much support it provide.

Of the \$130 million, the city of St. Paul will



St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman, *left*, and Pam Wheelock, the city's director of planning and economic development, describe their finance plan for a new arena to host the Minnesota Wild hockey team. They appeared before the House-Senate bonding conference committee March 25.

bond for \$30 million, and the team will provide \$35 million in the form of a letter of credit. The team also will pay the NHL \$80 million for the franchise. These amounts are currently set by the lease.

The city of St. Paul will pay off its \$30 million bond contribution through a \$1 ticket surcharge and through revenues raised from an outdoor marquee.

The city is requesting that the state provide \$65 million in general obligation bonds. If the state does not provide these funds, the city is responsible for covering the remaining amount under contracts already negotiated.

Coleman told the committee that the arena is just a part of a larger plan to revitalize the entire RiverCentre facility and downtown St. Paul. He said that the expansion of the entire facility will mean new jobs and economic development in the area.

"Right now, we have a private company willing to come in and pay \$80 million to help our capital city," he said.

He said the plan should be given the same treatment that other convention centers receive.

"All we seek is fairness," Coleman said. "We should be treated the same way as other facilities that are asking for a partnership with the state."

Coleman said that the plan is good for the state and good for taxpayers.

"The question we have consistently asked ourselves is, 'Are the public and the taxpayers adequately protected?'" Coleman said. "The answer is a resounding 'yes.'"

Coleman specifically cited provisions in the arena lease that guarantee that the team must remain in the facility at least for 10 years, and after that if the team chooses to leave, the team is responsible for the remaining bonding debt.

Coleman labeled this provision "an unprecedented taxpayer protection that the city insisted be part of the lease."

Sen. Jerry Janezich (DFL-Chisholm) said that this is not simply a convention center proposal.

"You may want to compare this to other projects," Janezich said. "It's a hockey arena for the team. To think it's for anything but the team is crazy."

Sen. Linda Berglin (DFL-Mpls) said that the RiverCentre arena should be viewed apart from other convention center proposals simply because it deals with public subsidies for sports.

"The Minneapolis facility is a facility that has no money going to a sports team," Berglin

Continued on page 4

said. "No money is going to pay a player's salary."

Sen. Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul) said that he is concerned about the city's financial situation if the state does not choose to provide the \$65 million.

If the city is forced to issue an additional \$65 million, some bond rating agencies have indicated that they would lower the city's credit rating, Cohen said.

Members of the conference committee also were concerned about provisions in the agreement that would prohibit the state from using bonds linked to arena revenues. Under the agreement, the state cannot use revenues which would have an impact on the team.

This agreement includes all revenues related to naming rights, concessions, and parking from game nights. Other revenue sources such as player income tax surcharge may also have an impact on the team and, therefore, may not be considered as possible revenue sources.

Pam Wheelock, of the city of St. Paul, told the committee that the city would be required to compensate the team for obligations of this sort.

Attempts to build a new Twins stadium last year relied heavily on these revenue sources to service the bonds.

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey) told Coleman and Wheelock that this agreement makes the search for middle ground between the House and Senate very difficult.

"The city has made a contract that precludes us from helping the city out," he said.

Cohen asked Martha Larson, of the Minnesota Wild, if the team would consider renegotiating its lease with the city in order to make some of these revenue sources available.

"If you are looking for a blanket commitment right here and now, I cannot make that for the team," Larson said. "The team needs to be careful when we're looking for middle ground that we keep the team successful."

Several legislators argued that the benefits of the facility justify the full contribution of \$65 million.

"Like all things, you can dig around and find bad things," said Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul). "But it's going to be a beautiful arena. It's going to add to downtown."

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) said that the Minnesota Wild should be applauded for making a significant investment in the city. He said that the numbers demonstrate the team is willing to make sacrifices.

"I call this charity," he said. "This is a lousy investment."

Bishop said the state should contribute to professional hockey in Minnesota.

"There is pain in the hearts of those of us who love hockey," he said. "I just won't watch those damn Dallas Stars." 🐾



Dimler concentrates on farming after backing namesake legislation

By Grant Martin

It is only fitting that an interview with former Rep. Chuck Dimler would be conducted via cellular phone with the subject traveling in his car down some unknown Minnesota highway.

Dimler — the man who has saved many Minnesotans from auto insurance rate hikes — would have no need to invoke the statutory provision bearing his name. He was obeying the speed limit.

"Right now, I'm going 55 miles per hour," he said. "You see, the traffic warrants it right here. The car in front of me is going 55."

Dimler, a Republican who served in the House from 1983 to 1986, is most known for the amendment that carries his name.

Under the so-called Dimler Amendment, drivers who are issued tickets for speeds up to 10 mph over a 55 mph speed limit get a break. The violators have to pay the fine, but the ticket does not go on their driving record.

The amendment, which became law in 1986, has prevented untold numbers of Minnesotans caught speeding from seeing their insurance rates jump.

"If I was driving Highway 15 outside of New Ulm, where the road is designed for 70 miles per hour, I'd be driving 64," Dimler said.

And that is the way it should be, according to Dimler. He has long argued that the safest speed is the one that is comfortable for drivers given the conditions of the road.

He said that the purpose of the Dimler Amendment is to give the highway patrol and the courts the tools to separate truly dangerous drivers from the moderate speeders.

It doesn't bother him that people plea bargain in court to get their speeding ticket lowered to fall under his law. It shows the flexibility that should be in the law, Dimler said.

"I've been to court with family and friends, and the judge will — on his own volition — change the charge to bring it under the amendment," Dimler said. "It's a tool they can use. They don't have to use it."

The provision has survived periodic challenges from public safety advocates since it became law. Dimler said that the law is still in effect simply because it's reasonable and people like it.



Former two-term member Chuck Dimler was the architect of the so-called "Dimler Amendment."

"It's a popular piece of statute," he said. "I mean, does it truly offend anyone?"

Dimler's life hasn't changed too much since he left the House more than a decade ago. He still answers the occasional questions about the Dimler Amendment and he still farms his land in Carver and Hennepin counties.

Now it's much easier to just concentrate on farming, he said.

"I am truly one of the living citizen-legislators," Dimler said. "I never left my career to do it. I made farm decisions from the retiring room of the House. Sometimes I planted corn at night and came back to the House the next morning. It was tough to run the farm and be in the Legislature at the same time."

But Dimler does not regret his time in the House.

"I was glad I did it," he said. "It was a life experience."

And Dimler said that it is an experience that more people should have. He said that public service should be seen as a responsibility for everyone and he favors term limits in order to maintain Minnesota's citizen Legislature.

Continued on page 17

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Eliminating a blight

Grain farmers from northwestern Minnesota who, in recent years, have lost significant parts of their crops to a plant disease called "scab" are in trouble, and they're asking the Legislature for some help.

A bill (**HF3853**) that Rep. Jim Tunheim (DFL-Kennedy) sponsors would provide assistance to those farmers. The bill was approved March 26 by the House Ways and Means Committee.

"This is really a dramatic situation," Tunheim said.

The bill would appropriate \$8.5 million from the budget reserve account to help beleaguered farmers in 11 northwestern Minnesota counties pay for crop insurance. If they've lost 50 percent or more of their crops in the 1994 to 1997 growing seasons, they would get help.

Farmers would receive help equal to half the total premium, to a maximum of \$4,000 per farm. The 11 eligible counties would be Beltrami, Clearwater, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau.

There are fears that many northwestern Minnesota farmers affected by scab — also known as Fusarium head blight — could fold this spring after five years of difficulty.

Rob Rynning, 34, is a Kittson County farmer who, along with his brother, grows canola, flax, soybeans, wheat, and barley on 3,100 acres.

Scab attaches itself to the kernel of grain crops, eventually rendering the crop unusable, Rynning said. It's often caused by wet weather, which has been abundant in northwestern Minnesota in recent years.

Scab began affecting many farms in the early 1990s.

"Minnesotans have lost \$1.5 billion to this disease that we've been fighting," Rynning told the committee.

If left unchecked, scab could wipe out 50 percent of the farms in northwestern Minnesota, Rynning said, and that would lead to problems with the rest of the economy in that area and the rest of the state.

"Anybody in the rural economy who deals with the farms is affected," he said, adding that he and his brother lost \$80,000 in wheat and barley in 1997.



Robert Rynning, a farmer from Kennedy, Minn., testifies in support of a bill that would provide emergency farm relief for northwestern Minnesota farmers whose crops are infected with wheat scab. Rynning appeared before the House Ways and Means Committee March 26.

Researchers at the University of Minnesota are looking for ways to eliminate the blight, but that could take some time, he said.

"We really need something in the short term. The young farmers are already getting out," Rynning said.

House Minority Leader Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon), also a farmer, said he sympathizes with the plight of the farmers in northwestern Minnesota. But farmers are often the victims of unfair prices and bad weather, and when he complains about that, his wife often tells him, "Steve, nobody gave you the right to farm," Sviggum said.

Rynning said this particular problem is different from the usual hardships of farming.

"I don't have the right to farm, but helping out the region is important to the economy," he said.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) spoke in support of the bill. "If farmers weren't farming, if loggers weren't logging, and if miners weren't mining, some people in the [Twin Cities] metropolitan area wouldn't have a job," he said.

The bill now moves to the floor.



BANKING

Checks in the mail



Restrictions will be placed on the unsolicited checks that some financial institutions mail to consumers, under a new law signed by Gov. Arne Carlson March 25.

Consumers who find such checks in their mailboxes are actually receiving loan solicitations, carrying interest rates as high as 30 percent.

Effective Jan. 1, 1999, the new law stipulates that no financial institution or lender can send such a check unless it complies with several new requirements.

The checks will be required to become void after 30 days, and information will have to be sent with the check advising consumers to destroy it if they do not use it.

Consumers will have to be told in plain terms that the check is a loan, and the loan agreement will have to be on the back of the check.

If such a check is fraudulently cashed by someone other than the addressee, the consumer is to be absolved from liability by signing a statement saying he or she did not cash the check.

The check will have to be mailed in an envelope that does not indicate its contents. Also, it must not be forwarded if the consumer no longer lives at the address.

Bill sponsor Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) said during House floor discussion of the measure that he recently received one such check — for thousands of dollars — in the mail.

He said if the check would have been lost or stolen, and cashed, it would have been a hardship. He said his legislation puts procedures in place to protect the consumer.

The measure allows an exception for prospective borrowers who already have an open-end credit arrangement, such as a credit card account, with a lender.

Sen. Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF2016/SF2550*/CH335

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Lost or stolen debit cards



A new law effective Aug. 1, 1998, will limit customer liability to \$50 on lost or stolen debit cards.

The law will cover the debit cards that financial institutions issue to holders of checking accounts. Besides getting cash out of automatic teller machines, consumers can use debit cards to make purchases that are directly deducted from their checking account, as long as the merchant has a terminal that can handle debit card transactions.

The law will limit customer liability to \$50 if the card is lost or stolen. The limit will apply to unauthorized transactions made before the bank receives notice that the card has been lost or stolen. (There is no liability for transactions made after the financial institution has been notified.)

A similar liability limit for credit card holders exists in current law.

Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope) and Sen. Edward Oliver (R-Deephaven) sponsored the measure.

HF2500*/SF2540/CH295

Women and credit history



A new law seeks to give divorced and widowed women a fairer shake when applying for loans and credit cards.

Effective Jan. 1, 1999, the law will require that creditors consider the credit history of an applicant's spouse and that credit histories be reported in the name of both spouses.

House sponsor Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley) said the law will help women who were conscientious borrowers while married, but find themselves unable to secure credit after a death or divorce because the credit history exists solely in their former spouse's name.

"There are times when an applicant finds she has no credit history," Leppik said. "This [will] give that person recourse to state court and small claims court. The applicant still has to establish her own credit-worthiness."

Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF2309*/SF2136/CH327

If you will be visiting the Capitol in the near future, call the Capitol Historic Site Program at (612) 296-2881 to schedule a tour.

Looking thin



A likeness of Bernie Omann, the governor's chief of staff, watches over proceedings at the House-Senate conference committee on the omnibus tax bill March 20, as Rep. Ted Winter, right, and Sen. Jim Vickerman, confer. Sen. Doug Johnson, chair of the Senate Committee on Taxes, brought the mock figure of Omann to the hearing because Johnson was displeased by a gubernatorial veto of one of his bills.

Reporting fraudulent checks



A new law effective Aug. 1, 1998, aims to encourage banks and credit unions to report information concerning fraudulent check use to the crime alert network or law enforcement agencies.

The law will limit the liability of financial institutions who provide stolen, forged, or fraudulent check information.

As long as an institution is acting in good faith when they disclose information, they will be free of risk of being held liable by the subjects of the disclosure, under the new law.

The measure was sponsored by Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) and Sen. Ember Junge (DFL-New Hope).

HF3389/SF2493*/CH337



BUSINESS

Minnesota's franchise law

Northwest Airlines would be unable to use a 1997 law to its advantage in a court battle, under a bill that's headed for the governor's desk.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), passed the House March 26. The vote was 128-2.

The 1997 Legislature passed special legislation for Northwest Airlines that retroactively exempted the airline from Minnesota's franchise law.

The state franchise law provides franchisees with some degree of protection against unwarranted termination of agreements with their parent companies.

Legislators recently discovered the retroactive exemption had an effect on pending litigation against Northwest Airlines.

A \$30 million lawsuit filed in Maine in 1994 by Northeast Express Airlines and Precision Valley Aviation claims that Northwest Airlines violated Minnesota's franchise law when it dropped the two commuter airlines, forcing them into bankruptcy.

The bill (**HF3841/SF3397***) would clarify that the 1997 franchise exemption does not apply to any agreements that were subject to litigation prior to passage of the law.

House Minority Leader Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) said the bill would bring back honor to the words and intentions of the 1997 law.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) said Northwest's attorneys willfully used the 1997 law as a defense in the Maine case. "What's their excuse — the devil made them do it?" Abrams asked.

Limited partner regulations



Regulations by which a limited partner in an investment can withdraw from a partnership will be changed under a new law signed March 23 by Gov. Arne Carlson.

The law will allow limited partners to withdraw from an investment partnership only if permitted by the written

partnership agreement. If the agreement contains no withdrawal authority, the limited partner will not be able to withdraw.

Current law allows limited partners to withdraw unless it is specifically forbidden in the written partnership agreement.

Limited partners invest in a partnership but are usually not subject to the same legal liabilities to which the general partners are subject.

The new law will apply to partnerships formed after July 31, 1998, and to partnerships formed earlier that contain a written provision allowing withdrawal.

Rep. Bill Macklin (R-Lakeville) and Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley) sponsored the measure.

HF2507/SF3036*/CH320



CONSUMERS

Getting extended area service



It will be easier to petition the Public Utilities Commission for extended telephone service within school district boundaries, under a new law effective March 24, 1998.

A 1997 law required a majority of all telephone customers in each exchange to vote in favor of extended area service within a school district.

The new measure, signed by Gov. Arne Carlson March 23, requires only that a majority of customers who cast a vote is required to extend the service.

Extended area service is often sought in rural areas, where calls from residents to their children's school can result in long distance charges. While extended area service may result in higher monthly service charges, it does make each call within a school district a local call.

House Minority Leader Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) and Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine) sponsored the measure.

HF3644*/SF3170/CH326



ELECTIONS

Elected Met Council rejected

The House narrowly rejected a bill March 23 that would make members of the Metropolitan Council stand for election beginning in 2003. The vote was 67-66 against the plan.

The council was created in 1967 and is responsible for regional planning in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. It's one of the largest regional governments in the country and over-

sees the regional bus system, wastewater treatment facilities, and Metro Mobility, a transit operation that serves disabled people.

The council's annual budget is \$360 million, partially paid by property taxes. It has about 3,500 employees who are governed by a board of directors appointed by the governor. There are 16 members, each representing a different region of the metropolitan area, and a chair.

The bill would require those members to be elected.

HF2588 is sponsored by Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls), who has introduced several bills calling for an elected Metropolitan Council in recent years, including one last year that passed the Legislature but was vetoed by Gov. Arne Carlson.

This year's bill drew much debate on the House floor.

Orfield argued that members of the council should be elected because the council has "many of the powers of legislative government. It has broad discretionary authority.

"In many ways, this entity is shaping the future of the region. A body this large, that has this kind of taxing authority, should be accountable to the people," he said.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) spoke against the bill.

"If you don't like how the Metropolitan Council is being run, get another governor," Abrams said. "An elected Metropolitan Council would be about as useful as a third house [of the Legislature]."

Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings) said an elected Metropolitan Council would add one more unnecessary level of government.

"You go under the assumption that it's government getting bigger and government getting stronger and more centralized," he said.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL- St. Paul) said the Metropolitan Council currently is not fulfilling its responsibilities.

"The Metropolitan Council should be providing the coordination and they are not," he said. "I would like to be able to sit down with my Metropolitan Council member and look at the future directions we're taking. I think an elected body will be accountable to the people."

The version of the bill the House rejected would not change any duties of the members of the Metropolitan Council.

An earlier version included a provision that would have required candidates for the Metropolitan Council to also be candidates for the county board in their home county. But that provision had been deleted from the bill.

Voter registration list update

The House passed a bill March 23 that would make voter registration easier for people in Minnesota who move to a new home. The vote was 71-61.

Sponsored by Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins), the bill would authorize the Office of the Secretary of State to get the names and addresses of people who have given the U.S. Postal Service a change-of-address card.

Littlest page



House Speaker Phil Carruthers lets 5-year-old Aaron Phipps try out the best seat in the House March 20. Aaron was visiting his mother, Yonina, who is a House page.

The information then could be given to the appropriate county auditor, who would update the voter registration lists. The county auditor would be required to confirm the voter's new address by mail.

Under current law, voters who move to a new home must take care of registration themselves — by visiting the county courthouse, by mail, or by registering at their polling place on election day.

"It'll just simplify the process so we can start the 21st century before the 21st century," Folliard said.

Critics said the bill would come uncomfortably close to making voter registration mandatory.

"This is an unnecessary piece of legislation. I think we should save the governor the trouble of vetoing it," said Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview).

And critics said voters should update their registration and should not count on the state to do it for them.

"Providing a change of address is the task of a responsible citizen," said Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka). "This is a solution in search of a problem."

HF2387/SF2149* now goes to the governor.

Candidates' endorsement claims

Candidates for political office in Minnesota would be required to get written permission before claiming the endorsement of any organization, under a bill the House passed March 23. The vote was 73-59.

Sponsored by Rep. Jim Tunheim (DFL-Kennedy), **HF2277** would stipulate that a candidate may not claim in campaign material that he or she has the support of an organization unless the organization has provided written permission.

Tunheim's bill would add organizations such as labor unions and business interests to current law stating that a candidate may not claim the support of an individual without written permission.

Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) said he sees no need for the legislation because most candidates receiving the support of an organization usually get a letter stating such.

"I just don't see that this is an issue of great importance," he said. "It seems to me this is a self-policing type of situation. I just don't see the need. [It's] more bureaucracy."

Tunheim agreed that when a candidate is endorsed by an organization, the candidate usually gets a letter from the group. But the bill

would make it clear that candidates must have that letter if they're going to mention the support in campaign literature.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

Open absentee balloting

A pilot program that allows for open absentee balloting in Ramsey County would be extended for another year, under a bill the House passed March 23. The vote was 78-54.

In 1991, Anoka, Hennepin, Polk, and Ramsey counties entered into a pilot project for open absentee balloting. The 1994 Legislature extended the pilot project in Ramsey County until this year, and the county now wants the project extended again until Dec. 31, 1999.

By law, people who want to vote by absentee ballot must have an acceptable reason that makes it necessary to do so. Reasons can include absence from the precinct, illness, disability, observance of a religious holiday, or service as an election judge.

An absentee ballot is mailed or given to the voter, who fills it out like a regular ballot and mails it back to the county auditor's office. The ballots are held until election day, then tallied with all the other ballots.

Under the bill, sponsored by Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul), Ramsey County would continue allowing voters to use an absentee ballot without providing a reason.

The pilot project requires only that voters who want to vote absentee apply in writing to the county auditor's office and provide their name, address and signature.

HF2567/SF2221* now goes to the governor.

Absentee ballots with 'reason'

Voters could use an absentee ballot for any reason, under a bill the House passed March 23. The vote was 68-64.

Current law lists a number of acceptable reasons for voting by absentee ballot. The reasons include absence from the precinct, illness, disability, observance of a religious holiday, or election judge service in another precinct.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul), would strike that language in current law and would require only that voters list their reason for needing an absentee ballot on their application.

The bill also would make it illegal to accept money for delivering or mailing an absentee ballot and to attempt to influence a voter who is completing an absentee ballot.

Rep. Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) expressed concern that voters' reasons for not going to the polls might become frivolous.

"It could be that they want to stay home and watch Andy Griffith reruns," Pawlenty said. "Why have them put a reason on it? It just goes around in a circle, and I think we should say what we mean and mean what we say. I think people should show up to vote."

HF2526/SF2148* goes to the Senate.

Absentee ballot without 'reason'

Voters in Hennepin County would be allowed to vote by absentee ballot without having to provide a reason for doing so, under a bill the House passed March 23. The vote was 73-60.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Richard Jefferson (DFL-Mpls), calls for a pilot project to test the more liberal absentee ballot requirements.

Under the bill, voters wanting to vote by absentee ballot could do so without giving a reason, as long as they give the county their name, address, signature, and some other basic information.

When the bill was discussed by the House General Legislation, Veterans Affairs and Elections Committee in February, Jefferson said that his district in Hennepin County consistently has the lowest voter turnout in the state.

With a high concentration of minorities, renters, and poverty, voter turnout is often low. A result of the low voter turnout is that candidates for statewide office rarely campaign in some parts of Hennepin County, Jefferson said at the time.

Under present law, people wanting to vote with an absentee ballot must have a reason, such as absence from the precinct, illness, disability, observance of a religious holiday, or service as an election judge.

House Minority Leader Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) objected to the bill and others that would expand absentee voting.

"This series of bills bothers me," he said. "The prevailing attitude is that it's government's duty rather than the voter's duty. There will be a small number of increases in the number of mistakes that are made."

Rep. Dee Long (DFL-Mpls) said it is important to make it easier for everyone to vote.

"I wouldn't want to tell any elderly voters that," she said in response to Sviggum's comments. "I wouldn't want to tell it to a business person who has to be out of town."

HF2293/SF2118* now goes to the governor.



ENVIRONMENT

Lottery revenue dedication

A bill that aims to extend the life of the state lottery's revenue dedication to the Minnesota Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund passed the House March 23. The vote was 132-0.

HF113*/SF76, sponsored by Rep. Willard Munger (DFL-Duluth), would submit the following constitutional amendment to voters in the 1998 general election: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to extend to the year 2025 the dedication of lottery proceeds to the environmental and natural resources trust fund and to maximize the long-term total return to the fund?"

The environmental trust fund was established in 1988 by a constitutional amendment that authorized the state to establish a lottery with 50 percent of the proceeds from the first five years earmarked for environmental spending. A second constitutional amendment in 1990 changed the designated portion of proceeds to 40 percent until the year 2001.

Since 1991, the environmental trust fund has provided 177 projects throughout the state with approximately \$83 million for the protection and conservation of fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. The fund is currently valued at more than \$209 million.



GAMBLING

Gambling proceeds and the ADA



A new law allows organizations to use legal gambling profits to bring their facilities into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Under previous law, gambling proceeds could be used for construction or repairs on only certain types of property. Legal uses included maintaining nonprofit facilities or replacing buildings lost to natural disaster or eminent-domain ruling.

But the new law allows any group that earns money from legal gambling — including pull tabs and lottery tickets — to use those funds to either improve handicapped access in a facility or to replace an out-of-compliance facility with one that meets ADA requirements.

Proponents said this will be useful for organizations such as Veterans of Foreign Wars, which often can't afford to make handicapped-access improvements.

The new law also allows licensed gambling organizations to pay salaries and winnings via

electronic transfer. Under prior law, gambling profits had to follow a paper check trail. Proponents said the new measure will increase efficiency in large gambling operations.

The law, effective March 24, 1998, was sponsored Rep. Mike Delmont (DFL-Lexington) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy).

HF2920/SF2911*/CH322



GAME & FISH

Hunting, fishing privileges

A bill that aims to amend the Minnesota Constitution to protect hunting and fishing privileges passed the House March 26. The vote was 118-13.

The bill (**HF3808/SF41***), sponsored by Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul), would submit the following amendment to voters in the 1998 general election: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to declare that fishing, hunting, and the taking of game and fish is a valued part of our heritage, which shall be forever preserved, and that this privilege



Fred L. Morrison, professor of law at the University of Minnesota, gives a crash course on constitutional law to members of the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee March 24. The committee was considering a bill that would place a constitutional amendment on the November ballot asking Minnesotans if they want to constitutionally protect the privileges of hunting and fishing. Morrison attended the hearing on behalf of Pheasants Forever and Ducks Unlimited.

shall be managed by law and regulation for the common good?"

Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls), citing the disappearance of several species from Minnesota, said she supports the bill on the basis of environmental conservation.

"Because the privilege 'shall be forever preserved' . . . we will need to redouble our efforts to clean up our waters and expand habitats," she said. "It's a win-win situation, even for those who choose not to exercise the privilege to hunt and fish."

Throughout the committee process, proponents have said the bill would be a first step in standing up to anti-hunting groups who seek to curtail the activities of hunting and fishing enthusiasts.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) questioned the reality of the threat posed by animal rights groups.

"I suspect the voters of the state will see the folly of this amendment," he said. "There is no need for it. There is no threat."

The bill now moves to the Senate.



HEALTH

'Off-label' drug coverage



Cancer patients who find relief from certain treatments not approved by the Food and Drug Administration for their specific form of cancer no longer will have to wonder if their health plan will pay

for the treatment.

A new state law will require health maintenance organizations and other health plans to pay for "off-label" use of drugs prescribed for cancer treatment. Effective Aug. 1, 1998, the law will stipulate that all health plans, including Medicare supplemental coverage, may not refuse to pay for cancer treatments involving drugs that are already on a plan's formulary.

"Off-label" drug use is the prescribing of drugs recognized as a treatment for at least one form of cancer in standard medical literature. Cancer specialists indicate about 10 percent of their patients respond to treatment that is not covered for their specific cancer under their insurance plan.

Drugs are often approved by the FDA for treatment of certain cancers, and further research sometimes finds the drug is beneficial for a wider range of cancers.

But drug companies rarely resubmit these medications for FDA approval because of the time and cost involved. Some health plans then refuse to pay for use of these prescription

drugs if the medication is not FDA-approved for a specific cancer.

The law will not apply to drugs used in experimental cancer treatment.

There are 27 other states with similar laws related to off-label drug use.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the measure.

HF1306/SF1076*/CH301

Rendering emergency care



Volunteers and others who provide emergency medical care with an automatic external defibrillator without expectation of compensation will not be liable for civil damages under a new law effective

Aug. 1, 1998.

The law broadens the existing "Good Samaritan statute," which provides immunity to volunteers or untrained people who give emergency care, unless a patient objects.

Many airlines and businesses now carry automatic external defibrillators, which restore the heart's rhythm by delivering an electric shock. To use an automatic external defibrillator, the rescuer places two pads on the victim's chest and the device measures the heart's rhythm. If the device detects ventricular fibrillation, the machine directs the user to push a button to deliver a shock.

Under the new law, any volunteer or other person who does not expect compensation will be able to render the emergency care without fear of civil liability, unless the person giving the care acts in a reckless manner.

The law will apply only to the scene of an emergency outside of a hospital or other facility where licensed practitioners are available.

Rep. Geri Evans (DFL-New Brighton) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure.

HF3138/SF2861*/CH329

Hepatitis B vaccinations



Children who enroll in kindergarten beginning in the 2000-2001 school year will have to be vaccinated against hepatitis B, under a new law effective Aug. 1, 1998.

The law also will apply to children enrolling in kindergarten through the seventh grade beginning with the 2007-2008 school term. But the law will exempt families who object to the vaccination for religious or other reasons.

Hepatitis B is caused by a virus and is spread

by contact with an infected person's blood or other body fluids. It can also be spread by sharing washcloths, razors or needles, and through tattooing. The vaccination process involves a schedule of three doses of the vaccine.

The disease causes liver inflammation that can lead to liver failure or cancer.

Roughly 80 percent of infants receive the vaccination in conjunction with other childhood vaccinations. The law's purpose is to inoculate those who now do not receive the vaccination.

The cost of the vaccination program for those entering kindergarten is covered under a federal program.

Rep. Nora Slawik (DFL-Maplewood) and Sen. Becky Lourey (DFL-Kerrick) sponsored the measure.

HF2681/SF2372*/CH305

Acquiring nonprofit hospitals



Gov. Arne Carlson used his veto authority March 25 to reject legislation that would have made purchase of nonprofit hospitals by for-profit chains more difficult.

The measure would have required that whenever a nonprofit hospital proposes to transfer more than 50 percent of its assets or financial control to a for-profit group, it must notify the state attorney general in writing.

The attorney general already has the power to investigate and stop such transactions, but the legislation would have ensured that written notice would go to the attorney general's office 45 days in advance of any deal.

Under the legislation, the attorney general could have made the notice accessible to the public if the office determined the public would benefit from the information.

The governor wrote in his veto statement, "I am persuaded that the office of the attorney general can adequately protect the public's interest in this area with the authority granted under current law."

Carlson also indicated he thought the bill "established a litigious, adversarial process for conducting business transactions which I find unnecessary."

"While I recognize the value of community hospitals, I cannot support the wholesale lock-out of noncharitable business entities in the marketplace, which is the effect of the bill."

He also said, "In some instances, particularly in the case of a financially struggling rural community hospital, the public may be best served by the noncharitable acquisition of the

hospital, especially when the only alternative is closure of the facility."

Nonprofit hospitals are generally viewed as charitable community assets, but from 1990 to 1996 a total of 192 nonprofit hospitals nationwide were converted to for-profit status.

Public funds are used for various projects at nonprofit hospitals. If the hospital is acquired by a for-profit company, the company likely acquires assets paid for with public dollars, possibly at less than fair-market value.

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls) and Sen. Linda Berglin (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the bill.

HF381/SF695*/CH330



INDUSTRY

Telephone assistance plan

Minnesotans' telephone bills would increase slightly under legislation the House passed March 24 that would expand the telephone assistance plan. The vote was 68-63.

Currently, about 50,000 low-income senior citizens and people with disabilities are covered by the program.

However, upcoming expansion of the program under direction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will include all residents at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level. That means a family of three with an income just under \$20,000 annually would qualify.

The FCC change would put an estimated 280,000 to 285,000 Minnesota households on the plan. That would cover more than 15 percent of the state's population.

The House bill would place a maximum 10-cent monthly surcharge on cellular phones. A current 6-cent surcharge on telephone lines would increase to 10 cents in about three years.

Until recently, the federal government and the state paid \$3.50 per recipient monthly toward the assistance program, for a total of \$7 in assistance for local telephone service.

As of Jan. 1, 1998, the federal share rose to \$5.25, plus an additional \$1.75 if the state contributes \$3.50. If Minnesota continues to contribute \$3.50, the total assistance for eligible households is \$10.50.

Some legislators argued that residents should not face a surcharge to pay for someone else's telephone use.

"We don't do that with food stamps," said Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska). "I don't quite understand why we're asking the general public to help pay for someone else when maybe for them it's an issue to pay their own phone bill."

Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls), sponsor of **HF3064/SF2718***, said that for many people helped by the program, telephone service is a lifeline. Without a telephone, many elderly people are cut off from the world, and they are denied 911 access.

Others argued against a surcharge on cellular phones, stating many people use them for business or emergencies and that taxing cellular phones would amount to taxing some phone users twice.

The bill now moves to conference committee.

A similar bill the Senate passed would increase the surcharge to 12 cents a line on July 1, 1999, and to 16 cents on July 1, 2000. The Senate bill has no provision for a cellular surcharge.



INSURANCE

New investment options



A new law that will give insurance companies more flexibility in investing their assets was signed March 23 by Gov. Arne Carlson.

Under the law effective Aug. 1, 1998, "financially strong" insurers will be allowed to choose to be governed by the new provisions rather than by current state insurance laws, which will remain in place.

To use the new investment options, insurers will be required to have a minimum of \$2 billion in total assets and a total capital and surplus of \$200 million.

Insurers who qualify and decide to invest under the new law could invest in anything within a standard considered by the company's board of directors, subject to an internal control system. The companies will have to have a written investment policy.

The commissioner of commerce will require information from insurers, and the commissioner could hire an expert to review an insurer's investments. The commissioner also will be able to order insurers to change their investments.

Rep. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope) and Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan) sponsored the measure.

HF3355/SF3032*/CH319

If you have Internet access, visit the Legislature's web page at: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us>

Medical equipment, supplies



A new law effective Jan. 1, 1999, will require health plans to tell clients what medical equipment and supplies are covered.

The law also will stipulate that any health plan that covers durable medical equipment may not exclude coverage of devices used in the home.

In addition, health plans will be required to tell members and prospective members the nature of the coverage for durable medical equipment, level of coverage available, procedures for prior authorizations, and an address or telephone number of someone with the plan that the member can call to get information, either verbally or in writing, on what's covered and not covered.

Rep. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm) and Sen. Leo Foley (DFL-Anoka) sponsored the new measure.

HF2814*/SF2130/CH334



LAW

A health care directive

A plan to consolidate the law regarding health care decision-making seems to be well on the way to recovery following what appeared to be full cardiac arrest on the House floor.

The bill (**HF2521/SF2050***), sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R- Rochester), failed March 20 on a vote of 67-63 against the mea-

sure. The bill was immediately reconsidered and tabled.

On March 26, the bill was lifted from the table, amended by Bishop, and passed by the full House on a 110-21 vote.

The bill is based on the recommendations of a working group the Minnesota State Bar Association sponsored to review current law on health care decision-making and to suggest ways to make the laws more effective. The group is made up of government officials and representatives from health care organizations, consumer groups, and ethical and religious organizations.

Currently, a patient can create a document that designates the care to be received if he or she cannot communicate those wishes. The document is called a living will. In addition, a patient can name a person as his or her durable power of attorney, which authorizes that person to make health care decisions. The living will and durable power of attorney provisions are contained in two separate statutes.

The bill would combine the living will and the durable power of attorney into one document called a health care directive. The bill provides the criteria necessary for a directive to be valid.

Bishop said that he brought the proposal forward to make an already existing process easier. He said his bill would encourage more people to outline their health care wishes before it is too late.

Opponents of the bill argued that the change would make it easier to withhold treatment that may prolong life from those who are terminally ill.

Special olympian



Bryn Paulson, niece of Rep. Bill Macklin, was recognized on the House floor March 23 for winning three gold medals and one silver in the freestyle swimming competition at the 1995 International Special Olympics in New Haven, Conn.

Bishop's amendment restated safeguards contained in the original law.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Real estate filing fees



A plan to create a uniform real estate filing fee structure for counties statewide was vetoed March 23 by Gov. Arne Carlson.

Carlson said he supports the idea of standardizing such processes across the state. However, he said that he could not support the proposal because it would have meant fee increases.

"Minnesotans already pay a substantial portion of their incomes to provide for local, state, and federal services," he wrote in his veto message. "With no demonstrated need for these fee increases, I cannot sanction this bill."

The bill was sponsored by Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown) and Sen. David Ten Eyck (DFL-East Gull Lake).

HF1882/SF1654*/CH311



MILITARY

NATO expansion resolution: 2

The House passed a bill March 20 that would call for a resolution asking President Clinton and the U.S. Congress to support the admission of the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to NATO. The vote was 101-11.

A similar bill (**HF2417*/SF2055/Res. 5**) concerning Poland, the Czech Republic, and the Republic of Hungary was approved without the governor's signature March 5 and a resolution concerning those countries was sent to Clinton and members of Congress.

The U.S. Senate is currently debating a measure that would call for admitting those three former Soviet-bloc nations to the 49-year-old peacekeeping alliance.

The three Baltic states are not included in that measure, which was approved by the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee but which still needs a three-quarters majority in the full U.S. Senate for approval. A vote there is expected following a two-week break in April.

HF3613 was sponsored by Rep. Mark Mahon (DFL-Bloomington). He said the matter was brought to his attention by a Richfield resident from Latvia who is active in promoting Baltic interests in Minnesota.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls), a co-sponsor of the bill, said members of the Baltic

community in her district had originally asked that their countries be included in the earlier resolution passed by the Legislature. Out of concern that that measure would be held up by last-minute changes, a second bill was drafted concerning the Baltic countries.

Mahon's bill now goes to the Senate.



TOURISM

Fishing dispute resolution

Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls) said he knew it was time to take action once long-standing fishing disputes with Canada spawned a proposal for Minnesota's Northwest Angle to secede from the United States.

"We need to indicate the willingness of the state of Minnesota to resolve these differences," Anderson said during House floor debate on a bill (**HF3854**) he is sponsoring.

Anderson's measure calls for a resolution asking President Clinton and the U.S. Congress to seek a solution to troubles between Minnesota and the Canadian province of Ontario.

The House passed the bill March 23 on a 124-2 vote.

The approximately 85 year-round residents of the Northwest Angle have complained for years about Canadian policies including fish limits, user fees, and border crossing permits that they say discriminate against U.S. anglers.

The Northwest Angle, the northernmost spot of the continental United States, is actually a peninsula on Lake of the Woods that is attached only to Canada.

According to Canadian law, tourists fishing the two-thirds of the lake in Canada and staying in Canadian resorts may keep up to two walleye or sauger per day. Beginning this summer, anglers staying at U.S. resorts will be allowed to keep none of those fish pulled from

Canadian waters.

Canadians say the regulations are needed because the species are overfished, but Northwest Angle residents claim Canada is driven by a desire to force tourists to stay at Canadian resorts.

U.S. Rep. Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) introduced a constitutional amendment March 18 that would let the Angle and nearby islands separate from the United States, allowing residents and tourists to enjoy the Canadian fishing privileges.

The Seventh District congressman said he sees secession as a long shot but that he sponsored the proposal in order to bring attention to the plight of Northwest Angle anglers. He also said the Canadian regulations violate a 1909 border-waters treaty and the North American Free Trade Agreement but that the federal government has not taken action to protect U.S. rights in the area.

On the House floor, several lawmakers who supported Anderson's proposal said they did so because they want to find a solution to the border turmoil without seeing a part of Minnesota secede.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

A related bill, also sponsored by Anderson, would give \$25,000 to the Council of State Governments to set up meetings between Minnesota legislators and members of the Manitoba and Ontario parliaments to discuss boundary disputes. That proposal was rolled into the House's omnibus state government finance bill (**SF3354**), which is currently being considered in a conference committee. The Senate companion bill does not include that funding.



TRANSPORTATION

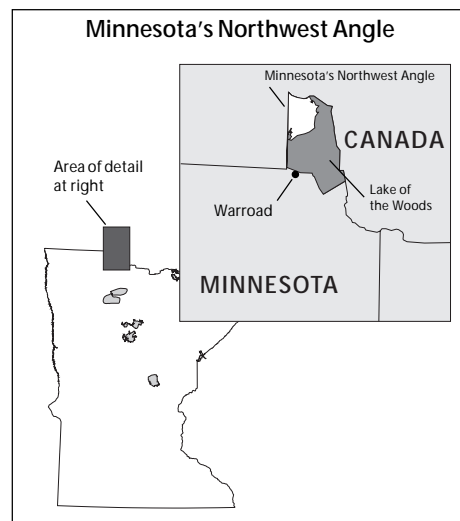
Graduated licensing for teens

No Minnesota teenager could get a full driver's license until age 17, a year later than current law allows, under legislation the House passed March 24. The vote was 80-49.

But it's unlikely most Minnesota teens would find the change restrictive.

The legislation for "graduated licensing" was amended on the House floor to remove what some considered the teeth of the bill, which would have placed a curfew and other restrictions on younger drivers with provisional licenses.

Currently, Minnesota teen drivers can get a learner's permit at age 15 and apply for a full driver's license at 16. The bill, sponsored by



Continued on page 17

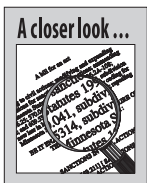
Light rail transit . . .

In spite of roadblocks, LRT is on brink of reality



Legislators are currently considering a metropolitan-area light rail transit system similar to this one in San Diego, which runs between that city's downtown area and the Mexican border.

By Jim Thielman



It seems many people believe the streetcar wasn't such a bad idea after all.

Not long after bus service and a growing dependence on automobiles pushed out the streetcar in the Twin Cities, new mass transit alternatives were quickly under study.

The last of the Twin Cities streetcar lines was shut down during the 1950s. The first metropolitan analysis of alternative transit came barely a decade later in 1967.

Now, light rail transit (LRT), which is basically a new generation streetcar, is near to becoming a fledgling reality in the state under a bonding bill (**HF3843**) now being considered by a House-Senate conference committee.

During the 1960s, discussion of alternative transit in the metropolitan area centered on an underground subway system. Since the early 1970s LRT, which like a streetcar, runs on tracks at ground level, has been heavily discussed.

And at the end of the 1980s, LRT was expected to become a reality in the state.

Newspaper accounts in 1989 forecast the look of public transit in approaching decades with grand expectations.

"In the next 10 years, construction of a light rail transit line between St. Paul and Minneapolis is almost a certainty," one report stated. "By the year 2000, there may be three light rail lines operating and a fourth being built."

Interstate 394 was touted at the time as another solution to the metro area's transportation problems. It was called "a whole transportation system" that would encourage car pooling, bus ridership, and exclusive lanes for "quicker trips at rush hour."

A decade later, rush-hour traffic on I-394 is thick, and bus ridership in the Twin Cities has slipped from 93 million a year in 1979 to 60 million annually today.

Yet the evolution of LRT has included several roadblocks and traffic jams. In both 1975 and 1985, the Legislature put bans on LRT planning or spending.

The 1975 ban was lifted in 1980, and LRT was immediately selected as the preferred choice of alternative transportation in an environmental impact statement. The following

said Bill Schreiber, House minority leader at the time. Schreiber is now director of inter-governmental policy for MnDOT.

Study of LRT continued, and in 1986, the Legislature removed the 1985 prohibition and gave regional rail authorities the ability to conduct rail transit planning.

In 1988, along with more studies, came new funding initiatives. The Legislature appropriated funds for designing a LRT system.

In each subsequent year there were engineering and design statements, or more studies or more boards, but nothing was built. Finally, in 1992, the Metropolitan LRT Joint Powers Board was formed, and the most concentrated effort toward LRT began.

The board, which consists of members from the seven-county metropolitan area, coordi-

"This is as close as we've been in 25 years . . ."

—LRT advocate and Hennepin County
Commissioner Peter McLaughlin.

year, a feasibility study was conducted by the Metropolitan Council, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), and the Metropolitan Transit Commission.

LRT appeared to be gaining serious momentum when legislators created the Regional Transit Board in 1984. But by 1985 the Legislature prohibited spending any public funds on LRT.

"The board was so strongly focused on light rail that everything else became secondary,"

nates policy development, markets, plans, and advises MnDOT and local committees on LRT implementation methods.

The board and LRT advocates got the best news yet this year.

The U.S. Senate passed a \$954 million capital improvements bill that includes \$50 million for the first leg of LRT in the Hiawatha Corridor, which would stretch from the University of Minnesota's West Bank to the Mall of America via downtown Minneapolis and

the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.


On March 24, the U.S. House Transportation Committee approved \$400 million for the LRT line in the Hiawatha corridor.

U.S. Rep. Martin Sabo (D-Minn.) has said he feels the federal government will eventually allocate \$200 million in federal money to the Hiawatha Corridor. State and local government will foot the rest of bill. The state would

be asked to pay about \$100 million, although only about half that amount would be provided in the bonding measures advancing in this year's Legislature.

"This is as close as we've been in 25 years, which is basically ever," said LRT advocate and Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin. "Congestion is bad and people perceive it as bad. Auto occupancy is at its

lowest ever in the state, bus ridership is down, and the federal government is looking to help. These are all good signs for LRT."

Twenty of the 30 largest metropolitan areas in the country use rail as part of their transit systems. Since 1986, Portland, Dallas, and Denver have opened systems. All three cities have a smaller population than the Twin Cities' 2.7 million. Denver, at 2.2 million, is closest in size. 

Minnesota — first state with nonpartisan Legislature

It's a fact!

Lawmakers who served in Minnesota's nonpartisan Legislature held split opinions about the system. Perhaps not surprisingly, some of their disagreements fell neatly along party lines.

Not so long ago, the Minnesota Legislature was elected on a nonpartisan basis. Under that system, no party affiliation appeared on ballots for legislative races.

Minnesota was the first state in the union to have a nonpartisan Legislature. By the early 1900s, many people in Minnesota and across the country had become disenchanted with political parties and "machine" politics.

The Minnesota law was passed in 1913 to take the party labels out of the legislative process. The Minnesota House was nonpartisan until 1974; the Senate was until 1976.

According to a survey of legislators taken in early 1972 — entitled "Legislator Appraisals of the Nonpartisan Minnesota Legislature" — the majority of lawmakers believed nonpartisan elections had weakened political parties in Minnesota.

However, that doesn't mean the terms "DFL" and "Republican" were foreign to voters. Most legislators identified them-

selves with one or the other party, and they believed most of the voters identified them as such because most legislators had announced their allegiance publicly, even though candidates couldn't be identified with a party on the ballot.

For the 1972 report, legislators were asked what factors they believed voters used to judge a candidate. Most legislators listed "personality" as the top factor in the minds of voters. However, supposed party allegiance was also considered a crucial factor — rating with their position on the issues and their past record.

Legislators saw some advantages to the nonpartisan system. Many lawmakers believed that nonpartisanship weakened the system of "partisan bossism" and "the domination of the Legislature by labor, business, or any other small segment of society."

And lawmakers of all political persuasions said that the nonpartisan system allowed them to "vote their conscience," according to the survey. Legislators also said the nonpartisan system placed more responsibility directly on the voters and that those elected better represented the voters.

However, the 1972 report showed that some DFLers thought the nonpartisan system weakened their party and strengthened the Republicans.

And Republicans did tend to support retention of the nonpartisan Legislature when the issue was debated in the early 1970s.

"Non-party designation makes for less ties with the party, thus fewer dictates by the parties to the legislators. This makes for better government. Minnesota is nationally recognized for having one of the most effective legislatures in the country. Nonparty designation is mainly responsible for this," said one Republican surveyed.

Many DFLers had different feelings on the issue. Most DFLers surveyed for the report said that going back to party designation would improve the Legislature's performance.

"Party identification would make the Legislature more responsible, and also make the party more responsible," said one DFL lawmaker.

"Party designation will make legislators more responsive to the issues of the day," said another DFL legislator.

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

Frequently called numbers

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 1-888-234-1112

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Toll free 1-800-657-3550

Rep. Eileen Tompkins . . .

Though leaving, member's political life will continue

By Jim Thielman



Outgoing Rep. Eileen Tompkins (R-Apple Valley) likes the maxim, "The world belongs to those who show up."

And that should answer any question about her plans to remain involved in politics despite her announcement that she won't run for an eighth term in District 36A.

"I don't intend to go and hide, that's for sure," she said. "I think I'll be involved in politics until the day I die."

Tompkins said she plans to spend the summer and fall helping with St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman's gubernatorial bid.

"He's going to need a Republican majority somewhere," she said. "I don't see that will happen in the Senate, so I plan to help to get that majority in the House."

Tompkins has been involved in the political process as long as she can recall. Her father and uncle were city council members, and she vividly recalls a childhood of heated political debates at home.

When she got older, she became absorbed in precinct caucuses and moved on to manage another candidate's failed campaign for a House seat.

"I think it's in the genes," Tompkins said of politics. "I've been interested in it all my life. The news is always the most important television program at our house, which tells you something."

Tompkins recalls being devastated when the House campaign she managed didn't result in victory. She was certain she wouldn't get that involved again. But she rebounded quickly, and the knowledge she gained from that failed campaign helped her succeed in her first run for the House in 1984.

She said she balked when first approached by party members about running for that House seat, and her protests resulted in an exchange she still laughs about.

"I said, 'I'm too short and too fat to run,' but someone told me that would probably cost me only three percent of the vote," Tompkins said.

Her nine children were grown by then, and



Rep. Eileen Tompkins is leaving the House after her seventh term, but she vows to remain active in public life.

although three of her 22 grandchildren moved in with her after their mother died three years ago, Tompkins never felt obliged to leave the Legislature and stay at home.

"Plenty of women raise a family and work," she said with a shrug. "The oldest of those is now 21. They're good kids. They go to the same schools my kids did, and working in the House is much easier than it used to be."

She recalls floor sessions that ran until 4 a.m. during her early years in the House, and that members were back in their offices three hours later to start another day.

"It was more a process of wearing you down so you'd finally vote for anything," she recalled. "We did some of our own research and handled our own constituent services. There were many times I remember putting in 14-[to] 18-hour days."

Her party briefly had the majority in the House then, and there was only a smattering of women legislators. Now there are more women legislators, but her party is the minor-

ity. She said she hopes to help change that for Coleman.

"I've got too much energy to not be involved with this, and I'll still garden. I love to garden," Tompkins said.

Gardening is another product of her youth. Tompkins was raised on a farm and, she said, gardening came easily to her. As with politics, she attacked gardening with a rare zeal.

Tompkins went to the University of Minnesota to find a solution to a problem with a patch of raspberries she had planted and ended up taking class after class until she became a master gardener.

But, she said, her years as a representative have taught her things she couldn't have learned in a classroom.

"I've learned that everybody has worth," she said. "I've volunteered for Catholic Charities, and I've been to the White House. And I can't tell you there's a big difference between street people and the President of the United States. They all have a human spirit." 🐾

Governor's Desk

CH305-CH337

Bills await governor's action

Once a bill has passed both the House and Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor, who has several options when considering a bill, can:

- sign the bill and it will become law;
- veto the bill;
- line-item veto individual items within an appropriations bill;
- or do nothing, which can have two different effects. The timing of these actions is as important as the actions themselves.

In the second year of the biennium (even-numbered years), a bill passed by the Legislature and presented to the governor before the final three days of the session will become law unless the governor vetoes it by returning it to the Legislature within three days. The governor normally signs the bills

and files them with the secretary of state, but his signature is not required.

But if a bill is passed during the last three days of session, the governor has a longer time to act on it. He or she must sign and deposit it with the secretary of state within 14 days after the Legislature adjourns "sine die" (Latin for adjournment "without a date certain"). If the governor does not sign a bill within this time frame, it will not become law, an action known as a "pocket veto." The governor is not required to provide a reason for the veto.

Only on appropriations bills can the governor exercise the line-item veto authority. This option allows the governor to eliminate the appropriation items to which he or she objects. As with all vetoes (save pocket vetoes) the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is either

14 days after adjournment for bills passed during the final three days of the session, or within three days after the governor receives the bill at any other time.

A two-thirds vote of the members in each house is needed to override a veto. But because only the governor can call a special session of the Legislature, anything vetoed after the Legislature adjourns is history — at least until the next year.

The governor's veto authority is outlined in the Minnesota constitution (Article IV, Section 23).

Internet access to this information is available at:
<http://www.governor.state.mn.us> (select "legislative issues" folder)

Key:
CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File Res.=Resolution

| CH | HF | SF | Description | Signed | Vetoed |
|-----|-------|-------|--|---------|---------|
| 305 | 2681 | 2372* | Hepatitis B immunization required for children. | 3/23/98 | |
| 306 | 3524 | 3016* | Qualified landfills authorized to accept materials from closed dumps. | 3/23/98 | |
| 307 | 2508 | 2581* | Olmsted County auditor/treasurer made an appointed position. | 3/23/98 | |
| 308 | 2824 | 2281* | Dakota Co. Housing, Redevelopment Authority employees not county employees w/o co. board consent. | 3/23/98 | |
| 309 | 2641 | 2378* | Corporate professional and professional services definitions expanded. | 3/23/98 | |
| 310 | 2665 | 2316* | Intra-state hazardous material carriers provided continuation of uniform registration, permitting program. | 3/23/98 | |
| 311 | 1882 | 1654* | Real estate document filing and recording fees modified. | | 3/23/98 |
| 312 | 2686 | 2269* | Board of Water and Soil Resources hearing and review provisions modified. | 3/23/98 | |
| 313 | 2785 | 2373* | Civil commitment release on provisions modified. | 3/23/98 | |
| 314 | 3254 | 2725* | County recorder and registrar functions provided additional methods. | 3/23/98 | |
| 315 | 2315* | 2344 | Trademarks and service marks regulated. | 3/23/98 | |
| 316 | 2401 | 2207* | Federal drug enforcement administration registration number requirement exemption provided. | 3/23/98 | |
| 317 | 2786 | 2447* | Speech-language pathologist, unlicensed mental health practitioner, alcohol and drug counselor, physical therapists, and hearing instrument dispenser licensure requirements modified. | 3/23/98 | |
| 318 | 2489* | 2381 | Ramsey and Washington counties state trail extended. | 3/23/98 | |
| 319 | 3355 | 3032* | Investments of Insurers Act adopted. | 3/23/98 | |
| 320 | 2507 | 3036* | Limited partnership withdrawals regulated. | 3/23/98 | |
| 321 | 2706 | 2068* | Electronic message reliability and certification authorities required. | 3/23/98 | |
| 322 | 2920 | 2911* | Lawful gambling revisions. | 3/23/98 | |
| 323 | 2750 | 2262* | Reinsurance intermediary brokers funds investment authority regulation. | 3/23/98 | |
| 324 | 1116 | 1814* | Board provisions modifications. | 3/23/98 | |
| 325 | 2667 | 2429* | Local government services advisory council membership increase, appointment process clarification. | 3/23/98 | |
| 326 | 3644* | 3170 | Combined school districts extended area telephone service voting requirements modification. | 3/23/98 | |
| 327 | 2309* | 2136 | Financial institutions consumer credit issuance and reporting equal treatment of spouses. | 3/23/98 | |
| 328 | 3432 | 2659* | Life insurance company investments and transactions regulations modified. | 3/23/98 | |

| Chapter | HF | SF | Description | Signed | Vetoed |
|---------|-------|-------|---|---------|---------|
| 329 | 3138 | 2861* | Emergency medical care automatic external defibrillators use liability immunity. | 3/23/98 | |
| 330 | 381 | 695* | Nonprofit health care trust agreements or transactions regulation. | | 3/25/98 |
| 331 | 3748 | 908* | Trust companies regulation provisions modification. | 3/25/98 | |
| 332 | 2615 | 2252* | DWI repeat offenders sentencing to intensive supervision and incarceration. | 3/25/98 | |
| 333 | 176 | 154* | Food donors' liability limit. | 3/25/98 | |
| 334 | 2814* | 2130 | Health plan companies durable medical equipment coverage requirement. | 3/25/98 | |
| 335 | 2016 | 2550* | Financial institutions mail loan solicitations regulation. | 3/25/98 | |
| 336 | 1207 | 330* | Nonprofit corrections treatment facilities liability limit. | 3/25/98 | |
| 337 | 3389 | 2493* | Financial institutions liability immunity for stolen or fraudulent checks information release to criminal alert networks or law enforcement agencies. | 3/25/98 | |

Dimler continued from page 4

"I think it would be great to see more people serve," he said. "It's unfair that some people just don't get the opportunity."

Dimler said that his namesake amendment is not the first thing that comes to mind when he thinks about his legislative accomplishments. He said he is most proud of the work he did on tax classification and agriculture issues.

"We were going through the farm crisis and I think we had a pretty large impact at that time," he said.

Dimler said he is also proud of what he didn't accomplish.

"Sometimes less is more," Dimler said. "My emphasis in the Legislature was to stop legislation. In fact, it's kind of ironic that there's a piece of legislation with my name on it."

Dimler said that he will continue to do what he's been doing for the past 25 years.

"I guess I'll farm a couple of more years," he said. "Then, who knows, maybe I'll come back and run for the Senate." 🐾

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

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

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides: committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* news magazine, 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>

Graduated licensing continued from page 12

Rep. Satveer Chaudhary (DFL-Fridley), would establish a provisional driver's license for 16- and 17-year-olds.

The provisional license-holder would need to go without an at-fault collision and no more than one moving violation for a year to qualify for a full license at 17. The teen applicant also would need to complete 30 hours of driving under the supervision of a licensed driver aged 21 or older.

Under the bill, if the provisional license-holder has two or more violations in 12 months, another 30 hours of supervised driving would be required and the driver would continue under the provisional license.

There would be no provisional license for any license applicant 18 or older.

The version of the bill that went to the House floor contained a proposed curfew that would have forbidden provisional license-holders from driving between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. The midnight to 5 a.m. curfew was removed in a floor amendment.

The earlier version of the bill also would have stipulated that a driver could have no moving violations in a 12-month period in order to apply for a full driver's license. That was amended on the floor to allow one moving violation.

One intent of the original bill was to limit teen driving at night. Although only 20 percent of miles driven by teens is accumulated between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., about half of fatal car accidents involving teen drivers occur during those hours.

A total of 26 states have some form of graduated teen licensing.

The bill (**HF2532/SF2407***) now moves to a House-Senate conference committee.

BWCA rally



Jerry Bahls, of Fridley, lets his canoe paddle do the talking during a rally in the Capitol rotunda March 25. The rally, in support of a bill that would limit motorboat use in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, was sponsored by the Friends of the Boundary Waters.

How a bill becomes law in Minnesota

Idea

1 A bill is an idea for a new law or an idea to change an old law. Anyone can suggest an idea for a bill — an individual, consumer group, professional association, government agency, or the governor. Most often, however, ideas come from legislators, the only ones who can begin to move an idea through the process. There are 134 House members and 67 senators.

Introduction

4 The chief House author of the bill introduces it in the House; the chief Senate author introduces it in the Senate. Identical bills introduced in each body are called *companion* bills. The bill introduction is called the *first reading*. The presiding officer of the House then refers it to an appropriate House committee for discussion; the same thing happens in the Senate.

General Orders

7 On General Orders, all House or Senate members, acting as the “committee of the whole,” have a chance to debate the issue, offer amendments, and present arguments on the bill. Afterwards, they vote to recommend: passage of the bill, progress (delay action), or further committee action. And sometimes they recommend that a bill not pass. Members’ votes on General Orders are usually not recorded unless there is a specific request to do so. From here, the bill is placed on the Calendar.

Conference

10 If the House and Senate versions of the bill are different, they go to a conference committee. In the House, the speaker of the House appoints three or five representatives, and in the Senate, the Subcommittee on Committees of the Committee on Rules and Administration selects the same number of senators to form the committee. The committee meets to work out differences in the two bills and to reach a compromise.

Legal form

2 The Office of the Revisor of Statutes and staff from other legislative offices work with legislators in putting the idea for a new law into proper legal form. The revisor’s office is responsible for assuring that the proposal’s form complies with the rules of both bodies before the bill can be introduced into the Minnesota House of Representatives and the Minnesota Senate.

Committee

5 The bill is discussed in one or more committees depending upon the subject matter. After discussion, committee members recommend action — approval or disapproval — to the full House and full Senate. The House committee then sends a report to the House about its action on the bill; the Senate committee does likewise in the Senate.

Calendar

8 The Calendar is a list of bills the full House and full Senate vote on. At this point, the bill has its *third reading*. The bill cannot be amended unless the entire body agrees to it. Here, representatives and senators vote on the bill for the last time. A bill needs 68 votes to pass the House and 34 votes to pass the Senate. If the House and Senate each pass the same version of the bill, it goes to the governor for a signature.

Floor

11 After the full House, or Senate, accepts the committee report, the bill has its *second reading*. From here, the bill is usually placed on the House and Senate agendas called General Orders. (A committee can recommend that a local or non-controversial bill bypass General Orders and go onto the Consent Calendar where it usually passes without debate.)

Authors

3 Each bill must have a legislator to sponsor and introduce it in the Legislature. That legislator is the chief author whose name appears on the bill along with the bill’s file number to identify it as it moves through the legislative process. There may be up to four co-authors from the House and four from the Senate. Their names also appear on the bill.

Floor

6 After the full House, or Senate, accepts the committee report, the bill has its *second reading*. From here, the bill is usually placed on the House and Senate agendas called General Orders. (A committee can recommend that a local or non-controversial bill bypass General Orders and go onto the Consent Calendar where it usually passes without debate.)

Special Orders

9 Toward the end of the session, the rules committees of the House and Senate designate bills from the General Orders calendar to receive priority consideration. These Special Orders bills are debated, amended, and passed in one day. The House also has a Rule 1.10 calendar which allows the chairs of the Taxes and Appropriations committees to call up for consideration any tax or appropriations bill that has had a second reading. These Rule 1.10 bills are debated, amended, and passed in one day.

Governor

12 Once the governor has the bill, he or she may: sign it, and the bill becomes law; veto it within three days; or allow it to become law by not signing it. During session, the House and Senate can override a governor’s veto. This requires a two-thirds vote in the House (90 votes) and Senate (45 votes). The governor also may “line-item veto” parts of a money bill, or “pocket veto” a bill passed during the last three days of the session by not signing it within 14 days after final adjournment.

Minnesota House of Representatives 1998 Members

List as of January 28, 1998

| District/Member/Party | Room* | Phone (612) 296- | District/Member/Party | Room* | Phone (612) 296- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-----|------|
| 45A | Abrams, Ron (R) | 209 | 9934 | 37B | Macklin, Bill (R) | 349 | 6926 |
| 19B | Anderson, Bruce (R) | 281 | 5063 | 40A | Mahon, Mark P. (DFL) | 401 | 7158 |
| 3A | Anderson, Irv (DFL) | 563 | 4936 | 55A | Mares, Harry (R) | 239 | 5363 |
| 6A | Bakk, Thomas (Tom) (DFL) | 575 | 2190 | 65B | Mariani, Carlos (DFL) | 403 | 9714 |
| 10B | Bettermann, Hilda (R) | 243 | 4317 | 57B | Marko, Sharon (DFL) | 439 | 3135 |
| 59A | Biernat, Len (DFL) | 429 | 4219 | 55B | McColum, Betty (DFL) | 501 | 1188 |
| 30B | Bishop, Dave (R) | 343 | 0573 | 36B | McElroy, Dan (R) | 259 | 4212 |
| 25B | Boudreau, Lynda (R) | 327 | 8237 | 54A | McGuire, Mary Jo (DFL) | 379 | 4342 |
| 30A | Bradley, Fran (R) | 233 | 9249 | 39B | Milbert, Bob (DFL) | 579 | 4192 |
| 53B | Broecker, Sherry (R) | 321 | 7153 | 35A | Molnau, Carol L. (R) | 287 | 8872 |
| 46B | Carlson, Lyndon R. (DFL) | 365 | 4255 | 21B | Mulder, Richard (R) | 283 | 4336 |
| 47B | Carruthers, Phil (DFL) | 463 | 3709 | 58A | Mullery, Joe (DFL) | 359 | 4262 |
| 52A | Chaudhary, Satveer (DFL) | 507 | 4331 | 7A | Munger, Willard (DFL) | 479 | 4282 |
| 23A | Clark, James (R) | 211 | 9303 | 8A | Murphy, Mary (DFL) | 557 | 2676 |
| 61A | Clark, Karen (DFL) | 503 | 0294 | 20A | Ness, Robert "Bob" (R) | 289 | 4344 |
| 38A | Commers, Tim (R) | 217 | 3533 | 10A | Nornes, Bud (R) | 357 | 4946 |
| 11A | Daggett, Roxann (R) | 253 | 4293 | 2B | Olson, Edgar (DFL) | 565 | 4265 |
| 31B | Davids, Gregory M. (R) | 371 | 9278 | 19A | Olson, Mark (R) | 323 | 4237 |
| 65A | Dawkins, Andy (DFL) | 409 | 5158 | 16A | Opatz, Joe (DFL) | 473 | 6612 |
| 14A | Dehler, Steve (R) | 203 | 7808 | 60B | Orfield, Myron (DFL) | 521 | 9281 |
| 51A | Delmont, Mike (DFL) | 433 | 4226 | 29B | Osskopp, Mike (R) | 329 | 9236 |
| 29A | Dempsey, Jerry (R) | 251 | 8635 | 66A | Osthoff, Tom (DFL) | 585 | 4224 |
| 24A | Dorn, John (DFL) | 571 | 3248 | 11B | Otremba, Mary Ellen (DFL) | 545 | 3201 |
| 64A | Entenza, Matt (DFL) | 421 | 8799 | 37A | Ozment, Dennis (R) | 317 | 4306 |
| 42A | Erhardt, Ron (R) | 237 | 4363 | 42B | Paulsen, Erik (R) | 221 | 7449 |
| 17A | Erickson, Sondra (R) | 247 | 6746 | 38B | Pawlenty, Tim (R) | 231 | 4128 |
| 52B | Evans, Geri (DFL) | 413 | 0141 | 64B | Paymar, Michael (DFL) | 529 | 4199 |
| 67A | Farrell, Jim (DFL) | 491 | 4277 | 32A | Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL) | 549 | 8637 |
| 1B | Finseth, Tim (R) | 377 | 9918 | 13B | Peterson, Doug (DFL) | 569 | 4228 |
| 44A | Folliard, Betty (DFL) | 523 | 3964 | 39A | Pugh, Thomas W. (DFL) | 583 | 6828 |
| 63B | Garcia, Edwina (DFL) | 417 | 5375 | 46A | Rest, Ann H. (DFL) | 485 | 4176 |
| 9A | Goodno, Kevin (R) | 369 | 5515 | 28A | Reuter, Doug (R) | 241 | 5368 |
| 62A | Greenfield, Lee (DFL) | 381 | 0173 | 44B | Rhodes, Jim (R) | 309 | 9889 |
| 54B | Greiling, Mindy (DFL) | 553 | 5387 | 32B | Rifenberg, Michelle (R) | 215 | 1069 |
| 26A | Gunther, Bob (R) | 337 | 3240 | 18A | Rostberg, Jim (R) | 311 | 5364 |
| 48A | Haas, Bill (R) | 201 | 5513 | 5A | Rukavina, Tom (DFL) | 471 | 0170 |
| 22B | Harder, Elaine (R) | 277 | 5373 | 17B | Schumacher, Leslie J. (DFL) | 517 | 5377 |
| 12A | Hasskamp, Kris (DFL) | 453 | 4333 | 41A | Seagren, Alice (R) | 315 | 7803 |
| 66B | Hausman, Alice (DFL) | 449 | 3824 | 21A | Seifert, Marty (R) | 213 | 5374 |
| 8B | Hilty, Bill (DFL) | 525 | 4308 | 50A | Sekhon, Kathleen (DFL) | 451 | 2439 |
| 56A | Holsten, Mark (R) | 345 | 3018 | 4A | Skare, Gail (DFL) | 431 | 5516 |
| 6B | Huntley, Thomas (DFL) | 533 | 2228 | 62B | Skoglund, Wes (DFL) | 477 | 4330 |
| 7B | Jaros, Mike (DFL) | 559 | 4246 | 57A | Slawik, Nora (DFL) | 551 | 7807 |
| 58B | Jefferson, Richard (DFL) | 577 | 8659 | 34A | Smith, Steve (R) | 353 | 9188 |
| 18B | Jennings, Loren Geo (DFL) | 591 | 0518 | 3B | Solberg, Loren A. (DFL) | 445 | 2365 |
| 48B | Johnson, Alice M. (DFL) | 539 | 5510 | 33B | Stanek, Rich (R) | 351 | 5502 |
| 24B | Johnson, Ruth (DFL) | 567 | 7065 | 14B | Stang, Doug (R) | 223 | 4373 |
| 15A | Juhnke, Al (DFL) | 531 | 6206 | 28B | Sviggum, Steve (R) | 267 | 2273 |
| 59B | Kahn, Phyllis (DFL) | 367 | 4257 | 23B | Swenson, Howard (R) | 331 | 8634 |
| 26B | Kalis, Henry J. (DFL) | 543 | 4240 | 43B | Sykora, Barb (R) | 389 | 4315 |
| 35B | Kelso, Becky (DFL) | 415 | 1072 | 50B | Tingelstad, Kathy (R) | 295 | 5369 |
| 20B | Kielkucki, Tony (R) | 313 | 1534 | 5B | Tomassoni, David J. (DFL) | 593 | 0172 |
| 4B | Kinkel, Anthony G. (Tony) (DFL) | 537 | 2451 | 36A | Tompkins, Eileen (R) | 245 | 5506 |
| 40B | Knight, Kevin (R) | 229 | 4218 | 67B | Trimble, Steve (DFL) | 597 | 4201 |
| 16B | Knoblach, Jim (R) | 207 | 6316 | 25A | Tuma, John (R) | 301 | 4229 |
| 49B | Koskinen, Luanne (DFL) | 411 | 4231 | 1A | Tunheim, Jim (DFL) | 509 | 9635 |
| 27A | Kraus, Ron (R) | 279 | 8216 | 34B | Van Dellen, Todd (R) | 291 | 5511 |
| 53A | Krinkie, Philip (R) | 303 | 2907 | 51B | Vandever, Ray (R) | 255 | 4124 |
| 15B | Kubly, Gary W. (DFL) | 423 | 4346 | 63A | Wagenius, Jean (DFL) | 437 | 4200 |
| 31A | Kuisle, William (R) | 375 | 4378 | 49A | Weaver, Charlie (R) | 261 | 1729 |
| 56B | Larsen, Peg (R) | 307 | 4244 | 61B | Wejzman, Linda (DFL) | 407 | 7152 |
| 27B | Leighton, Rob (DFL) | 527 | 4193 | 12B | Wenzel, Stephen G. (DFL) | 487 | 4247 |
| 45B | Leppik, Peggy (R) | 393 | 7026 | 9B | Westfall, Robert L. (Bob) (R) | 225 | 6829 |
| 2A | Lieder, Bernie L. (DFL) | 515 | 5091 | 13A | Westrom, Torrey (R) | 273 | 4929 |
| 33A | Lindner, Arlon (R) | 227 | 7806 | 22A | Winter, Ted (DFL) | 459 | 5505 |
| 60A | Long, Dee (DFL) | 443 | 0171 | 41B | Wolf, Ken (R) | 387 | 5185 |
| 47A | Luther, Darlene (DFL) | 581 | 3751 | 43A | Workman, Tom (R) | 335 | 5066 |

Note: Room numbers are subject to change.

*All rooms are in the State Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155

Minnesota Senate 1998 Members

| District/Member/Party | Room* | Phone (612) 296- | District/Member/Party | Room* | Phone (612) 296- |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------------|----------------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 66 Anderson, Ellen R. (DFL) | G-24 Cap. | 5537 | 8 Lourey, Becky (DFL) | G-9 Cap. | 0293 |
| 26 Beckman, Tracy L. (DFL) | 124G Cap. | 5713 | 54 Marty, John (DFL) | 325 Cap. | 5645 |
| 41 Belanger Jr., William V. (R) | 113 SOB | 5975 | 39 Metzen, James P. (DFL) | 303 Cap. | 4370 |
| 13 Berg, Charles A. (Ind.) | G-51 SOB | 5094 | 2 Moe, Roger D. (DFL) | 208 Cap. | 2577 |
| 61 Berglin, Linda (DFL) | 309 Cap. | 4261 | 32 Morse, Steven (DFL) | G-24 Cap. | 5649 |
| 48 Betzold, Don (DFL) | 306 Cap. | 2556 | 29 Murphy, Steve (DFL) | 301 Cap. | 4264 |
| 64 Cohen, Richard J. (DFL) | 317 Cap. | 5931 | 25 Neuville, Thomas M. (R) | 123 SOB | 1279 |
| 28 Day, Dick (R) | 147 SOB | 9457 | 52 Novak, Steven G. (DFL) | 322 Cap. | 4334 |
| 20 Dille, Steve (R) | 103 SOB | 4131 | 43 Oliver, Edward C. (R) | 121 SOB | 4837 |
| 14 Fischbach, Michelle L. (R) | 149 SOB | 2084 | 34 Olson, Gen (R) | 119 SOB | 1282 |
| 62 Flynn, Carol (DFL) | 120 Cap. | 4274 | 19 Ourada, Mark (R) | 145 SOB | 5981 |
| 49 Foley, Leo T. (DFL) | G-9 Cap. | 4154 | 65 Pappas, Sandra L. (DFL) | 120 Cap. | 1802 |
| 23 Frederickson, Dennis R. (R) | 139 SOB | 8138 | 37 Pariseau, Pat (R) | 109 SOB | 5252 |
| 50 Hanson, Paula E. (DFL) | 328 Cap. | 3219 | 27 Piper, Pat (DFL) | G-9 Cap. | 9248 |
| 58 Higgins, Linda I. (DFL) | 227 Cap. | 9246 | 59 Pogemiller, Lawrence J. (DFL) | 235 Cap. | 7809 |
| 24 Hottinger, John C. (DFL) | 120 Cap. | 6153 | 57 Price, Leonard R. (DFL) | 235 Cap. | 7-8060 |
| 5 Janezich, Jerry R. (DFL) | 328 Cap. | 8017 | 63 Ranum, Jane B. (DFL) | 306 Cap. | 7-8061 |
| 40 Johnson, Dave (DFL) | 111 Cap. | 9261 | 45 Robertson, Martha R. (R) | 125 SOB | 4314 |
| 15 Johnson, Dean E. (R) | 117 SOB | 3826 | 35 Robling, Claire A. (R) | 151 SOB | 4123 |
| 6 Johnson, Douglas J. (DFL) | 205 Cap. | 8881 | 53 Runbeck, Linda (R) | 107 SOB | 1253 |
| 18 Johnson, Janet B. (DFL) | G-9 Cap. | 5419 | 11 Sams, Dallas C. (DFL) | 328 Cap. | 7-8063 |
| 46 Junge, Ember Reichgott (DFL) | 205 Cap. | 2889 | 12 Samuelson, Don (DFL) | 124 Cap. | 4875 |
| 44 Kelley, Steve (DFL) | 321 Cap. | 7-8065 | 31 Scheevel, Kenric J. (R) | 129 SOB | 3903 |
| 67 Kelly, Randy C. (DFL) | 323 Cap. | 5285 | 47 Scheid, Linda (DFL) | 317 Cap. | 8869 |
| 30 Kiscaden, Sheila M. (R) | 135 SOB | 4848 | 7 Solon, Sam G. (DFL) | 303 Cap. | 4188 |
| 16 Kleis, Dave (R) | 143 SOB | 6455 | 60 Spear, Allan H. (DFL) | 120 Cap. | 4191 |
| 36 Knutson, David L. (R) | 133 SOB | 4120 | 17 Stevens, Dan (R) | 105 SOB | 8075 |
| 51 Krentz, Jane (DFL) | 235 Cap. | 7061 | 1 Stumpf, LeRoy A. (DFL) | G-24 Cap. | 8660 |
| 56 Laidig, Gary W. (R) | 141 SOB | 4351 | 4 Ten Eyck, David J. (DFL) | G-24F Cap. | 4913 |
| 9 Langseth, Keith (DFL) | 122 Cap. | 3205 | 42 Terwilliger, Roy (R) | 115 SOB | 6238 |
| 10 Larson, Cal (R) | 153 SOB | 5655 | 22 Vickerman, Jim (DFL) | 226 Cap. | 5650 |
| 21 Lesewski, Arlene J. (R) | 131 SOB | 4125 | 38 Wiener, Deanna L. (DFL) | 303 Cap. | 7-8073 |
| 3 Lessard, Bob (DFL) | 111 Cap. | 4136 | 55 Wiger, Charles W. (DFL) | 325 Cap. | 6820 |
| 33 Limmer, Warren (R) | 127 SOB | 2159 | | | |

*Capitol or State Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155

Minnesota House and Senate Membership

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List as of January 28, 1998

Early Minnesotans sought university of their own

It's a fact!

The University of Minnesota, which will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2001, is actually older than the state of Minnesota.

The U of M was founded in 1851. Minnesota had just become a territory two years earlier and would not become a state until 1858.

The now-enormous school, which has facilities in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, Morris, and Crookston and is home to tens of thousands of students, was begun at the urging of Minnesota's first territorial governor, Alexander Ramsey.

Ramsey called for the creation of the university in his second message to the Territorial Legislature.

He and other settlers wanted to make sure youths in the area wouldn't have to leave the area to seek higher education. They also wanted something to fill the lives

of the state's young people, and they believed in having an educated citizenry.

A St. Paul businessman named William G. Le Duc helped lead the charge. He wanted Fort Snelling transformed into a university, and he circulated petitions to that effect.

The petitions reached Ramsey, and although the governor didn't endorse the conversion of Fort Snelling, he did support the concept of a territorial university.

Rep. John North, of St. Anthony, then chair of the House Committee on Schools in the Territorial Legislature, pointed out that Harvard had been founded at the Massachusetts Bay Colony when it had only half as many people as Minnesota had in 1851.

There was broad agreement that there should be a university; the question was

where to put it. While the bill was in the House, Rep. Martin McLeod introduced an amendment to locate the university in St. Anthony Falls.

Soon after that, both houses of the Legislature elected a Board of Regents. One of those regents, Franklin Steele, happened to own a tract of land in St. Anthony Falls, and he offered to donate it for the university's first building. It was a two-story building for algebra, geometry, physiology, and languages.

Not long after, Steele decided to use the land for commercial purposes, so he took it back. The regents decided to move the campus to a spot about one mile away, which is the present site in Minneapolis. The land had earlier been deeded for the university by the U.S. Congress. The university paid \$49,000 to erect the first building on its current campus.

1998 House membership statistics

Member information

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| House members: | 134 |
| DFL members: | 70 |
| Republican members: | 64 |
| Men: | 94 |
| Women: | 40 (29.8 percent of House members) |
| DFL women: | 26 |
| Republican women: | 14 |
| Newly elected members: | 4 |
| DFLer (1997): | 1 |
| Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba | 11B |
| Republicans (1998): | 3 |
| Rep. James T. Clark | 23A |
| Rep. Sondra Erickson | 17A |
| Rep. Ray Vandevveer | 51B |
| Members deceased: | 2 |
| Rep. Ken Otremba | 11B |
| Rep. Barb Vickerman | 23A |
| Member appointed to a commission: | 1 |
| Rep. LeRoy Koppendrayner | 17A |
| Member appointed to a district judgeship: | 1 |
| Rep. Doug Swenson | 51B |

Member occupations

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Education | 24 |
| Business | 20 |
| Law | 17 |
| Lawmaking (full-time) | 18 |
| Farming | 10 |
| Consulting | 6 |
| Homemaking | 5 |
| Communications | 4 |
| Government | 3 |
| Insurance | 3 |
| Real Estate | 3 |
| Retired | 3 |
| Retail | 2 |
| Trades | 2 |
| Public Safety | 2 |
| Accounting | 1 |
| Medicine | 1 |
| Art | 1 |
| Religion | 1 |
| Social Services | 1 |
| Other | 7 |

In the Hopper . . .
March 20 - 26

Bill Introductions

HF3853-HF3858

Friday, March 20

HF3853—Tunheim (DFL)
Ways & Means
Clearwater, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahanomen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, and Roseau counties; temporary emergency federal crop insurance premium assistance program established, and money appropriated.

Monday, March 23

HF3854—Anderson, I. (DFL)
House Floor
Ontario; United States government memorialized to resolve differences between the province of Ontario and the state of Minnesota regarding Canadian waters and the taking of fish.

Thursday, March 26

HF3855—Winter (DFL)
Agriculture
Agricultural cooperative competition with members limited, and exception provided.

HF3856—Bakk (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
Wilderness areas created in Rice, Winona, and Houston counties, and motorized equipment prohibited.

HF3857—Van Dellen (R)
Judiciary
Women not employed and with one or more children not attending school provided jury duty exemption.

HF3858—Seifert (R)
Education
Criminal background checks provided for teacher license and coach contract renewals, and license issuance or renewal prohibited for persons convicted of criminal sexual conduct.

Coming Up Next Week . . . March 30 - April 3, 1998

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change. For information updates, call House Calls at (612) 296-9283. All meetings are open to the public. Sign language interpreter services: (612) 224-6548 v/tty To have the daily and weekly schedules delivered to your e-mail address, send a message to: listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us In the body of the message type: **subscribe h-schedules**

MONDAY, March 30

9 a.m.

The House meets in session.

1 p.m.

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Tax Bill HF3840/SF2985**
15 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Dee Long
Sen. Douglas Johnson

1/2 Hour After Last Body
Adjourns

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Capital Investment
Bonding Bill HF3843/SF3388**
123 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Henry Kalis
Sen. Keith Langseth

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Data Privacy Bill
SF1378/HF1626**
316 State Capitol
Chrs. Sen Don Betzold
Rep. Mary Jo McGuire

TUESDAY, March 31

9 a.m.

The House meets in session.

After Session

**REGULATED INDUSTRIES
& ENERGY**
200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Loren Jennings
Agenda: Informal hearing regarding the 612 area code assignment.

1 p.m.

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Tax Bill HF3840/SF2985**
15 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Dee Long
Sen. Douglas Johnson

1/2 Hour After Last Body
Adjourns

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Capital Investment
Bonding Bill HF3843/SF3388**
123 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Henry Kalis
Sen. Keith Langseth

WEDNESDAY, April 1

9 a.m.

The House meets in session.

1 p.m.

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Tax Bill HF3840/SF2985**
15 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Dee Long
Sen. Douglas Johnson

1/2 Hour After Last Body
Adjourns

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Capital Investment
Bonding Bill HF3843/SF3388**
123 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Henry Kalis
Sen. Keith Langseth

THURSDAY, April 2

9 a.m.

The House meets in session.

1 p.m.

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Tax Bill HF3840/SF2985**
15 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Dee Long
Sen. Douglas Johnson

1/2 Hour After Last Body
Adjourns

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Capital Investment
Bonding Bill HF3843/SF3388**
123 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Henry Kalis
Sen. Keith Langseth

FRIDAY, April 3

9 a.m.

The House meets in session.

1 p.m.

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Tax Bill HF3840/SF2985**
15 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Dee Long
Sen. Douglas Johnson

1/2 Hour After Last Body
Adjourns

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Capital Investment
Bonding Bill HF3843/SF3388**
123 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Henry Kalis
Sen. Keith Langseth

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Majority Leader: Ted Winter
Minority Leader: Steve Sviggum

MINNESOTA INDEX

Health and health care in Minnesota

| | |
|--|---------|
| Heart disease deaths per 100,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 225.2 |
| in U.S. | 280.7 |
| Cancer deaths per 100,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 188.6 |
| in U.S. | 204.9 |
| Stroke deaths per 100,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 67.8 |
| in U.S. | 60.1 |
| Smokers among adult population in Minnesota (as percent), 1995 | 21.6 |
| in U.S. | 22.3 |
| Reported AIDS cases per 100,000 population in Minnesota, 1996 | 6.5 |
| in U.S. | 25.6 |
| Hospital admissions per 1,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 113.0 |
| in U.S. | 126.6 |
| Hospital outpatient visits per 1,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 1,377.3 |
| in U.S. | 1,838.0 |
| Emergency room visits per 1,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 261.2 |
| in U.S. | 380.0 |
| Health care employment (as percent of total jobs in Minnesota), 1996 | 8.0 |
| in U.S. | 7.9 |
| Physician generalists per 100,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 47 |
| in U.S. | 28 |
| Physical specialists per 100,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 182 |
| in U.S. | 200 |
| Registered nurses per 100,000 population in Minnesota, 1996 | 945 |
| in U.S. | 798 |
| Hospital beds per 100,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 449.7 |
| in U.S. | 411.0 |
| Live births per 1,000 population in Minnesota, 1995 | 13.6 |
| Births to unmarried women as percent of all births | 23.7 |
| Percent of state population not covered by health insurance, 1995 | 8 |
| Percent of Minnesota population enrolled in HMOs, 1996 | 28.6 |
| Percent of adults who are overweight, 1995 | 28.4 |
| States with a higher percentage of adults who are overweight | 22 |
| Minnesotans' 1993 personal health care expenditures, in billions | \$14.19 |
| Per capita expenditures | \$3,137 |

Sources: *Reforming the Health Care System: State Profiles 1997*, American Association of Retired Persons and *Minnesota Health Care in Perspective 1997: Health Care in the North Star State*, Morgan Quitno Press.

For more information



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