

SESSION WEEKLY

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Reflections

Minnesota was a state for just three years when it was called upon to show its loyalty to the nation. When Fort Sumter, S.C., was attacked on April 12, 1861, President Lincoln asked for 75,000 troops to defend the Union.

Gov. Alexander Ramsey, who was in Washington, D.C., at the time, met with Lincoln to commit the service of 1,000 men from the state militia.

Lt. Gov. Ignatius Donnelly received a telegraph in St. Paul from Ramsey on April 14 and called a meeting that evening with the St. Paul Pioneer Guards. Josias R. King was the first to sign up. He made history that evening by becoming the first to volunteer for the Union in the Civil War.

At 10 a.m. the next day, Aaron Greenwald, James W. Groat, and five other citizens were the first to volunteer under former territorial governor Willis Gorman in Anoka, Minn.

The Minnesotans memorialized in bronze in the Capitol (see related story, page 14) also represent forgotten names of hundreds of enlisted men, among them Josias King's cousin, Levi, who was wounded at Gettysburg. Others were well-known. Among them were Gov. Henry Sibley and Gorman. Another was Knute Nelson, who served in the 1st Wisconsin Regiment as a corporal, became governor of Minnesota in 1893, then served as a U.S. senator.

Of the 259 blacks noted in the 1860 census, 104, or almost one-half of the African-American population in Minnesota, volunteered to serve in 1861, even though they were not able to vote in the state until 1870.

Minnesotans fought successfully in other military units, but it was the 1st Minnesota under the Army of the Potomac that was successful at Manassas, Bull Run, and other battles. Still, the bloody Gettysburg battle stands out in state history.

Josias and Levi King, Greenwald, Groat, and 258 others led the charge of the 1st Regiment on July 2 and 3, 1863. Fifteen minutes into battle, 215 of them were dead. Greenwald was one of them.

Many Civil War memorials have been dedicated around the state. They include the monument to Knute Nelson in front of the Capitol steps and a makeshift wooden staff that carried the tattered U.S. flag at Gettysburg, displayed with the flag in the Capitol rotunda.

The staff — its wood half Union and half Confederate — is held with a leather strap that patched together two fragments of flag staffs found on the battlefield after the original bearers fell.

Other Civil War monuments include: a plaque erected to Greenwald, Groat, and others that is located across the street from the old Anoka County Court House; a monument to Col. William Colvill in Cannon Falls, Minn.; and the Josias R. King monument, found a few hundred yards north of the St. Paul Cathedral.

King posed for its creation, and it was completed in 1903. He was among the 4,000 who attended the dedication to "perpetuate the memory of the Union soldiers and sailors of the War of 1861-1865. Their suffering and sacrifice exalted the chorus."

— LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Perched high above the rotunda floor, Plant Management Engineer Dave Albien changes lights around the Capitol dome March 18.

— Photo by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

Graduated licensing restrictions . . .

Bill requires teens to 'graduate' through driving stages

By Jim Thielman

For teen-agers, a driver's license spells independence. But for 669 California teens in 1994, a driver's license meant the end of their lives.

So although California is already among 26 states with some form of graduated teen licensing, starting July 1 the state will place additional conditions and restrictions on driving privileges for young people.

Minnesota teens have no graduated licensing restrictions of any kind, but a bill approved by the House Ways and Means Committee March 16 aims to introduce some new requirements.

A similar bill stalled in the House Transportation and Transit Committee a year ago, and its companion bill in the Senate never came up for a floor vote.

Nighttime driving is a particularly high-risk activity for 16- to 19-year-olds. Accident studies reveal that only about 20 percent of miles driven by teens is accumulated between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., but almost half of their fatal crashes occur during those hours.

Auto accidents are the leading cause of death for 15- to 20-year-olds, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Drivers aged 16 and 17 are 18 times more likely to be killed in traffic accidents than adults aged 30 to 34, according to NHTSA. Twenty-five percent of teen drivers will be involved in an auto accident, and 5 percent of those collisions will lead to serious injury or death.

Teen drivers also are more likely to be involved in single-vehicle incidents.

Currently, 16-year-old drivers in Minnesota can drive unsupervised at any hour. But under the graduated licensing system, driving between midnight and 5 a.m. would be restricted, with some exceptions.

The restriction, and the exceptions, have generated much debate among lawmakers.

Provisional license holders would be allowed to drive between midnight and 5 a.m. for employment, religious, education, or limited social purposes. The young drivers would need a certificate stating the nature of the exception, and the certificate would have to be signed by a parent, guardian, or employer.

The exceptions to the midnight driving curfew have grown as the bill has moved through the House committees process. For instance, the original bill excepted school-sponsored events from the nighttime driving limits, but during discussion in the Ways and Means Committee, Rep. Dee Long (DFL-Mpls) asked about hockey and ice skating practices.

She said ice hockey "captains' practices" are not school-sponsored events. They are called at the discretion of the team, and they are often held after midnight, when ice time is available. She also indicated that many figure skaters drive to indoor facilities very early in the morning for the same reason.

The bill was amended to include such activities on the list of exceptions to the driving curfew.

Other legislators argued that a teen attending a film that begins at 9:30 p.m. is unlikely to get home before the midnight deadline. That activity does not fall under any of the bill's stated exceptions.

Another provision in the bill would require that a driver with a learner's permit could be accompanied in the front seat by only the supervising licensed driver.

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey), the Ways and Means Committee chair, said the provision would mean problems for parents who are pickup truck owners.

"I can't have one son drive and another as passenger then?" he asked.

Legislators were told in that situation the supervising driver should be behind the wheel.

The bill has drawn concern from some lawmakers, but Chaudhary's plan is supported by the Minnesota State Patrol, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the Department of Public



Minnesota teens currently can acquire a driver's license with full driving privileges at age 16, but a bill moving through the House is designed to introduce restrictions on teen-age drivers. Minnesota could join the ranks of over half of the states that already have some sort of graduated licensing system for teens.

The graduated licensing laws on the books in 26 states require young drivers to "graduate" through stages of restricted driving before they are allowed to get their unrestricted licenses.

The restrictions applied in other states often include a mandatory supervised driving period, night driving curfews, and training that involves a certain amount of night driving experience.

The bill (HF2401/SF2407*), sponsored by Rep. Satveer Chaudhary (DFL-Fridley), would place restrictions on nighttime teen driving, create youth-oriented driver improvement clinics for traffic violators under age 18, and create a three-stage licensing process.

Under the bill, drivers in Minnesota would have to be at least 16 years old and have a learner's permit for six months to apply for a provisional license.

Safety, and more than a dozen other groups.

The Senate has passed a graduated licensing bill this year without the curfew language.

And the public seems to favor graduated licensing.

An April 1997 Minneapolis *Star Tribune* poll of 800 adults revealed 79 percent of respondents favored a midnight driving curfew.

Under the House bill, the minimum age for a full driver's license would be 17. In the *Star Tribune* poll, 54 percent favored raising that age limit from 16 to 17.

The attempt to restrict younger drivers is not just a Minnesota effort.

Under the enhanced California law that takes effect July 1, a 16-year-old with a provisional license will have to be accompanied by parent or licensed driver 25 or older in order to drive between midnight and 5 a.m. Currently, in California, the restriction applies only to those who are 15 and a half and have a learner's permit.

The California measure also will incorporate a trend toward combining driver's education with graduated licensing.

Worldwide research has indicated that people who merely graduate from driver's education courses do not have fewer subsequent crashes than drivers who learned without formal driver education.

The belief of experts is that training combined with a graduated licensing system is the safest way to introduce teens to various driving conditions.

The first model for teen graduated licensing was developed more than 20 years ago by the NHTSA. The NHTSA and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators are pushing for entry-level staged licensing and education in all 50 states. 🐼

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By Jim Thielman

In former Rep. Kathleen Vellenga's mind, there is rarely anything bad about a good argument. That's certainly one thing she misses since she left the House in 1994.

"Having something to say and standing up on the floor of the House and saying it, that's one thing I really miss," she said in a recent interview.

On the other hand, Vellenga's career as project coordinator of the St. Paul/Ramsey County Children's Initiative has its advantages.

"I don't wake up in the middle of the night as much. I don't feel like the whole state's watching me," she said.

A Macalester graduate in education, she taught school and volunteered in child-abuse prevention programs before she sought political office.

When voters in Vellenga's St. Paul district approached her about running for state representative in 1980, her thought was that she was just a normal person.

"After I got over to the House, I realized everyone was," she said.

Vellenga was just a kid from Nebraska, but her uncle Tom Osborne was a state senator there. (The senator's son and Vellenga's cousin was the Tom Osborne

who retired this year after 25 seasons as head football coach at the University of Nebraska.)

When first elected, Vellenga set her goal at three terms in the Minnesota House at a time when women were a small minority in the House. The DFLer never expected leadership roles would follow.

However, during her seven terms as a lawmaker, Vellenga chaired the House

Vellenga maintains former goals in 'Children's Initiative' position

Education Finance Committee and the House Judiciary Committee.

When Rep. Dee Long (DFL-Mpls) stepped down as House speaker in 1993, Vellenga's name was mentioned as a potential successor.

"I knew I did not want to do that," Vellenga said. "Sure, it would be fun up there running the floor sessions and, sure, it would be fun to be that influential on issues. But you've got to be out there campaigning for 134 House seats, because you've got to keep that majority."

"I wasn't going to do that. I never even liked my own campaigns."

She says her most important legislative work was "synthesizing the message that we wanted to spend one dollar on prevention for every dollar we spent on corrections. We know the first three years in a



Former Rep. Kathleen Vellenga, who was once a teacher, now works as project coordinator of the St. Paul/Ramsey County Children's Initiative.

child's life are the most important, and we wanted to get that message out."

Now, she pursues that social goal at another level.

In hindsight, Vellenga said she "was getting cynical [in the House]. It was time to go." But she believes her years in the House gave her a breadth of knowledge that makes it easier to do her current work. 🐼

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Bill to study hemp defeated

A bill calling for a study to determine the feasibility of allowing Minnesota farmers to grow industrial hemp was soundly defeated in the House March 19. The vote was 81-49 against the plan.

Leading the charge to defeat the bill was Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), a Minneapolis police officer, who said he was uncomfortable with the fact that industrial hemp comes from the same family as marijuana, an illegal, controlled substance in the U. S. since 1937.

Bill sponsor Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) said the study would not open the door to the legalization of marijuana. But, she said, industrial hemp might open some financial doors for farmers in Minnesota because it can be used for a variety of products such as paper, clothing, fiber board, twine, birdseed, and oil.

Marijuana and industrial hemp carry the scientific classification of *cannabis sativa*, but they are significantly different plants, according to information that has been supplied by the North American Industrial Hemp Council.

THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the intoxicating drug in both marijuana and hemp. Marijuana contains 3 percent to 20 percent THC, while hemp contains 0.05 percent to 1 percent THC. Hemp-based finished products have no THC in them.

The bill (HF349/SF1181*) also had the approval of the Minnesota Agri-Growth Council, which is "hardly a liberal think tank," Kahn said.

"I don't want to pretend that this bill will save the farm community. It's supporting their use of a crop which can be uniquely successful in Minnesota," she said.

Stanek said law enforcement officials believe that legalization of hemp might not be a good idea.

"How do I explain going down the slippery slope of allowing hemp to be grown when most people associate it with marijuana?" Stanek asked.

Kahn said, "You tell them the first draft of the Declaration of Independence was written on hemp paper. You tell them that Betsy Ross' first American flag was sewn with hemp fabric."

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) said several studies conducted in other states concluded hemp's possibilities as a profitable crop were dubious.

"I feel upset that people say this will be a viable crop and save agriculture," she said. "It's not been found viable — not for economic reasons, not for any reason. I have a real problem with giving false hope to an agricultural community that needs real hope."

House Minority Leader Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) said it would be hard for law enforcement to tell the difference between industrial hemp and marijuana.

"I would think it would be an important step backwards in the war against drugs," he said.

The Senate approved the hemp study bill last year.



BANKING

Checks in the mail

The House passed a bill March 19 that would place some restrictions on the unsolicited checks that some financial institutions send to consumers. The vote was 126-2.

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

"If that check would have been taken out of my mailbox and someone had taken it to the check-cashing place and cashed it, my life would have been miserable," he said.

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

Under the bill, no financial institution or lender could send such a check unless it complied with several new requirements.

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

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

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

"There have been incidents where checks have been stolen," Haas said. "We're putting regulations in place in which the consumer would be protected. There is no procedure in place to protect me."

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

The bill (HF2016/SF2550*) now goes to the governor.



BUDGET

Tobacco lawsuit funds

The House Ways and Means Committee approved a bill March 16 that would require that any funds received from the state's lawsuit against big tobacco go into the general fund.

Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls), sponsor of the bill (HF3314), told the committee that money reimbursed to the state should be distributed by elected officials. He said he didn't want the state of Minnesota to go through the same situation as in Texas.

In January 1998, Texas received a settlement from cigarette makers in the amount of \$15.3 billion. The Texas attorney general placed a portion of the funds in a foundation governed by a board of directors.

Texas state legislators argued that they alone had the constitutional authority to appropriate state revenues. After weeks of grandstanding and legal challenges, the state attorney general agreed to turn the funds over to the Legislature.

Anderson's bill now goes to the House floor.



BUSINESS

Minnesota's franchise law

A House panel has approved a bill that aims to prevent Northwest Airlines from using a 1997 law to its advantage in a court battle.

The 1997 Legislature passed special legislation for Northwest Airlines that retroactively exempted airline carriers 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.

Controversy erupted when it was discovered recently that 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 "feeder" airlines, forcing them into bankruptcy.

Some legislators have questioned whether Northwest Airlines withheld knowledge of the lawsuit before the Legislature passed the 1997 law.

The House Commerce, Tourism and Consumer Affairs Committee approved a bill (HF3841) March 12 that would specify that the 1997 franchise exemption does not apply to any agreements that were subject to litigation prior to passage of the law.

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), the bill's sponsor, also carried the 1997 legislation.

"It was not my intention to get in the way of pending litigation," he said.

Joseph V. O'Donnell, of Portland, Maine, is the bankruptcy trustee of Northeast Express Airlines and Precision Valley Aviation. O'Donnell said the retroactive repeal of the franchise law seriously damaged his court case.

Northwest Airlines brought the 1997 legislation to the table as a "housekeeping" measure, O'Donnell said.

"They have not used it as housekeeping in Maine," he said. "I think it was material to the 450 people who lost their jobs."

Robert Benner, a Northwest Airlines lobbyist, said the bill would not affect the Maine lawsuit.

"There are a number of other issues," Benner said. "Northwest will continue to pursue its rights under the law without the benefit of the franchise amendment passed in 1997."

The committee also voted to send along a related bill (HF3842) without recommendation. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls), would repeal the 1997 airline carrier franchise exemption altogether.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) expressed concern over once again subjecting airlines to the franchise law.

Airlines need to have the option of dropping their feeder airlines when safety concerns become insurmountable, McElroy said.

"I would remind the committee that it was Northwest Airlines that grounded Express One before the [Federal Aviation Administration] did," McElroy said in reference to a 1993 commuter airline crash in Hibbing. "The FAA is certainly important, but they are not the only link in the safety issue."

Both bills are headed for the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee.

Limited partner withdrawals

The House passed a bill March 13 that would alter regulations by which a limited partner in an investment may withdraw from the partnership. The bill passed 132-0.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Bill Macklin (R-Lakeville), would allow limited partners to withdraw from an investment partnership only if permitted by the written partnership agreement. If the agreement contained no withdrawal authority, the limited partner could not 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 liability to which the general partners are subject.

The bill would apply to partnerships formed after July 31, 1998, and to partnerships formed beforehand that contain a written provision allowing withdrawal.

HF2507/SF3036* goes to the governor.



CHILDREN

Child protection system

The House approved a bill March 13 which would make significant changes to the state's child protection system. The vote was 128-0.

Sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), the bill (HF2985) seeks to address issues that have recently come to light regarding the state's ability to protect children who are in danger.

In January 1998, the legislative auditor released an evaluation of the state's child protection system. The auditor found that services varied greatly from county to county and that no external oversight exists to monitor the

actions in these cases. The auditor suggested numerous approaches to reforming the current state of the system.

Entenza's bill incorporates many of the suggestions, along with changes recently mandated by federal law. The bill would create a more uniform statewide system and attempt to provide a sufficient level of oversight to make sure that the cases are handled effectively.

The bill also seeks to place children more quickly into permanent living situations, either with a parent or another alternative home. In addition, the bill would require that the Department of Human Services design a statewide child protective services plan with input from the county-administered programs.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

Children's endowment fund

The House Ways and Means Committee approved a bill March 16 that aims to create a permanent endowment fund to improve the physical, intellectual, and emotional development of Minnesota's youngest citizens.

HF3167, sponsored by Rep. Nora Slawik (DFL-Maplewood), is headed for a vote on the House floor.

The bill would submit the following constitutional amendment to voters in the 1998 general election: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to create a permanent endowment fund to enhance the development of young children through the age of four?"

Potential sources of initial funds for the endowment include surplus dollars in state coffers and tax-deductible contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

Money in the endowment fund would be earmarked for several purposes, including

Peekaboo



Rep. Rich Stanek's 2-year-old daughter, Jennifer, plays at her father's desk in the House chamber during the floor session March 16.

Olympic medalists



Olympic gold medalists Jenny Schmidgall of Edina, *left*, and Alana Blahosky, of St. Paul, are cheered by members of the House. The two were part of the U.S. women's hockey team that took the gold medal at the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan. The pair was honored on the House floor March 16.

activities that heighten public awareness of the importance of early brain stimulation and more research into early childhood development.

The fund would exist to supplement, not supplant, current spending on early childhood education programs.



DWI

Alcohol concentration

Following two similar victories — one in Washington, D.C., and one in Washington state — a proposal to lower Minnesota's blood alcohol concentration standard was narrowly approved by the House Ways and Means Committee March 16. The vote in committee was 12-10.

HF2389, sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), would lower the per se blood alcohol concentration limit from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent.

On March 4, the U.S. Senate adopted an amendment which would tie highway funding to the 0.08 percent standard. If it becomes law, states that do not have the lower standard in place by 2001 would see a reduction in federal highway dollars.

Later that same week, Washington state legislators passed a bill that would make Washington the 16th state to enact the 0.08 percent limit. The governor of Washington is expected

to sign the bill into law.

Proponents argue that the new standard is reasonable and that it will result in a reduction in Minnesota's DWI related traffic fatalities.

The average male would have to drink four standard drinks in an hour and the average female would have to drink three standard drinks in an hour to reach that level, according to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration.

Opponents contend that the new standard would unfairly target social drinkers and take valuable resources from the real problem, repeat DWI offenders.

The bill now goes to the House floor.



EMPLOYMENT

Workplace breast-feeding

The House passed a bill March 19 that would require businesses to make "reasonable efforts" to provide adequate private space and unpaid time off for new mothers to pump breast milk. The vote was 107-19.

"Many businesses are doing this already," said Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville), House sponsor of the bill. "We're just trying to provide a positive nudge."

The bill would require employers to make available "the nearest convenient and appropriate room or other location, other than a

toilet stall," for women to take breaks to privately pump milk.

Under the bill, the break times would run concurrently with any other allotted breaks. Employers would not have to provide the breaks if doing so would "unduly disrupt the operations" of the business.

Greiling noted that the bill purposely uses vague language and does not set penalties for noncompliance.

"We're not trying to make this be an unreasonable request or burden," she said.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) successfully added an amendment specifying that businesses would be held harmless if reasonable efforts to comply with the potential law had been made.

The bill also contains a provision, added in the Senate, that would clarify that breast-feeding is excepted from the crime of indecent exposure.

The bill (**HF3459/SF2751***) now goes back to the Senate.



ENVIRONMENT

Watercraft bill withdrawn

A bill that would place restrictions on the operation of personal watercraft on Minnesota lakes suffered a major setback on the House floor March 18.

The so-called "personal watercraft safety and courtesy act," sponsored by Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), included a provision that would have banned the operation of personal watercraft on lakes of 100 acres or less.

Rep. Jim Tunheim (DFL-Kennedy) offered a successful amendment to remove the proposed ban from the bill. In response to the 96-34 vote in favor of the amendment, Hasskamp withdrew her bill from consideration.

"Without a major influx of public opinion and people calling their legislators, it could be dead for the session," Hasskamp said afterward.

What remains of the bill includes measures that would shorten the hours for operation of personal watercraft, prohibit the continuous operation of a personal watercraft in the same area for longer than 30 minutes, and assess civil penalties for operators who violate personal watercraft laws.

"If we do nothing this year . . . the problem will get worse," Hasskamp said. "I fear that road rage will turn into water rage."

Hasskamp said she has tried to accommodate "jet-sporters" where she thought they had reasonable concerns, but "people who do

this don't understand that their fun in the sun is someone else's torture."

The bill (HF1169) was met with bipartisan opposition.

"Frankly, I think we need to be more tolerant of each other's recreational interests," said Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook).

Minority Leader Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) said the bill would make Minnesota the "Land of 3,000 Lakes" because many lakes would be off-limits to personal watercraft enthusiasts.

Transport packaging waste



A new law aims to reduce the amount of transport packaging waste that Minnesota's soft drink industry creates.

In 1995, 22 percent of municipal solid waste consisted of transport packaging such as wood pallets and corrugated cardboard, Rep. Willard Munger (DFL-Duluth), the House sponsor of the measure, said during floor debate.

The soft drink industry is considering a \$15 million investment in reusable, recyclable plastic merchandise pallets to replace the wood pallets they currently use to transport their goods to retailers.

The plastic pallets are expected to cost about \$32 each, compared to \$5 to \$7 each for wood pallets.

There is now a system in place where third parties collect used pallets from retail sites and then resell them to soft drink companies.

During a Feb. 17 committee hearing, Dave Locey, of the Minnesota Soft Drink Association, said the third party collection system stands in the way of the transition from wood to plastic.

"We're in the position of trying to make a pro-environmental system work," Locey said. "What we want to do before we make this \$15 million investment in plastic pallets is make sure we can control them."

Effective Aug. 1, 1998, third party collectors will be prohibited from taking plastic pallets that are labeled as private property.

The plastic pallets will have to clearly show the owner's name and address or telephone number, as well as a notice that the unauthorized possession of the pallet is a violation of state law.

The rightful owner of a stolen plastic pallet will be able to sue for damages equal to three times the cost of the pallet, in addition to legal expenses.

Sen. Dan Stevens (R-Mora) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF2696/SF2402*/CH282



FAMILY

Joint parenting after divorce

A new process for joint parenting following divorce is the centerpiece of the omnibus family law bill passed by the House March 16. The vote was 106-25.

The bill (HF2784/SF2276*), sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), combines several bills the Civil and Family Law Division of the House Judiciary Committee heard this session.

The bulk of the bill is dedicated to Dawkins' parenting plan proposal (originally introduced as HF1323). The proposal would restructure state law to focus on joint decision-making between the two divorced parents.

Under current law, the courts establish custody in situations where the placement of the child is an issue after marriage dissolution. Courts designate a custodial parent, and all decisions concerning the child are made by that parent.

Under the new language, parents involved in marriage dissolution proceedings would be provided the option to compose a plan that would ensure significant participation by both parents in all decision-making. The document would outline visitation and custody issues for the child. Courts would then approve the parenting plan.

Dawkins said that his proposal is an attempt to separate certain decisions about the care of the child from other decisions following marriage dissolution.

Dawkins said that children too often become bargaining chips in the divorce negotiations and parents are unable to make concessions that they think are in the best interest of the child.

"In my own law practice, I've had fathers coming in saying, 'I think it's okay for Junior to spend time at his mom's house,'" Dawkins said. "And I'd have to advise the father not to say that in court."

Dawkins said that his proposal is an attempt to maintain a significant relationship between the child and both parents after a marriage dissolution.

Initially, the bill called for the parenting plan option to be offered statewide. In its current form, the bill would create a pilot project and gives each judicial district the power to decide whether or not to participate in the pilot.

The Minnesota Supreme Court would then have the final say in whether or not the pilot projects are initiated.

The omnibus bill now goes to conference committee where legislators will work out the differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill. The Senate version does not address the parenting plan.

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

Sacred drummers



The Fond du Lac sacred fire lodge drummers sing and pray on the steps of the Capitol during a spiritual gathering for the wolf. The Minnesota Wolf Alliance held the March 16 gathering in honor and support of wolves and to voice opposition to proposals to allow hunting or trapping of wolves. The drummers include Pat Braveheart, Harold Ironshield, Ken Danielson, and Garrett Wilson.



Omnibus pension bill

Minnesota judges would receive a small raise to allow them to contribute more of their retirement plan costs, under the omnibus pension bill the House passed March 18.

"Currently, judges are paying a much smaller part of the cost of their retirement plan than [other state employees]," said Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls), who is sponsoring HF2970. "This brings them more in line with others, and it is cost-free to the state."

The bill would give judges a 1.5 percent raise but would require them to increase their pension fund contributions by 1.73 percent. The state would make up for paying the higher salaries because its own required contributions to the pension fund would go down.

The wage hike is necessary because the state constitution prohibits reducing the salary of a sitting judge. Although the provision would still lead to a slight drop in pay, Kahn said that judges have agreed to the arrangement and would not rule it unconstitutional in court.

"The result is that we will be getting to better judicial pension policy at no cost to the state and at small cost to judges," Kahn said.

But some lawmakers objected to any increase in judges' salaries because the Legislature granted them a 9 percent raise in 1997. A failed amendment by Rep. Ron Kraus (R-Albert Lea) would have eliminated the raise but left the provision calling for increased pension contributions.

"Let's put it out there, and let's see if the judges rule it unconstitutional," Kraus said. "I think [eliminating the raise] would be fair and I think fairness is important to all judges."

The bill passed on a 90-40 vote and now goes to the Senate.

Other provisions in the omnibus pension bill would:

- increase surviving-spouse benefits for the wife of a St. Paul building inspector killed while on duty last Christmas Eve;
- change the qualifications and filing deadlines for the state's part-time teacher pension program, allowing teachers to work up to 80 percent of full-time hours and remain eligible for the program; and
- provide guidelines under which two public medical facilities may provide pension-related payments if they are transferred to private ownership. The two facilities are Luverne Community Hospital in Luverne, Minn., and Arnold Memorial Hospital in Adrian, Minn.

Claims against the state

The family of a 14-year-old girl killed in 1991 by a convicted sex offender on his way from prison to a halfway house would receive almost \$15,000 under a bill the House passed March 13.

David and Gayle Johnson of Alexandria, Minn., filed a wrongful-death suit against the state after their daughter was murdered by a convict who had been released from St. Cloud prison five days earlier and ordered to report to a halfway house in Minneapolis. He was not assigned an escort and did not show up at the halfway house.

Following the murder, the Legislature changed the law to require that escorts be provided in similar situations, but the Minnesota Supreme Court rejected the parents' claim.

The Johnsons next turned for recourse to the Minnesota Legislature's Joint House-Senate Subcommittee on Claims, which annually hears private restitution claims that have been refused by the courts or state government departments.

This year's claims bill (HF3830), sponsored by Rep. Edgar Olson (DFL-Fosston), would authorize payment of certain of those claims against the state, as recommended by the subcommittee. The bill passed the House on a 126-6 vote.

In addition to the payment to the Johnsons, the bill would pay almost \$24,000 to a Benton County deputy who in 1996 shot and killed a suspect in the murder of a St. Joseph police officer. The deputy later suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome and was unable to

work for eight months, but she was refused lost-wage payment by Benton County.

The bill also would provide several payments to inmates or former inmates who suffered injuries while incarcerated and to persons injured while performing court-ordered community service work.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

Donating 'distressed' foods

Food handlers could donate "distressed" foods to local governments or to the state, under a bill passed by the House March 18. The vote was 130-0.

Food is considered distressed when it cannot legally be sold but is still deemed safe — unspoiled milk that has not sold before the expiration date, for example.

Currently, food handlers can donate distressed foods to nonprofit organizations who supply the food to the elderly or needy. The bill (HF176/SF154*) would expand the law to allow them to donate these foods to units of government.

The bill would remove liability for food handlers who choose to donate the distressed food, except in instances of gross negligence or intentional misconduct.

Bill sponsor Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson) said that the idea was brought to her by county commissioners who felt that it was a good way to defray corrections costs.

"It's food that may not be marketable, but it is still safe for consumption," Harder said.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

Libertarian protest



Protesters seeking a permanent tax cut and a refund of the state's projected budget surplus gather on the Capitol steps March 16. Members of the crowd voiced their opinions and listened to speakers during a rally sponsored by the Libertarian Party of Minnesota.



HEALTH

Acquiring nonprofit hospitals

The House passed a bill March 17 that would make it more difficult for for-profit hospital groups or health care companies to acquire nonprofit hospitals. The vote was 76-53.

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

The attorney general could make the transaction notices accessible to the public and obtain public comment on any pending transaction.

The bill stipulates that the attorney general could investigate transactions if 50 percent or more of a hospital's assets are involved in the proposed sale and could make notice to the public if the attorney general determines the public would benefit from the information.

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

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls), the bill's sponsor, said that before California adopted similar legislation, roughly \$3 billion in public assets disappeared when for-profit chains acquired nonprofit hospitals.

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

Acquiring a hospital below market value would likely mean fewer dollars enter charitable trusts to help those communities promote health care.

HF381/SF695* awaits action in a conference committee.

Emergency medical care

People who provide emergency medical care with a new device called an automatic external defibrillator would not be liable for civil damages, under a bill the House passed March 17. The vote was 125-0.

The exemption for liability would fall under the existing "Good Samaritan statute," which provides immunity to untrained people who give emergency care, unless the patient objects.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Geri Evans (DFL-New Brighton), would not exempt medical professionals but would include vol-

unteer firefighters, volunteer police officers, and other volunteers likely to find themselves in a situation where administering the treatment is necessary.

Many airlines are now carrying the new defibrillator devices, which restore the rhythm of the heart by delivering an electric shock. Other businesses also are beginning to invest in the devices.

To use an automatic external defibrillator, the rescuer places two pads on the victim's chest area, and the device measures the heart's rhythm. If the device detects ventricular fibrillation, which requires a shock to the heart, the machine directs the user to push a button.

According to the American Heart Association, more than 250,000 Americans die each year from sudden cardiac arrest, and fewer

than seven percent of those suffering cardiac arrest outside a hospital survive.

The association believes wider availability of these defibrillators would reduce fatalities.

HF3138/SF2861* now goes to the governor for his consideration.



HOUSING

Preserving low-income housing

The law governing how private-activity, tax-exempt bonds can be allocated would be altered under a bill passed by the House March 16. The vote was 128-0.

These bonds are used to finance private projects, and because of their tax-exempt status, the state places limits on how they are allocated.

HF3165, sponsored by Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope), would give top priority to projects that preserve existing federally subsidized low-income housing.

Rest's bill, along with several others introduced this year, seeks to address a shortage of affordable housing that may develop because of a situation involving federally subsidized complexes.

In the 1970s, the federal government set up a program where developers received reduced-rate mortgages and financing incentives to build low- and moderate-income housing. Rent rates were subsidized by the federal government and rent increases were regulated.

Owners of these complexes are now taking advantage of a provision that allows them to prepay the remaining portion of their mortgage and to begin charging market rate rent.

Housing advocates say that this situation could happen at over 300 apartment complexes throughout the state that were financed through the federal program.

HF3165 would make several changes in the law that regulates distribution of the state's federal limit for private-activity, tax-exempt bonds.

In addition to highlighting low-income housing preservation, the bill would give special consideration to projects for seniors only.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

Housing options for seniors



A new law signed by the governor March 18 seeks to create more affordable housing options for seniors.

Effective March 19, 1998, the law will expand the statutory definition of elderly housing as it applies to the

Welfare rally



Lanette Howze, of Minneapolis, holds her sign to shade her eyes from the sun during a March 19 rally on the steps of the Capitol. The rally, sponsored by the Welfare Rights Committee, attracted people who want changes in welfare reform law that was enacted last year.

human rights law, bringing state law into compliance with federal statutes. The effect will be that more facilities could classify as elderly housing exclusively.

The new law will remove the requirement that elderly housing must provide facilities designed to meet social and physical needs, such as recreation and meeting rooms.

Rep. Satveer Chaudhary (DFL-Fridley), sponsor of the measure, said that the additional services provided to tenants mean additional cost in rent.

"These types of facilities often cause rent to be \$100 to \$300 higher than other facilities," he said.

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

HF2779/SF2230*/CH291

Selling abandoned homes



A new state law aims to help Minnesota's manufactured-home park owners rid their properties of abandoned homes.

Effective March 17, 1998, the law authorizes the owner of a manufactured-home park to obtain a limited dealer's license and to sell up to five used homes that are within the park's boundaries per year.

Previously, only real estate agents and licensed dealers were permitted to sell manufactured homes in Minnesota.

The legislation was introduced at the request of rural park owners who were having difficulties attracting agents to sell low-end homes.

The measure was sponsored by Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls) and Sen. Steven Novak (DFL-New Brighton).

HF3148/SF2047*/CH280



HUMAN SERVICES

Removing employment barriers

A resolution asking the U.S. Congress to remove Medicaid policy barriers to employment for people with disabilities has been filed with the Office of the Secretary of State without the governor's signature.

The resolution urges Congress to adopt Medicaid buy-in legislation that would allow people with permanent disabilities to retain Medicaid coverage to address unmet health needs when they become employed.

Employee-based health care and government programs such as Medicare and MinnesotaCare do not typically cover long-term support needed by disabled people.

The resolution seeks to remove any policy barriers to employment so more people with disabilities can reduce their dependence on government programs and become taxpaying workers.

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls) and Sen. Becky Lourey (DFL-Kerrick) sponsored the measure.

HF3258/SF2699*/Res. 7



INDUSTRY

A practice called 'slamming'

Long-distance telephone carriers would need to provide proof that a customer authorized a change in long-distance service carriers, under a bill the House passed March 18. The vote was 132-0.

The legislation, sponsored by Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris), aims to further combat a practice called "slamming," which is the switching of long-distance carriers without a customer's permission.

Telephone customers sometimes receive mailed notices that their long-distance carrier will be switched unless the customer responds to the letter and cancels the change.

The legislation stipulates that if challenged, a long-distance carrier would have to provide proof the change was actively authorized by a customer. This would require a carrier to produce a tape recording or written statement of the approval.

If the long-distance provider could not present the evidence, that carrier would have to pay the cost of returning the customer to the original service and the cost of the customer's long distance calls during the unauthorized period.

Long-distance telephone carriers also would have to provide, upon customer request, information about the cost of interstate and intrastate calls, including any difference in pricing for evening, night, and weekend rates. The carrier also would have to provide other applicable information such as flat fees and termination charges.

The measure would deem it insufficient if the long-distance carrier simply files tariffs or price lists for its services with a regulatory agency.

The legislation also would repeal a current provision that allows carriers to notify customers of price increases through newspaper ads. Instead, carriers would have to make a direct notice to customers, either by including the information with a bill or by direct mail.

Another provision would require carriers to offer customers the ability to block interna-

tional calls from their telephones. This would prevent children or other unauthorized callers from making international calls.

HF3042 now moves to the Senate.

Using professional titles



Industrial hygienists — people hired to make work environments safer — will become members of a legally recognized profession under a new law effective Aug. 1, 1998.

The law will prohibit people who do not meet certain requirements from using specific titles including industrial hygienist, certified safety professional, and construction health and safety technologist.

Only those who have attended an accredited college or university and received the proper certification will be allowed to use those professional titles. For instance, a certified industrial hygienist will have to pass a test by the nonprofit American Board of Industrial Hygiene and maintain that license in order to use the title.

The restrictions will not apply to properly supervised apprentices, or to employees of the state of Minnesota, who are already subject to strict standards.

Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington), who sponsored the proposal in the House, said the law will not only protect the professionals, but will further public health and safety by ensuring quality work.

Sen. Sheila Kiscaden (R-Rochester) sponsored the new measure in the Senate.

HF668*/SF668/CH288



INSURANCE

MCHA cap increased



The maximum lifetime benefit for people who get their health coverage through Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association (MCHA) will be increased from \$1.5 million to \$2 million, under a new law effective March 19, 1998.

The change is necessary to address the needs of a southern Minnesota boy who suffers from Melnick-Needles Syndrome, a bone and cartilage disorder. The boy requires a full-time nurse, specialized equipment, frequent hospital visits, and medications.

A 1995 law moved the cap on MCHA benefits from \$1 million to \$1.5 million because the boy's medical expenses were approaching the limit and he was at risk of being cut off from coverage.

Now, the child is closing in on the \$1.5 million maximum. Also, supporters of the new law said \$2 million is the standard limit for lifetime benefits.

The Legislature created MCHA in 1976 to sell insurance to state residents who have been turned down for insurance due to pre-existing conditions.

The organization is not funded by the state. Premiums are collected from participants and from an annual assessment on insurance companies, health maintenance organizations, and other insurance providers.

The boy could have been forced onto the government-funded Medical Assistance program, had the MCHA coverage limit not been increased.

The new measure was sponsored by Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato) and Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan).

HF3065/SF2608*/CH293

No break on insurance premiums



Gov. Arne Carlson used his veto authority March 18 to strike down legislation that would have allowed drivers who successfully complete an accident prevention course to get a break on auto insurance premiums.

Drivers over 30 years old who passed the safety course would have received a 10 percent reduction in their auto insurance premiums, under the bill. Currently, drivers 55 and older who pass an accident prevention course every three years receive a premium reduction.

In his veto message, Carlson wrote, "Statistical analyses fail to provide evidence that successful completion of additional driver testing results in heightened safety rates on Minnesota roadways."

He said automobile insurance premiums ought to be determined by the market and individual driving records.

"Any mandated rate reduction to one class of citizen drivers would unfairly shift costs to those of the unprotected class," he said. "In this case, the shift would take place on those drivers who are already paying the highest premiums within this state, that is, those drivers under the age of 30."

Carlson also said while a driver safety course can be effective for those 55 and older, "I do not believe that the completion of this type of program would be effective on younger drivers."

The legislation was sponsored by Rep. Mark Mahon (DFL-Bloomington) and Sen. Douglas Johnson (DFL-Tower).

HF2846*/SF2245/CH287

New investment options

The House passed a bill March 13 that would give insurance companies more flexibility in investing their assets. The vote was 128-4.

Under the bill, sponsored by Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope), "financially strong" insurers could choose to be governed by the new provisions in the bill, rather than by current state insurance laws, which would stay in place.

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

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

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

investments, and the insurers could request hearings.

HF3355 /SF3032* goes to the governor.

Reinsurance investment options

Reinsurance intermediary-brokers would have more investment options for the funds they hold for insurance companies, under a bill passed by the House March 16. The vote was 129-1.

Currently, reinsurance intermediary-brokers may invest funds they hold for insurance companies exclusively in bank trust accounts. The bill would allow investments in federally guaranteed short-term securities or any investment considered appropriate.

The bill states that the investments must be traded on a national securities exchange and may include municipal and corporate bonds.

The reinsurance broker, who could take advantage of the new investment opportunities only with written permission from the client who holds the money, would be responsible for any losses on the investments.

According to the bill, the investments "should emphasize safety, liquidity, and diversification." The bill, sponsored by Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls), further states that the money should be invested so that it's available to remit on a timely basis.

HF2750/SF2262* now goes to the governor.

Snow capped



Snow rests on a statue of the young Civil War soldier Knute Nelson. The monument of Nelson, who served as governor of Minnesota in the 1890s, stands in front of the Capitol and is one of a group of works depicting different stages in the governor's life.



LAW

Special guardians, conservators



A new law signed by the governor March 16 refines the special guardian and conservator hearing process to prevent potential abuse.

Guardians and conservators are appointed by the state courts to make decisions for adults who are incapable of making decisions for themselves, oftentimes the elderly in nursing homes.

Special guardianships and conservatorships differ in that they are temporary arrangements designed to respond to short-term situations.

Effective Aug. 1, 1998, the new law lengthens the time required to give notice of hearings related to special guardianships and conservatorships from 24 hours to 48 hours and requires that the hearing be held within two weeks of the notice.

The law also requires that petitioners show a clear need for the appointment. It also limits these appointments to 30 days.

Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin), House

sponsor of the new measure, said that the idea was brought to him by members of a family in his district who felt the process was being abused by a nursing home caring for their father.

Sen. Pat Piper (DFL-Austin) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF1414/SF1151*/CH281



METRO AFFAIRS

Innovative bike racks



Gov. Arne Carlson signed into law March 16 a measure that allows cities of the first class to place art and informational signs on bicycle racks and storage areas.

Effective March 17, 1998, the new law results from a desire by the Minneapolis City Council to place decorated bicycle racks on every block in the Uptown neighborhood of the city.

The city is trying to promote bicycle riding to ease parking and traffic congestion. City officials want to place art or signs on the racks that would blend with the Uptown area's atmosphere that caters to a young clientele.

The art and signs will be allowed only if placement does not create a hazard. That decision will be left to the road authority that authorizes the placement of the art or signage.

The new measure was sponsored by Rep. Dee Long (DFL-Mpls) and Sen. Allan Spear (DFL-Mpls).

HF3296/SF2729*/CH283



TRANSPORTATION

Ignoring highway barricades

Motorists who ignore barricades, drive on closed state highways during storms, and get stuck might also get stuck with the cost of any rescue, under a bill headed to the House floor.

HF2589, sponsored by Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls), would require any motorist who becomes stranded after bypassing a barricade designed to prevent travel on a highway during or after a storm to pay up to \$10,000 in expenses incurred during any rescue efforts by local or state law enforcement officials.

The House Ways and Means Committee approved the bill March 16.

The legislation resulted from a number of incidents during the 1996-1997 winter when drivers ignored highway barricades. Law enforcement officers put themselves at risk to save some of the motorists, and the state or local law enforcement units paid the cost.

The legislation would allow the state agency

or political entity that incurs the cost to bring action to recover up to \$10,000 of those costs. Legislators were told the cost of the rescues is typically under \$2,000.

Drivers would be liable if they failed to obey the instruction of authorized personnel at the restricted roadway, or if they drove over, around, or through a barricade designed to stop travel on a closed portion of highway.

Also in the bill is a provision crafted to prevent motorists from driving around lowered railway crossing gates.

Under current law, drivers who go around lowered railway gates face a misdemeanor charge only if it is determined that it was unsafe to do so. The bill would require all drivers to stop when railway gates are lowered and to wait for the gates to be raised. Anyone who drives around the gates — regardless of the conditions — would face a misdemeanor charge.

Legislators asked if the restriction applies to

Desktop memento



A statue of St. Patrick stands on Rep. Mark Mahon's desk in the House chamber. Mahon taped the figure to his desk on St. Patrick's Day March 17.

malfunctioning gates that are triggered when no train is approaching, or gates that fail to rise after a train passes.

Betsy Parker, of the Department of Transportation, told legislators those instances are rare, while violations occur frequently when trains are oncoming and the gates have worked properly. No provision was included in the bill to address the issue of gate malfunctions.

Aircraft repair resolution

A resolution asking President Clinton and Congress to enact federal legislation called the Aircraft Repair Station Safety Act of 1997 has been filed with the Office of the Secretary of State without the governor's signature.

The resolution supports a congressional effort to force foreign repair facilities to use the same standards that apply to domestic aircraft repair procedures and parts.

Some aviation experts are concerned that airplane repair facilities in foreign countries use defective parts or do substandard repair work on U.S. airplanes.

Federal legislation before the U.S. Congress aims to tighten controls on repair facilities that service aircraft that operate in the U.S. The act would revoke certification of any repair facility that purposely uses uncertified or substandard parts.

Rep. Edwina Garcia (DFL-Richfield) and Sen. Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the resolution.

HF3250*/SF2786/Res. 7

Bowe Memorial Highway



For the first time in Minnesota history, a stretch of highway will be named after a slain state trooper.

Gov. Arne Carlson signed into law March 18 a measure that will rename a stretch of Trunk Highway 95 after Cpl. Timothy Bowe.

Effective Aug. 1, 1998, the new law requires the commissioner of transportation to adopt a design and to erect the signs to mark the memorial highway. The signs will be paid for by the community of Cambridge, Minn.

Last year, Bowe became the first Minnesota State Patrol officer killed in the line of duty since 1978. The 36-year-old Coon Rapids man was shot to death in Chisago County while answering a call about a shooting at a rural home.

Bowe, a 15-year veteran, was the seventh Minnesota trooper killed in the line of duty.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) and Sen. Janet Johnson (DFL-North Branch) sponsored the measure.

HF2612*/SF2335/CH290

Memorials in bronze . . .

Four Civil War officers stand tall in Capitol rotunda



A panoramic photo of the statues of three of the four Civil War heroes in the Capitol rotunda.

By Jim Thielman

A cavalry broadsword was large, heavy, and a poor choice for duels, which is why Abraham Lincoln chose it.

"I don't want the fellow to kill me," he said.

The fellow was James Shields, one of four Civil War officers whose statue stands on the second floor of the Minnesota State Capitol.

Shields' bronze likeness in the Capitol is one of many artistic elements carrying a Civil War theme. The reason for that theme is no mystery.

Minnesotans were still living on the edge of the frontier when ground was broken for the third and current state Capitol in 1896, and the young men who survived the Civil War had become state decision-makers.

Three of the six men who served on the commission to build the Minnesota Capitol were Civil War veterans. Six of the state's first 10 governors were Civil War veterans.

So it's evident why six of eight paintings that hang in the Governor's Reception Room — the most ornate and elaborately appointed room in the Capitol — depict Civil War battles.

In alcoves on the second floor of the Capitol — where the rotunda turns into an octagonal wall of Kasota stone — stand the larger-than-life statues of Civil War heroes John B. Sanborn, Alexander Wilkin, William Colvill, and Shields. All four were prominent figures in 19th century Minnesota.

Maj. Gen. James Shields

Shields was perhaps the best-known of the group. He was regarded as a handsome bachelor — genial yet vain — and a statesman. And he considered himself a ladies' man.

When the Democrat Shields served as Illi-

nois state auditor, he clashed rhetorically with Lincoln, who was then a Whig.

After Shields learned Lincoln had written, under a pseudonym, a letter to a newspaper satirizing an Illinois currency crisis and Shields' aversion to marriage, Shields challenged Lincoln to a duel.

In Lincoln's day, it was the job of "seconds" to resolve disputes. Most of these challenges to honor were settled diplomatically, and Lincoln's second did just that. Even if the duel had occurred, it's likely Lincoln would have won and both men would have survived.

Lincoln had the choice of weapons and conditions, and Lincoln's favored conditions would have restricted the movement of each man, keeping Lincoln's body well beyond the reach of Shields. Shields was shorter than Lincoln, who had uncommonly long arms and who admitted he had practiced with the broadsword.

"I felt sure that I could disarm him," Lincoln said, "having had more than a month to learn the broadsword exercise."

Lincoln was said to be greatly embarrassed by the dispute, but both political careers steamed forward. While Lincoln's fate is well known today, Shields' is not.

Shields — a major general during the war — became the only man to serve as a senator in three states — Illinois, Minnesota, and Missouri. He also was the governor of the Oregon Territory.

Gen. Alexander Wilkin

Of the four Civil War veterans cast in bronze at the Capitol, only Gen. Alexander Wilkin died in battle. He was the highest ranking Minnesota officer to perish in the Civil War.

Wilkin founded St. Paul Fire and Marine

Insurance Company before the war. He stood 5-foot-1 and weighed about 110 pounds, but the descendent of two generations of politicians was considered a tenacious fighter, and, like Shields, was not averse to a duel. Wilkin shot and killed a fellow officer who challenged him during the Mexican War.

Wilkin faced many war-time skirmishes and once expressed amazement at surviving a battle in which he was caught in a Confederate crossfire and could sense the bullets whizzing past his skull.

He died while he was supposed to be in reserve in Tupelo, Miss. Hot-tempered Confederate officer Nathan Bedford Forrest, who had no formal military training, was raiding heavily in middle Tennessee at the time. Wilkin was among those Gen. William Sherman thought could stop Forrest. That's something which might have changed history: Forrest survived to found the Ku Klux Klan.

Union casualties near Tupelo were slight in the ensuing battle, but Wilkin was among them. In 1868, Minnesota's Wilkin County was named after him.

Col. William Colvill

The statue of Col. William Colvill appropriately overlooks a tattered cloth encased in glass on the Capitol's first floor. The cloth is the remnant of a flag the First Minnesota Regiment carried at Gettysburg, the bloodiest battle ever fought on American soil.

The First Minnesota suffered more than 80 percent casualties in July 1863, and Colvill was wounded during the second day of the three-day battle in Pennsylvania. He returned to Minnesota weak from his wounds, but survived to age 75.

In 1905, Colvill was the first man to lie in state in the present Capitol. He is buried in Cannon Falls, Minn.

Brevet Maj. John B. Sanborn

The fourth statue on the Capitol's second floor is of Brevet Maj. John B. Sanborn, who was Minnesota's adjutant general when the Civil War began.

Commander of the Fourth Minnesota volunteer infantry, he was one of two brigade commanders in charge of Vicksburg after Gen. Ulysses S. Grant took the city.

Sanborn was a lawyer and both a state senator and representative. He eventually became president of the Minnesota Historical Society and was a member of the society for 48 years. He died at age 78 in 1904.

Those interested in learning more about the Capitol's Civil War legacy will have two chances to do so before the end of the year. For a small fee, the Minnesota Historical Society will present a "Rally Round the Flags Civil War Tour" June 13 and Nov. 14 at the Capitol. Reservations can be made by calling (612) 296-2881.

Civil War statues lack Cass Gilbert's blessing

Cass Gilbert was a man with a sweeping handlebar mustache who made sweeping demands. He was, someone said, "purposely impressive in manner and rather pompous at times."

As architect of the Minnesota Capitol, he was driven to control its every detail, including the monuments that would stand inside.

While Capitol visitors might not think critically of the four immense bronze Civil War statues that stand on the second floor of the building, Gilbert was not pleased with any of them. He was least satisfied with the work of Minneapolis artist Catherine Backus, who rendered the memorial to William Colvill.

Gilbert wanted a sculptor of international reputation to do Colvill's statue. When the citizens' group that commissioned Backus ignored that wish, he wrote to the group:

"You now have before you models for this important work by persons who are naturally ambitious but who, so far as I can ascertain, utterly lack the training and experience to execute the work."

Despite Gilbert's evaluation, the work by Backus was placed in the Capitol, and many other memorials without Gilbert's blessing followed.

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Website: <http://www.senate.gov/~wellstone>

Four-term legislator gears up for more door-knocking

By Nicole Wood



Don't be surprised if Rep. Edwina Garcia (DFL-Richfield) shows up on your doorstep in the next few months.

Garcia has decided to leave the House after four terms to run for the office of secretary of state. And she loves door-to-door campaigning.

"I would probably door-knock even out of office — just to talk," she said during a recent interview. "Sometimes I knock so hard, the skin on my knuckles starts peeling. People invite you in and ask for help with things — I have even helped people unclog sinks."

Garcia believes it is of utmost importance for elected officials to go out into the communities they represent and visit the nursing homes, hospitals, veterans homes, and even the casinos.

"If you really want to know what's in people's hearts or how they've overcome adversity, go out there and talk to them and listen to them," she said. "If you don't, how can you be the judge of how some people live or don't live?"

Garcia grew up poor in Clovis, N.M., which is about one hundred miles west of Amarillo, Texas.

Her parents divorced after her alcoholic father gambled away the ranch that was their family home. Her dad often would fail to follow through on his word, she said, and from this she learned the importance of discipline and persistence.

"He had great visions and promises, but he never fulfilled anything," she said. "It's like the old saying goes, even a bad example is a good example."

As a means of "escape" during her childhood, Garcia would slip off to 10-cent June Allison movies and to the library.

"I loved to read, but my grandmother used to say, 'Put that book down. All you're going to wind up doing is changing diapers, anyway,'" Garcia said. "If my background had been different, I don't think I would be where I am today."



Rep. Edwina Garcia is leaving the House after four terms to seek the position of secretary of state.

Garcia and her husband, Joe, left New Mexico for Minnesota in the early 1970s.

"We only came with one pickup, my daughter, and a little dog," she said. "We just took off, the four of us, because we wanted to start fresh. But I tell you, if we hadn't come here, I don't think we would have had the opportunities or direction to follow."

At the age of 35, Garcia was the first person in her family or her husband's family to graduate from college. Their daughter, Jill, became the first in the family to obtain a master's degree.

Garcia was in the middle of her second term on the Richfield City Council when she mounted a successful run for the House in 1990.

The legislative district she represents is "landlocked" between the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport, several major freeways, and Edina, Garcia said. Before seeking the state office, she was frustrated by the lack of partnership between her local government and the Legislature.

"We have nowhere to grow but up," she said. "We've done very well in terms of redevelopment and building up our tax base."

Garcia regards the Metropolitan Airport Commission noise mitigation legislation she sponsored as her "sweetest victory" because it was a win for the people who live adjacent to the airport.

"It was just beautiful because [the commission] hadn't been defeated in years," she said. "I like to fight impossible battles and I like a challenge. It just keeps you going and gives you so much energy."

Garcia said she can feel her energy level increasing as she gears up for her secretary of state campaign.

"I've never lost a race, but if someone were to beat me, I would say, 'I wish you well. I wish you success. If there's anything I can do to help you in that office, I will,' and I would walk away free," she said. "Whatever happens, I'm OK with leaving." 🐾

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Chief Clerk of the House
211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate
110 Capitol 296-2887
Index, House
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Information, Senate
231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House
175 State Office Building 296-2146
TTY*, Senate 296-0250
Toll free 1-888-234-1112
TTY*, House 296-9896
Toll free 1-800-657-3550

Rep. Charlie Weaver . . .

Five-term lawmaker seeks control over his own destiny

By Grant Martin



Seeking one of the most high-profile elected positions in the state with hopes of having more time to spend with your children seems to go against common sense.

But Rep. Charlie Weaver (R-Anoka) said in a recent interview that his children are one of the main reasons he is running for state attorney general.

"One of the reasons I'm leaving the House is that this is critical time in their lives," Weaver said. "The attorney general's office will allow me to be there."

Weaver said that unlike the governor and legislators who have to deal with the constant political battle, the attorney general's work is much less partisan.

"It's not an easier job," Weaver said. "I'll just have more control over my own destiny. I'm really looking forward to spending more time with my kids."

Weaver said that his experiences as a prosecuting attorney for Anoka County make his pursuit a logical one. He has worked for the county since 1991.

Weaver also has a good deal of experience when it comes to political battles. Elected in 1988, he rose rapidly to a leadership role within the Republican caucus. He is currently an assistant minority leader and Republican floor leader, and he frequently takes the point position for the Republicans in floor debate.

Weaver joked that his inspiration to run for a seat in the Legislature stems from a "genetic defect."

Weaver's family has had a long history in state politics. Weaver's House seat was held by his father, Charles Weaver, from 1967 to 1974 and by his uncle John Weaver from 1979 to 1982.

"Growing up, it wasn't my ambition to be a state representative," Weaver said. "I didn't grow up with that as my goal. It just worked out that way."

Whether it was nature or nurture, Weaver eventually got involved in politics. He said looking back now it's obvious to him that his father was the inspiration to go into public life.

"My father was my hero," Weaver said. "And I learned the importance of giving back to the community from him."



Rep. Charlie Weaver, a second-generation House member, will not seek re-election this fall. He is a candidate for attorney general.

Weaver said that he is very proud of his work in the Legislature regarding school safety. He was the chief author of the 1993 Safe Schools Act, which sought to give teachers and administrators the power to keep the state's schools safe from violence.

He also is pleased with his lesser-known legislative work.

"I am very proud of the little things," Weaver said. "The genetic discrimination act that we passed two years ago and the bone marrow donor legislation, for example. These things have been really important to me."

Weaver said that he learned a good deal about strategy from House members on both sides of the aisle. He said that his role models were former Reps. Brad Stanius, Paul Ogren, and Gil Gutknecht.

"The thing that all three of these guys had in common was they could be tough, strong partisans without being personal," he said. "They could disagree without being disagreeable."

Weaver said that the members of the Legislature can learn from that attitude. He said that he is worried that members are losing the ability to both debate ideas and maintain friendships.

"The thing that legislators need to avoid, and it's getting harder and harder to do it, is

taking themselves too seriously," Weaver said. "We tend to come down here and get caught up in the business, and that's important. But my biggest disappointment in the last 10 years is the decline in the personal relationships between members."

Weaver said that such relationships are important to the institution.

"When I first arrived here there were lots of opportunities to talk to other members and get to know them in social settings," he said. "Frankly, that's declined and I think it's bad for the system that we don't spend much time together — Republicans and Democrats — outside of here."

He also thinks that partisanship has become a serious problem for the Legislature, especially for the image of the institution.

"It's not good especially now that we're on camera," Weaver said. "The worst thing we could do is cause people to lose respect for the institution. We don't lose respect by disagreeing on issues. We lose it by being overtly partisan."

Weaver said that he will miss members from both sides of the aisle, but he is excited about his future plans.

"It's going to be fun," he said. "If I don't win, I'll just go back to prosecuting bad guys."



More bill listings . . .

House files incorporated into 1998 omnibus bills

If you've lost track of some of the bills you have been following during the session, you may find them on one of these pages. This is the third and last installment of an unofficial listing, as of a certain date, of the House files that are contained in the various omnibus bills and other larger bills.

Ongoing floor and conference committee action may well alter the makeup of these bills before they reach the end of the legislative process. In many cases, the language found in the major bills may not be exactly as it appears in the original House files due to amendments that happen along the way. In addition, the House files that are listed may have been included either entirely or partially.

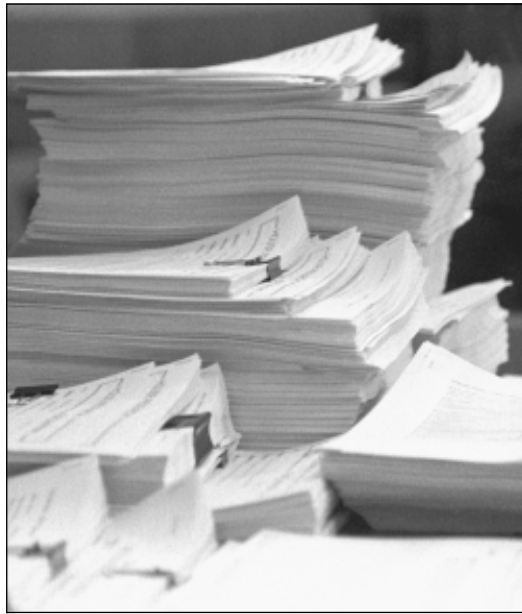
The list was compiled by the House Public Information Office from a variety of sources, including committee administrators, fiscal analysts, commission staff, and legislative analysts. In some cases, the Senate companion file number and author are listed along with the House file number and author. Each bill is accompanied by a brief description of its content.

An asterisk after a House or Senate file number indicates the version of the bill that is under consideration.

If you're interested in following conference committee action (and have access to the World Wide Web), point your Web browser to: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us>

You also can stop by the office and pick up a "Today" sheet which provides the daily meeting schedule.

If you have questions, call the House Public Information Office, (612) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550 or the Senate Information Office, (612) 296-0504 or 1-888-234-1112.



A total of 1,597 bills have been introduced in the House of Representatives so far during the 1998 Legislative session. The governor has already signed a few of these. Some will follow, some will not, and many others have been rolled into large omnibus bills that are awaiting their fates.

Government

Omnibus Pension Bill

HF2970 (Kahn)/SF2555 (Morse) (Delete everything amendment LCPR98-82)

Content as of March 18, 1998, when the House passed the bill on a 90-40 vote.

(Note: The following is a listing, by article, of the source bills as amended and contained in the delete everything amendment. The sections indicated below refer to sections in the amendment in which the source bill, as revised by any amendments recommended to pass by the the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement, appears.)

Article 1: Public Medical Facility Privatization

HF2727 (Mulder)/SF2150 (Lesewski) PERA; retirement coverage after hospital privatization. (Sections 1, 2, and 3)

Article 2: Miscellaneous General Employee Pension Changes

HF3012 (Kahn)/SF2657 (Morse) TRA and IRAP; Phase-Out-Into-Retirement program modifications. (Sections 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, and 10)

HF2869 (Delmont)/SF2439 (Metzen) Deferred Compensation Program; administrative expense changes. (Sections 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, and 17)

HF3418 (Jefferson)/SF3038 (Pogemiller) MERF; increase death-while-active survivor benefit. (Section 13)

HF2802 (Slawik)/SF2410 (Price) PERA; Special survivor benefit for certain deceased St. Paul building inspector. (Section 14 and 15)

HF3260 (Jefferson)/SF3025 (Pogemiller) PERA; allow Hennepin County Regional Park employee to elect PERA defined contribution plan. (Section 16)

Article 3: Qualified Part-Time Teacher Retirement Program Reporting Deadline

HF2525 (Koskinen)/SF1939 (Betzold) TRA; Extension of part-time teacher service credit for certain school district. (Sections 1 and 4)

HF3198 (Folliard)/SF2742 (Kelley) TRA; allow greater percentage of full-time in part-time participation program. (Sections 2 and 3)

Article 4: Prior Service Credit Purchases

Establishes a revised prior service credit purchase payment procedure adopted by the LCPR based on an interim study. (Sections 1 and 2)

HF1230 (Johnson, R.)/SF1507 (Hottinger) TRA; Authorization of service credit purchase for prior uncredited leave. (Section 3, Subdivision 1)

HF416 (Entenza)/SF139 (Cohen) TRA; Authorization of service credit purchase for multiple sclerosis leave. (Section 3, Subdivision 2)

HF2525 (Koskinen)/SF1939 (Betzold) TRA; Extension of part-time teacher service credit program for certain school district. (Section 3, Subdivision 3)

HF2987 (Murphy)/SF2556 (Morse) MSRS; Authorization for prior middle management association service credit purchase. (Section 3, Subdivision 4)

HF3122 (Chaudhary)/SF2529 (Novak) TRA; Purchase of Columbia Heights High School district uncredited extended leave of absence period. (Section 3, Subdivision 5)

HF3202 (Pelowski)/SF2769 (Morse) TRA; Purchase of Winona State University uncredited extended leave of absence period. (Section 3, Subdivision 6)

SF3001 (Foley) TRA; Authorizing the purchase of service credit for a sabbatical leave by a certain teacher. (Section 3, Subdivision 7)

HF3228 (Murphy)/SF2798 (Morse) DTRFA; Purchase of service credit for maternity leave for certain person. (Section 3, Subdivision 8)

Article 5: Judges Retirement Plan Contribution Modifications
HF2970 (Kahn)/SF2555 (Morse) Judges retirement plan; increasing salary and contributions. (Sections 1 through 7)

Article 6: Unclassified State Employee Pension Plan Modifications
Commission mandated study: Legislators Retirement Plan and Elective State Officers Retirement Plan; authorizes transfer to Unclassified State Employees Plan. (Sections 1 and 2)

Article 7: Local Police and Fire Relief Association Pension Changes
HF1756 (Chaudhary)/SF1077 (Novak) Columbia Heights volunteer fire; conversion to Defined Contribution Pension Plan. (Section 1)
HF2716 (Kahn)/SF2364 (Pogemiller) Minneapolis fire; certain survivor benefit retroactive. (Section 2)

Insurance

Omnibus Insurance Bill
SF349 (Anderson, I.)
As of March 19, 1998.

HF2253 (Anderson, I.) Automobile insurance discrimination prohibited based upon two or fewer minor traffic violations.

HF3408 (Mahon) No-fault auto insurance disability and income loss benefit limits increased.

HF3508 (Carlson) Health plan companies required to notify enrollees of subrogation recoveries.



Because courtesy titles such as “madam chair” or “representative” precede a person’s name when addressed in House proceedings, it’s not rare for confusion to occur. Often, someone addresses a person by the wrong title.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) had trouble with Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Vice Chancellor of Finance Laura King during testimony at the March 16 House Ways and Means Committee meeting.

“I guess I could just call you ‘Laura,’” Bishop finally conceded.

Rep. Dee Long (DFL-Mpls) quickly responded that would be allowed only if Bishop addressed the men by their first name. Bishop said that he had never been accused of being sexist, “at least not since my fourth daughter was born.”

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey), the committee chair, got a laugh and ended the exchange when he turned to Bishop and in a fatherly voice said, “David, if you’ll continue.”

When someone asked House Minority Leader Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) before a March 16 committee meeting how he enjoyed the weekend, it was impossible for Sviggum not to smile.

Sviggum’s son, Hans, a 5-foot-8 guard for Kenyon-Wanamingo, played the pivotal role in putting his team in the high school state basketball tournament.

Hans stole a pass with 19 seconds left in a March 13 game that led to the state tournament berth. He was fouled twice after that steal, sank all four free throw attempts, and Kenyon-Wanamingo won 34-32.

There was more reason for Sviggum to beam over his son March 17. Hans scored 18 points,

including nine of 10 free throws in the final quarter, in a 55-47 state quarterfinal win over top-ranked, unbeaten Redwood Valley.

Clarification

The story entitled “Population shifts redefine legislative district boundaries” on page 22 of the March 13, 1998, *Session Weekly* needs clarification. The article said that 1972, 1982, and 1992 attempts at redistricting in Minnesota had to be settled by the federal courts because matters had not been resolved by the election deadline. The 1992 redistricting plan was passed by the Legislature and became law after a failed attempt by Gov. Arne Carlson to veto the proposal. The administration then mounted a court challenge that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which allowed the Legislature’s redistricting plan to stand.

Chief Clerk’s Office

211 State Capitol (612) 296-2314

The Chief Clerk’s Office provides copies of bills at no charge, all agendas for House sessions, and the Journal of the House.

House Index Department

211 State Capitol (612) 296-6646

The House Index Department, a part of the Chief Clerk’s Office, has a computerized index available for public use. House Index lists bills by

Where to find information

committee, topic, author, file number, and other categories. The office can also give you the current status of legislation.

House Television Services

216C State Capitol (612) 297-1338

House Television Services is responsible for live coverage of House floor sessions and some

committee hearings. Such coverage is aired in the Twin Cities area on KTCI-TV, Channel 17. The House also broadcasts via satellite statewide. Outstate residents should check with local cable operators for time and channel information or the office’s Web site at: <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/htv/htv.ssi>

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Governor's Desk

CH274-CH304

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
Res. 6	3250*	2786	President and Congress memorialized to enact the aircraft repair station safety act of 1997.	Filed without signature	
Res. 7	3258	2699*	A resolution to remove Medicaid policy barriers to employment for people with disabilities.	Filed without signature	
274	3040*	2355	Long-term nursing care facility payroll documentation procedures modified.	3/16/98	
275	2642*	2280	Standard collection procedure exemption provided to overpaid reemployment insurance benefits.	3/16/98	
276	2809*	2791	Audited financial statement copies provided to members of the local unit of government.	3/16/98	
277	2616*	2255	Dakota County dangerous dog registration system city administration provided.	3/16/98	
278	3071*	2849	Petroleum product specifications modified.	3/16/98	
279	3593	2457*	Rural finance authority and housing finance electronic meetings authority permanency.	3/16/98	
280	3148	2047*	Manufactured home park owners limited dealers licenses.	3/16/98	
281	1414	1151*	Guardians and conservators appointment provisions modifications.	3/16/98	
282	2696	2402*	Merchandise pallets unauthorized possession or damage prohibitions.	3/16/98	
283	3296	2729*	Bike racks and storage facilities ads, public art, informational signs placement and maintenance authority.	3/16/98	
284	2992	2669*	Day training and rehab services business arrangements use and rate variance mechanism flexibility.	3/16/98	
285	3028	2163*	Motor vehicle dealers licensing requirements exemption for charitable organizations.	3/18/98	
286	2777	2516*	Employee relations department experimental or research projects authority expansion.	3/18/98	
287	2846*	2245	Automobile insurance program reduction provided for completion of an accident prevention course.		3/18/98
288	668*	668	Industrial hygienist and safety professional title protection act adopted.	3/18/98	
289	2601*	2677	Building and construction contract lien and claim waivers and subcontractor payments regulated.	3/18/98	
290	2612*	2335	Trunk Highway #95 designated as state trooper Timothy Bowe Memorial Highway.	3/18/98	
291	2779	2230*	Elderly housing definition modification for discrimination prohibition exemption purposes.	3/18/98	
292	2635	2574*	Headwaters regional development commission non-profit housing corporation establishment authority.	3/18/98	
293	3065	2608*	Health insurance basic medicare supplement plans coverage for diabetes equipment.	3/18/98	
294	3532	3068*	Workers comp benefits special compensation fund reimbursement requirement elimination.	3/18/98	
295	2500*	2540	Customer loss or theft of a debit card limited liability provided.	3/18/98	
296	2222*	1973	Cartways established by town boards upon owner petition.	Filed without signature	

Chapter	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
297	2895	2293*	Township mutual insurance companies permitted investments expanded.	3/18/98	
298	3442*	2945	Interstate emergency management assistance compact.	3/18/98	
299	2523*	2266	Gasoline and special fuels tax provisions recodification and clarification.	3/18/98	
300	2659*	2570	Tax provisions technical corrections and administrative changes.	3/18/98	
301	1306*	1076	Health plan coverage for off label use of drugs.	3/18/98	
302	2790*	2384	Chisago county recorder appointment; Rush City easements.	3/18/98	
303	2043*	1583	State agencies reg. rules and programs policy and obsolete, unnecessary or duplicative rules regs.	3/18/98	
304	2294*	2041	Property tax rebate for tax pre-payments.	3/18/98	

Coming Up Next Week . . . March 23 - 27, 1998

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

For information updates, call
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MONDAY, March 23

10 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

3 p.m.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Omnibus Health and Human Services Finance
Bill SF3346/HF2868
107 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Lee Greenfield
Sen. Don Samuelson

TUESDAY, March 24

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

WEDNESDAY, March 25

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

After Session

REGULATED INDUSTRIES & ENERGY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Loren Jennings
Agenda: HF3191 (Paymar) Public Utilities
Commission required to reconsider telephone
area code assignments for the metropolitan area.

THURSDAY, March 26

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

FRIDAY, March 27

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

Bill Introductions

HF3844-HF3852

Monday, March 16

HF3844—Biernat (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
BWCA; motorboat use prohibited in Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and civil penalty provided.

HF3845—Evans (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
BWCA; motorboat use prohibited in Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and civil penalty provided.

HF3846—Greenfield (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
BWCA; motorboat use prohibited in Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and civil penalty provided.

HF3847—Hausman (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
BWCA; motorboat use prohibited in Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and civil penalty provided.

HF3848—Greiling (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
BWCA; motorboat use prohibited in Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and civil penalty provided.

HF3849—Paymar (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
BWCA; motorboat use prohibited in Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and civil penalty provided.

HF3850—Leppik (R)
Environment & Natural Resources
BWCA; motorboat use prohibited in Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and civil penalty provided.

HF3851—Chaudhary (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources
BWCA; motorboat use prohibited in Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and civil penalty provided.

Wednesday, March 18

HF3852—Van Dellen (R)
Taxes
IRC; Congress memorialized to enact legislation that will sunset the Internal Revenue Code by Dec. 31, 2000, and develop a replacement tax code.

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Legislature's web page at:
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us>

Road to women's suffrage proves rocky

It's a fact!

Although women in Minnesota were officially excluded from the political process until 1919 — when the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution secured their right to vote — suffragists had been lobbying the state Legislature for almost 60 years before that.

As early as 1860, Jane Grey Swisshelm, editor of the *St. Cloud Visitor*, was invited to speak before the Minnesota House on "Women and Politics." The first of her gender to address the body, she was praised by one newspaper as a woman "who mingled in politics without losing her feminine attributes."

It was seven years later when Sarah Burger Stearns and Mary Colburn brought the first petition for women's suffrage to the Legislature. Although they received a hearing before a special committee, no action was taken that year.

But the following year, another petition was introduced and approved by the House Elections Committee. On the House floor, however, the issue was greeted with laughter and shelved.

In 1870, a bill that would put the question to Minnesota voters actually passed both the House and the Senate. Lawmakers even added a provision that would have allowed women as well as men to vote on the required constitutional amendment.

And while that move may have seemed like good news to the

suffragists, in fact, lawmakers had only added that provision with the expectation that women themselves would defeat the initiative at the polls.

In any event, the matter was settled by Gov. Horace Austin, who vetoed the bill.

The first real success for Minnesota suffragists came in 1875, when voters approved an amendment allowing women to vote on school questions and to hold school offices.

Proponents used two tricky moves to secure the success of that ballot. First, they minimized attention on the issue until just before election day, when they persuaded the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* to endorse the amendment. Also, they convinced both political parties to print the ballots only in the affirmative, so voters would have to find a pencil, cross out yes, and write no to vote against it.

Although advocates continued to organize and to lobby, it was another two decades before the suffrage movement gained further concessions in Minnesota. In 1898, libraries were added to the short list of organizations for which women

could vote and run for office.

Little changed for another 20 years, until the Legislature passed a resolution urging Congress to pass the 19th Amendment. Minnesota ratified that amendment the same year, and women were voting in 1920.

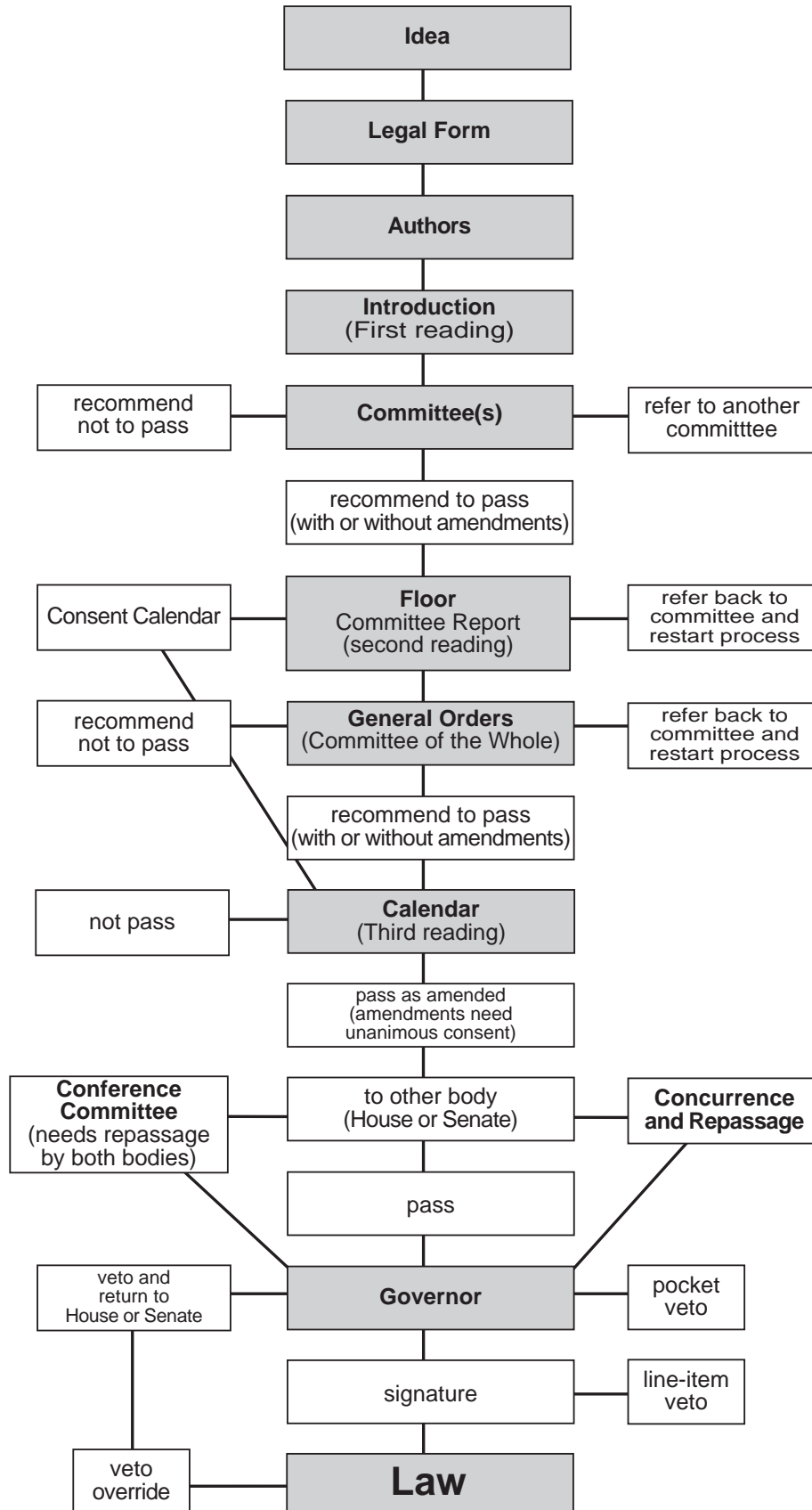


Women register to vote in 1924 at the Calvin Coolidge campaign headquarters in Minneapolis.

Photo courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

How a Bill Becomes a Law in Minnesota

The lawmaking process is a technical one, filled with many arcane rules and procedures that can determine whether a bill will or will not become law. While this chart shows how most bills become law, it does not account for all possibilities.



Speaker of the House: Phil Carruthers
Majority Leader: Ted Winter
Minority Leader: Steve Sviggum

MINNESOTA INDEX

Airport traffic on the rise

1997 passengers served at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport,	
in millions	30.2
Percent increase from 1996	5
Passengers in 1997 whose flights originated or terminated at the airport,	
in millions	17.8
Percent increase from 1996	8
Connecting passengers in 1997 who used the airport, in millions	11
Nonpaying customers — such as airline employees and those traveling on	
free passes — that used the airport in 1997, in millions	1.5
Landings and takeoffs, 1997	491,273
in 1996	485,480
in 1995	465,354
Major airline flights, 1997	298,000
International flight passengers served at the airport, 1997	974,000
in 1996	665,000
Percent of 1997 airline takeoffs and landings at the airport that were	
Northwest Airlines flights	78.2
United Airlines flights	4.7
American Airlines flights	4.0
U.S. airports that originate more charter flights than Minneapolis-St. Paul	
International	0
Public parking spaces currently available at the facility	11,000
Public parking spaces to be added in construction of a nine-level ramp	
to begin in 1998	6,000
Additional new spaces for rental car companies	3,000
1996 estimate of cost of parking expansion, in millions	\$94
March 1998 budget for the project, in millions	\$149.5
Drivers who used airport parking in 1996, in millions	3.2
Those who parked for less than four hours, in millions	2.3
Revenue from airport parking in 1996, in millions	\$30.3
Rank of parking among airport revenue sources	1
Hours the airport was closed due to weather, 1996	2.5
Year airport began operating as Speedway Field at current site	1920
Pilots killed on the Chicago-Twin Cities airmail route in nine months	
before service was discontinued in June 1921	4
People who work at the airport	25,000

Sources: Metropolitan Airports Commission (<http://www.msairport.com/>) and *America's North Coast Gateway*, 1993, Metropolitan Airports Commission.

For more information



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