

SESSION WEEKLY

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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • January 8, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 1

Welcome ...

Welcome to the 81st session of the Minnesota Legislature.

This issue of *Session Weekly* begins our 16th year of providing easily digestible highlights of committee and floor action from the Minnesota House of Representatives. Each week of coverage begins and ends on Thursday afternoons.

Each issue is published on Fridays throughout the session. In each issue you will find the committee schedule for the coming week — all the information you will need to attend committee hearings, all of which are open to the public.

The “First Reading” section in this issue takes a look at the opening day of the 1999 session. In other issues, it will focus on specific bills of major importance to the general public. We’ll also provide you with articles each week about the Legislature and state government that will help you follow the legislative process.

“Highlights” will give you an understandable synopsis of bills discussed in committees. Other informational features such as “Bill Introductions,” “It’s a Fact!” and the “Minnesota Index” will be helpful as you follow proceedings throughout the session.

Each week we’ll also introduce you to the newest members of the House, beginning this week with Reps. Gregory Gray (DFL-Mpls) and Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan).

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We hope you like our nationally recognized newsmagazine. Please contact us if you have suggestions for improving the *Session Weekly*, if you need answers to general questions, or if you need further help in following the Legislature.

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—The staff

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On the cover: Rep. Steve Sviggum is sworn in as speaker by Minnesota Supreme Court Chief Justice Kathleen Blatz Jan. 5.

—Photo by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

The 81st Legislative Session . . .

Speaker Sviggum calls for cooperation, tax cuts



Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives take the oath of office Jan. 5.

By Grant Martin

Following one of the most interesting election years in Minnesota's history, members of the House of Representatives opened the 81st Legislative Session Jan. 5 with discussions of bipartisan — even tripartisan — cooperation.

Speaker-to-be Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) smiled from ear to ear as he greeted members at the House chamber door before the gavel dropped.

He has reason to smile.

Under Sviggum's leadership, Republicans have grabbed something they haven't held since 1986 — the majority.

Republicans gained seven seats last November, creating a 71-63 split. The majority allows Republicans to name the speaker and committee chairs, and gives the caucus power to set the agenda.

In a chamber stuffed with family and friends, Chief Justice Kathleen Blatz administered the oath of office to members, including 21 freshmen.

To no one's surprise, Sviggum was elected speaker over the minority candidate Rep. Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) by a 72-61 vote. One DFLer crossed over to vote for Sviggum.

In nominating speeches, members praised Sviggum as a person of integrity, common sense, and kindness. Members said that he had "earned the honor of being speaker" through his six years of hard work as minority leader.

In his acceptance speech, Sviggum

promised the people of Minnesota that he will work with DFLers.

"I pledge to bring cooperation and a bipartisan attitude to the House of Representatives and to the governing of this great state," Sviggum said.

Sviggum told members that he looks forward to a close working relationship with Pugh, who will serve as DFL minority leader. He also had kind words for the two former speakers, Reps. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls) and Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center).

"I will work hard to handle this podium with the same professionalism that you did," he said.

Sviggum also pledged to work with Gov. Jesse Ventura. He said he agreed with Ventura's words at his inauguration that those in public service should "do their best and do it with honor."

"The citizens of this state deserve no less," Sviggum said.

Addressing the public, Sviggum promised that tax cuts would be high on the agenda for the House.

"You have my word that this body will permanently and significantly cut your taxes," he said.

Having just been sworn in the day before, Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer had the honor of convening the session.

Kiffmeyer spoke to legislators about avoid-

ing the dangers of partisanship. She passed along advice that her father gave her when she was learning to drive.

"Keep your eyes down the road a little bit," she said. "The car will follow."

Kiffmeyer said that members should look past partisanship and special interests and focus on their own principles.

"The legislative car will follow," she said.

The Tuesday opener also marked the kickoff of what many say could be one of the most interesting legislative sessions in Minnesota history. Three parties will be vying to set the agenda of the state's government, with Republicans controlling the House, DFLers controlling the Senate, and a new Reform Party governor.

The projected \$1.5 billion budget surplus may provide the first challenge to state's new government.

House Republicans held a press conference Jan. 6 to announce their plans for a quick rebate totaling \$1.1 billion, along with other initiatives. Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) noted that his caucus was the first to deliver its legislative goals.

"We are proud to be the first leg of the three-legged stool that forms the government in Minnesota to come out with an agenda," he said.

Although full details of the income tax rebate plan were not released, leaders said it

would be based on taxes paid and would be returned as soon as a mechanism for payment could be set up.

Ventura has disagreed with the timing of Republican proposals. Arguing that the surplus exists now only as a projection, he has suggested that the funds should only be returned at the end of the fiscal cycle when all the money has been actually collected. Under Ventura's plan the rebates would be sent out some time after June 30.

House DFLers are also critical of the Republican plan, saying that the rebate would disproportionately benefit high-income taxpayers. Democrats favor a continued approach of property tax relief and reductions. Here are some other issues that legislators will consider.

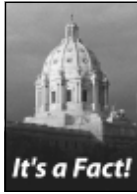
- **Taxes:** Following several years of surplus budgets, House Republicans have announced that they are working on a permanent income tax cut. DFLers have proposed permanent property tax cuts, which they say would provide more equitable tax reduction.
- **Tobacco settlement:** Minnesota received its first payment of the \$6.1 billion settlement from tobacco companies this year, and legislators will decide what to do with the money. Ventura has proposed creating an endowment to fund medical research. House Republicans propose to use the money for tax cuts and to fund MinnesotaCare.
- **Education:** Ventura campaigned heavily on the issue of reducing class sizes in Minnesota's public schools. Republicans and DFLers agree. The question that remains is how to do it, and those plans should be forthcoming.
- **Farm crisis:** With pork prices at a historic low, Minnesota farmers are feeling the crunch. Republicans and DFLers are working on plans to provide relief to farmers.
- **Budget:** The governor will be submitting his budget for the biennium before the middle of February. With a new governor, this means new funding initiatives and priorities for state agencies. 🐷

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.



Could St. Paul be a cold Lincoln?

There's little doubt that the issue of unicameralism will come before lawmakers during the 1999 legislative session.

The past two sessions have seen at least nine bills proposing that the state Legislature be reduced to a single lawmaking body.

And this year, the topic could have stronger support than before. Gov. Jesse Ventura and House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon), a longtime fan of unicameralism, have both indicated they would favor efforts to consider the one-body system in the North Star State.

Currently, Nebraska is the only state with a unicameral legislature, meaning that one house instead of two passes legislation. The District of Columbia, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands also operate with unicameral assemblies.

Nebraska's 49 legislators have been elected on a nonpartisan ballot since the state's first unicameral session in 1937. Each lawmaker represents about the same number of people as members of the Minnesota House do.

Previous bills in Minnesota for a unicameral system have recommended as many as 135 members, which would closely resemble the current House membership (134).

There is no party leadership in the Nebraska system. Leaders and committee members are elected by the whole body on a regional or geographic basis. Committee chairs are elected on the floor by secret ballot, and a nine-member Executive Board (chosen by the whole body) prepares a slate of committee members, which the full body then approves by a floor vote.

Because a significant amount of time is spent in floor debates, the Nebraska session lasts 30 days longer than the Minnesota session, starting in early January and ending in late May or early June.

Unlike the Minnesota Legislature, there is no constitutional deadline for adjournment, but the Unicameral has several other deadlines to prevent last-minute bill introductions and hasty passage of omnibus bills. All general appropriation bills must be passed 10 legislative days before the session ends, and general revenue bills must be passed five legislative days before adjournment.

	NEB.	MINN.
Members	49	134 (House)/67 (Senate)
Term limits	NO	NO
Overlapping terms	YES	NO
Staff	5/member 40 session temps	3/member 190 session temps
Costs per year	\$15 million \$9.15/capita \$312,000/legislator	\$50 million \$10.85/capita \$274,000/legislator
Salary	\$12,000/year	\$31,140/year
Per diem	\$83/day (session only)	\$56/day (session and interim official business)

Source: *Nebraska's Unicameral Legislature*, January 1998, House Research Department.

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Not so high on the hog

Members of two House agriculture committees attempted to get to the meat of low hog prices and how they impact Minnesota at a joint hearing Jan. 7.

Representatives from many sectors of the agriculture industry — from economists to farmers to processors — agreed that prices are at a historic low, but they did not find much other common ground.

“We are concerned about the hog issue and its impact on the broader farm sector,” said Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), chair of the House Agriculture Policy Committee. “Good decisions are based on the best available information, reasoned thought, and input from the people involved.”

Although the stated purpose of the hearing wasn’t to discuss solutions, Ness hinted that any recommendations would dovetail with expected federal assistance for vexed hog producers. He also suggested that the ultimate solution should be a public-private partnership “to provide a measure of market stability for farmers.”

Also suggested was a property tax decrease targeted at smaller pork producers.

Hog prices began falling several months ago and bottomed out in early December, when prices paid to producers fell under 10 cents per pound. That’s lower than average prices paid to farmers during the Great Depression, and about one-fourth of what is generally believed to be a break-even point for producers.

The precipitous drop in prices has meant huge losses for many farmers, some of whom may be forced to discontinue operations.

Who gets the blame depends upon perspective, but many who testified said the explanation is simple.

“Production is far ahead of what was expected,” said Perry Aasness, assistant commissioner with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Actual hog numbers have risen 10 percent over last year, nearly triple federal predictions.

Compounding the problem is a bottleneck in meat-packing operations caused by the closure of three plants in the past year, a widespread lack of workers, and an influx of Canadian hogs due to record low dollar exchange rates.

On the upside, lawmakers learned that demand for pork is at record levels and more pork than ever is being shipped to foreign markets. Recent efforts by the federal government have begun making a dent in the problem, and prices have risen slightly.

Although by some estimates over 10,000 producers will eventually go under before market prices rebound, not all are hurting. Producers who have signed contracts with packers have seen only slight fluctuations in the price they’ve received for hogs.

Much of the debate centered on the effect

— and even the legality — of those contracts.

“Contracts are the problem,” said veteran hog farmer Bernie Herkenhoff of Alexandria. “There is no mistake about it. None. The farmers with contracts aren’t looking at the market signals; they just keep producing.”

He added that contracts take away incentives for the market price to fluctuate.

His view was shared by Nobles County producer Jim Joens Jr. who said he believes as much as 63 percent of the hogs in Minnesota are raised on a contract basis.

Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda) suggested contracts may be discriminatory and therefore illegal.

“If the only difference between receiving the contract price or the market price is this piece of paper, then that’s discrimination,” he said, waving several sheets over his head.

But producer Scott Hislop of Mapleton and several others said that contracts were part of an overall strategy for successful farming.

Paul Zimmerman of Waseca, chair of the Minnesota Farm Bureau Swine Committee, said he first heard of contracts in 1994 but he declined to secure one because his economic risk was low at the time. Two years later, after borrowing money to expand, contracts weren’t

only more attractive, they were required by his lending institution.

A spokesman for Hormel Foods Corp., which uses contracts extensively, said the practice has kept a steady stream of high-quality hogs flowing into the Austin company.

Most of the company’s contracts are with small- and medium-sized growers, said Brian Stevens, a Hormel executive. He said the contracts have become a necessity because pork production is moving away from the Midwest to states such as North Carolina, Texas, and Oklahoma, where environmental regulations are lax and tax



Jim Joens Jr. of Wilmont, left, says that he cannot get a decent price for his hogs because other producers have contracted with meat packers. Scott Hislop of Mapleton, right, says he gets a good price because he signed a contract. Both testified before a joint hearing of the House Agriculture Policy and House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance committees Jan. 7.



breaks are more common. He said the company's efforts have also kept the pork industry in Minnesota strong.

Stevens said Hormel is often criticized for its size but that the size of production operations has grown, too. Today, 50 percent of the pork produced comes from the largest 50 growers, only one of which is in Minnesota.

Stevens also said his company is not slacking in its processing capacity. Workers at the Austin plant put in 78,000 overtime hours in the eight weeks prior to Christmas.

The panel also heard testimony regarding the spread between what farmers are receiving for live hogs and what consumers pay for pork chops and other products has been falling, it hasn't dipped as noticeably as live hog prices.

Members of the House Agriculture & Rural Development Finance Committee attended the hearing along with their colleagues on the policy committee.



BUDGET

Lawmakers eye the surplus

The projected \$1.5 billion budget surplus was the subject of an informal audit by members of the House Ways & Means Committee Jan. 7.

Finance Commissioner Wayne Simoneau, Assistant Finance Commissioner Peggy Ingison, and State Economist Tom Stinson gave an overview of the process by which the Department of Finance formulates its projections and answered questions from the members.

According to the department, the \$1.5 billion surplus comes from three identifiable sources. The largest portion — \$803 million — is from increased revenues due to the unanticipated strength of Minnesota's economy. Higher wages and capital gains drove this increase.

The state also will collect \$46.1 million this fiscal year from tobacco companies in the first payments from the state's \$6.1 billion settlement. In addition, \$262 million comes from lower than projected expenditures.

Of the \$1.5 billion, \$608.8 million is already spent under current law. The 1998 Legislature stipulated that this money would be appropriated if a budget surplus occurred.

The Legislature allocated \$400 million to pay cash for bonding projects in last year's bonding law. Also, legislators dedicated \$8.8 million to go to a budget reserve account and \$200 million to a tax reform account.

That leaves \$953 million of undedicated funds.

The Department of Finance is also projecting a \$1.8 billion surplus for the 2000-2001 biennium. A new budget forecast is due in February.



HOUSING

Building code problems

The number of agencies responsible for the state building code would be reduced from five to two under a bill that is expected to be introduced this session.

A group of legislators discussed the overlapping oversight of state building and fire codes at a Jan. 7 Legislative Audit Commission meeting. The Office of the Legislative Auditor released its report on the state building code at the meeting.

According to the report, enforcement of the building and fire code is currently shared by the State Board of Electricity and the departments of administration, health, public safety, and public service. Several other agencies also have input in inspecting and reviewing building plans for public buildings.

Disagreements between building and fire officials and poor coordination between the various state agencies has caused unnecessary delays in construction, the report states. A possible solution would be to give one department responsibility for developing and enforcing the building code.

Several people at the meeting said input from the different organizations is critical because each has a different area of expertise. Pat Bloomgren, director of the health department's Environmental Health Division, said public buildings must comply with federal regulations, which vary depending on the type of building. Any restructuring would need to include people with experience in those areas, she added.

State Fire Marshal Thomas Brace added that his department has unique areas of expertise, such as sprinkler systems and other fire-protection equipment.

Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan) said it would be more realistic to divide the responsibilities between the public safety and administration departments. Wiener, who chairs the Legislative Audit Commission, said she plans to introduce such a bill this session, and Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) plans to introduce a version of the bill in the House.

"The goal is to take down some of those barriers and make the process more streamlined, with public safety being utmost important," Wiener said.



TAXES

Top billing for tax rebate

Minnesota taxpayers would benefit from nearly \$1.1 billion in rebates this year, under the first bill introduced in the House this session.

HF1 is sponsored by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the House Taxes Committee. The bill calls for a 20 percent income tax rebate to be returned within 60 days of enactment.

The proposal's designation as the session's first bill is a signal that the measure is a top priority for House leaders. The rebate plan outlined in the bill was included by Republican leaders in an agenda outline announced Jan. 6. The bill was formally introduced Jan. 7.

"We feel that Minnesota families are paying too much to the government's house and not being able to keep enough in their own houses," said House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon), a co-sponsor of the bill.

Under the bill, those who paid \$1 to \$150 in state income taxes in 1997 would receive back the entire amount. Those who paid more than \$150 would get the \$150 plus 20 percent of taxes paid in excess of that amount. The rebates would be capped at \$3,800 for single people and \$7,600 for couples.

Tax proposals have not been common as the first House file to be introduced in recent sessions. Measures such as wetlands preservation, jury membership, and farm funding have topped the House's agenda in past years.

In 1997, the first bill introduced proposed repealing funding caps for K-12 education that had been established by the previous Legislature. Welfare reform topped the House's agenda in 1995, and in 1993 a streamlined House committee structure was proposed first — an issue which Republicans also took up after gaining the majority this past November.

Although his budget recommendations have not yet been made public, Gov. Jesse Ventura has indicated support for an income tax rebate. However, he differs with legislators on the timing of the rebate. Ventura has said he would prefer waiting until the end of the fiscal year to return the money, while legislators are proposing the rebate be effective 60 to 90 days after the bill passes.

Sen. Doug Johnson (DFL-Tower) is sponsoring **SF1**, which calls for a 22 percent income tax rebate. The Senate bill calls for a cap of \$900 for single people and \$1,800 for married couples who filed a joint tax return. A \$313 minimum is also part of the proposal.

HF1 was referred to the House Taxes Committee.

Speaker of the House . . .

Sviggum promises balance, openness in House

By Sandy Donovan

New House Speaker Steve Sviggum has been a lawmaker for 20 years, but it's his experience as a high school basketball referee that gives him confidence as he assumes his new post.

"Once you've called a foul on someone's daughter or someone's son and they don't think it's a foul, once you've heard those heated words and those criticisms from the sidelines, you can come to St. Paul and take on anything," he said.

Sviggum (R-Kenyon) traded in his role of minority leader — a job he held since 1993 — for the speaker's post after leading his caucus in 1998 to gain its first House majority in more than a decade.

He said the switch will call for a different kind of leadership style, and he pledges to be fair to members on both sides of the aisle.

"I'm truly and honestly going to try to be speaker for the entire House, not just an advocate of the Republican position," he said.

And he said a new level of cooperation will be needed between the Republican-controlled House, DFL-controlled Senate, and Reform Party governor.

"I think that all of us are trying to cozy up to each other," Sviggum said. "None of us by ourselves — not the House, not the Senate, and not Governor Ventura — can enact legislation alone."

Still, Sviggum said the tripartisan setup won't stall the legislative process.

"I'm optimistic that it's not a formula for gridlock, but that the opposite is true, that it's a formula for balance and for openness," he said.

To that end, Republican caucus meetings will continue to be open to the press.

"The strategies, the decisions, and the options are going to be much more available than in the past to the press and to the citizens," Sviggum said.

And the new speaker has already overseen a change in committee structure that he said will streamline the lawmaking process. With five fewer total committees than last year, Sviggum said the new structure will line up more closely with the Senate committee structure and allow for increased efficiency in conference committees.

Also this year, spending bills will go directly from finance committees to the Ways and Means Committee, eliminating a stop at the related policy committees.



When he's not keeping things in order in the House, Speaker Steve Sviggum is a basketball referee. Here he officiates a boys state high school tournament game.

"I think that's appropriate from the standpoint of trying to keep the bills as clean as possible, not getting policy issues into appropriations bills," he said. "I'm not going to say I can entirely prevent that from happening. This is an attempt to do so."

But, Sviggum stresses, neither a third-party governor nor a new committee structure will distract his caucus from focusing on a top-priority.

"First and foremost we need to pass a significant, permanent tax cut," he said.

Education reforms will also be high on the House Republicans' agenda this year.

"That will include enhancing classroom discipline, closing the disparity between the high-spending and low-spending districts, addressing the Profile of Learning, and reducing class sizes," Sviggum said.

Also expected is a package of government reforms including a measure that would require a super-majority vote to raise taxes and closing the revolving door that Sviggum said sends too many ex-legislators into the lobbying profession.

"And we'll certainly be doing some rules changes," he said. "For instance, we'll be expecting that when one offers a spending amendment on the House floor, it will have to be balanced. In other words, you won't be able to just step forward and say you're going to spend more money on nursing homes without saying where that money will come from."

Sviggum said he's looking forward to a good

relationship with House Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul).

"I like Rep. Pugh, and I think he will be fair to deal with and honorable. And that's all I'd ever ask," he said. "I understand we're going to have differences, that he has his job to do, and that that job is to bring forward the (DFL) platform."

As for his own new job, Sviggum said he's waiting to see how well he can maintain a balance between his professional life and his personal one. The former teacher continues to run a farm with his two brothers.

At home, he said, he remains "the fifth most powerful member of the family" — right behind his wife Debra and their three children, 18-year-old Hans, 16-year-old Eric, and 14-year-old Marit.

"I'm just Dad to them," he said. "They don't deal with me as a state representative. They want to know if I can make it to their basketball game."

And basketball, of course, will remain as important part of Sviggum's life.

"My hobby is refereeing, and a hobby is something you need to keep your fingers in," he said. "Just because you become speaker of the House, you don't want to change from who you are. It would be like taking the farm out of me. I'm a farmer so you can't take the farm out of me, or, hopefully, the referee."

Election brings new majority, shifts demographics

Things changed from the time the gavel fell to end the 1998 session to when it banged Jan. 5 to convene the 1999 Minnesota House of Representatives.

Perhaps most visible was the change in the person given the job of holding the gavel. Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) became the first person from his party to preside in the House since 1986.

Sviggum, who was minority leader in the House for six years, oversaw the Republicans' successful sweep into control of the House in the 1998 elections.

Republican victories in November 1998 left the DFL on the short end of a 71-63 partisan split in the House. Republicans picked up seven seats in the elections, in which the parties battled to claim 15 open seats and to hold other districts.

The DFL won an open suburban Twin Cities district that was previously held by a Republican, but the GOP claimed two open rural

1998 was hardly a banner year for diversity in the House. Only one of the 134 House seats is held by an African-American. That's the same number as 100 years ago when J.F. Wheaton became the first African-American person to serve in the House.

In all, 20 House members are new to the Capitol, and one — Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) — reclaimed the seat he lost in 1996.

Lawmakers come from all walks of life, but there are some noticeable changes among the occupations most commonly listed by House members.

occupation for all House members. There were 26 farmers serving in 1989, but that number has been falling steadily for years. By the time lawmakers convened two years ago there were just 11 farmers serving in the House. Now the number of farmers has slipped into the single digits.

The House also includes a family physician, a chiropractor, a carpenter, a freelance artist, a writer, a handful of homemakers, and several retirees.

The current crop of lawmakers is a bit more educated than the last. Seventy-five percent of House members hold at least a four-year college degree. That's up from 74 percent in 1997 and 66 percent a decade ago.

Forty-nine 1999 House members hold graduate degrees, compared to 43 in 1997 and 31 a decade ago.

Currently, the largest class of lawmakers is composed of the 25 members beginning their third term. The next largest is the 24 entering their second term. Twenty lawmakers are in their fourth term, and 20 more are in their first term.

The longest-serving lawmaker is Rep. Willard Munger (DFL-Duluth), who is in his 22nd term. Sviggum, who is entering his 11th term, is the longest-serving Republican.

The average age of House members continues its upward trend. Now at 48.7 years, the average age has risen from 40.8 years in 1975.

Munger, 87, is the oldest member. At 24, Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) is the youngest.



Voters line up outside the Grant Town Hall on Election Day, Nov. 3, 1998.

seats previously held by DFLers. And Republicans knocked off six DFL incumbents, mostly in suburban Twin Cities districts.

It is unlikely that anyone will declare 1998 the Year of the Woman in Minnesota politics. In fact, five of the six DFL incumbents who lost at the polls were women, and only one of them was beaten by another woman. The number of women holding House seats dropped from a record high 40 in 1998 to 35 at the beginning of the 1999 session.

Other election results also demonstrate that

Business has displaced education as the field in which most House members work. The 1999 House includes 24 business people and 19 educators. The total of 17 attorneys in the House ranks third.

Fourteen members list themselves as full-time legislators, which is down from 18 in 1997.

Meanwhile, the number of farmers in the House continues to decline. The 1999 House includes only nine farmers, a record low.

A decade ago farming was the top-ranking

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

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

1999 House Profile

Membership					
	1999	1997	1995	1993*	1991**
DFL	63	70	71	86	79
R	71	64	63	47	53
Men	99	95	102	101	103
Women	35	39	32	32	29

Age					
	1999	1997	1995	1993*	1991**
21-30	6	5	6	5	6
31-40	23	27	24	28	23
41-50	51	45	51	50	44
51-60	38	43	34	34	26
61-70	13	11	16	15	12
over 71	3	3	3	1	1†
Average age	48.7	48.3	47.9	47.7	47†
† Ages not available for 20 members					

Education					
	1999	1997	1995	1993*	1991**
High School	4	5	5	6	7
Some College	17	19	24	20	18
4-yr. Undergraduate Degree	39	40	41	47	45
Some Graduate Work	13	16	14	16	17
Graduate Degree	49	43	37	32	29
Technical College	6	10	11	6	6
2-yr. Undergraduate Degree	6	1	—	—	3
No listing	—	—	2	6	7

* The 1993 session began with 133 members due to one resignation.

** The 1991 session began with 132 members due to two resignations.

Current Term					
	1999	1997	1995	1993*	1991**
1	20	22	26	33	21
2	24	29	29	16	15
3	25	25	16	11	27
4	20	14	11	25	12
5	10	7	20	8	16
6	5	14	7	13	9
7	10	6	4	3	9
8	4	3	2	6	6
9	3	1	3	6	5
10	1	3	5	3	10
11	2	3	3	7	1
12	3	2	6	1	—
13	2	4	1	—	—
14	4	—	—	—	—
Other	1 (22)	1 (21)	1 (20)	1 (19)	1 (18)

Occupation					
	1999	1997	1995	1993*	1991**
Business	24	21	20	14	20
Educator	19	22	20	20	19
Attorney	17	17	18	16	18
Legislator	14	18	19	17	19
Farming	9	11	14	16	20
Consultant	6	6	6	8	7
Homemaker	5	5	3	3	7
Communications	4	4	3	—	—
Insurance	4	3	3	3	—
Retired	4	3	3	3	—
Real Estate	3	2	2	2	3
Trades	3	2	4	3	4
Government	2	3	3	—	4
Retail	1	3	3	2	—
Other	19	14	13	27	11

Orientation retreat . . .

New lawmakers consider opportunities, challenges

By Nicole Wood

Barely two months fall between an election-night victory and the swearing-in ceremony for new representatives, leaving little time to prepare for the role of lawmaker.

To help with the transition from private citizen to public servant, nearly two dozen new representatives — 18 freshmen and three one-year veterans — attended a three-day crash course last November.

Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington) chaired the retreat, held Nov. 16-18 at the Riverwood Conference Center near Monticello, Minn. The agenda included guest speakers, legislative workshops, panel discussions, and a rousing round of the House's own Get to Know Me game.

House Speaker-designate Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) came to greet freshman members and to enthuse about the unique state of affairs in Minnesota politics.

"Ask the media — this is the greatest job in the country right now," he said.

Former U.S. Rep. Tim Penny, a member of Gov. Jesse Ventura's transition team, shared some insight on the new head of state.

"I think you're going to like him," Penny said. "One of his greatest strengths is that he's quite altruistic about government and public service."

Just two weeks after the general election, Ventura's victory was a hot topic at the retreat. Penny also addressed ways in which Republicans and DFLers could reach out to those who voted for the Reform Party governor.

"[Ventura] will challenge you to put your partisan instincts aside," he said.

Also featured was House Chief Clerk Ed-



Rep. Jim Seifert jokes that his first bill will be to make the Toro lawnmower the official lawnmower of Minnesota. His comments came during a mixer at the new member orientation session. Seifert is a vice president for the Toro Corporation.

ward A. Burdick, who presented a seminar on the fundamentals of parliamentary procedure and the legislative process.

"Parliamentary procedure is not an exact science," Burdick explained. "It's a slow, deliberative process, one that is designed to encourage maximum discussion, heated debate, and compromise."

Seagren, a fourth-term legislator, led a panel discussion on the personal and professional challenges of the job.

As part of that forum, Rep. Tony Kielucki (R-Lester Prairie) said striking a balance between home and House is key.

"The first time I missed one of my kid's

band concerts, it tore me up inside," he said. "Plan your family time wisely."

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) advised incoming members of the seemingly unusual alliances — liberal/conservative, urban/rural — that often develop between first-termers.

"You are in the room right now with your best friends in the Legislature," she said.

Also on the agenda were newly-appointed Revisor Michele Timmons, House Research Department Director Tom Todd, and members of the Capitol press corps.

Meet the newly elected 1999 House members



Abeler, Jim (R) 49A
581 State Office Building (651) 296-1729
E-mail: rep.jim.abeler@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Anoka
3400 Rum River Drive 55303 (612) 245-3764
Business: Anoka
*600 E. Main St. 55303 (612) 421-3722
Born: 5/18/54. **Married:** spouse Barb, 5 children. **Occupation:** Chiropractor. **Education:** DC, chiropractic, Northwestern College of Chiropractic. **Elected:** 1998.
Term: 1st.



Buesgens, Mark (R) 35B
415 State Office Building (651) 296-1072
E-mail: rep.mark.buesgens@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Jordan
*113 Stewart Drive 55352 (612) 492-2992
Born: 5/14/61. **Married:** spouse Sara, 5 children. **Occupation:** Educator. **Education:** BS, mathematics, Mankato State University; Specialist, educational administration, Minnesota State University-Mankato. **Elected:** 1998.
Term: 1st.



Cassell, George (R) 10B
 421 State Office Building (651) 296-4317
E-mail: rep.george.cassell@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Alexandria
 *2500 County Road 22 N.W. 56308 (320) 762-2471
Born: 5/25/35. **Married:** spouse Carol, 3 children. **Occupation:** Retired Educator/Administrator. **Education:** BS, education/psychology, University of Wisconsin-River Falls; MS, educational administration/psychology, University of Wyoming; EdD, educational administration, University of Wyoming. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Gray, Gregory (DFL) 58B
 229 State Office Building (651) 296-8659
E-mail: rep.gregory.gray@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Minneapolis
 1507 Oakpark Ave. N. 55411 (612) 377-5270
Business: Minneapolis
 Minnesota State Bar Association
 514 Nicollet Mall, Suite 300 55402
Married: spouse Renee. **Occupation:** Attorney. **Education:** BS, business administration, University of Wisconsin-River Falls; JD Hamline University School of Law. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Dorman, Dan (R) 27A
 579 State Office Building (651) 296-8216
E-mail: rep.dan.dorman@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Albert Lea
 *445 Lakeview Blvd. 56007 (507) 377-9441
Business: Albert Lea
 505 E. Main 56007 (507) 373-0636
Born: 10/16/62. **Married:** spouse Mary Jo, 2 children. **Occupation:** Small Business Owner. **Education:** BA, political science, University of Minnesota. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Haake, Barb (R) 52B
 429 State Office Building (651) 296-0141
E-mail: rep.barb.haake@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Mounds View
 3024 County Road I 55112-4309 (612) 786-1022
Business: St. Paul
 P. O. Box 120760 55112 (651) 784-8260
Born: 11/13/40. **Single:** 3 children. **Occupation:** Employee Benefits Broker. **Education:** University of Minnesota. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Fuller, Doug (R) 4A
 525 State Office Building (651) 296-5516
E-mail: rep.doug.fuller@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Bemidji
 *817 Minnesota Ave. N.W. 56601 (218) 751-1055
Business: Bemidji
 P. O. Box 781 56619-0781 (218) 751-1055
Born: 5/14/68. **Married:** spouse Jeri Lynn. **Occupation:** Senior District Manager, American Cancer Society. **Education:** Accounting, finance, Bemidji State University. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Hackbarth, Tom (R) 50A
 *575 State Office Building (651) 296-2439
E-mail: rep.tom.hackbarth@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Cedar
 19255 Eidelweiss St. N.W. 55011 (612) 753-3215
Born: 12/28/51. **Married:** spouse Mary, 3 children. **Occupation:** Automotive Parts. **Education:** North Hennepin Community College. **Elected:** 1994. **Term:** 2nd (non-consecutive).



Gerlach, Chris (R) 36A
 531 State Office Building (651) 296-5506
E-mail: rep.chris.gerlach@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Apple Valley
 *173 County Road 42 55124 (612) 432-4100
Business: same.
Born: 11/17/64. **Married:** spouse Shelli. **Occupation:** Telecommunications Sales. **Education:** BA, political science, University of St. Thomas; MBA, business, University of South Dakota. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Holberg, Mary Liz (R) 37B
 433 State Office Building (651) 296-6926
E-mail: rep.maryliz.holberg@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Lakeville
 *12195 Upper 167th St. 55044 (612) 435-8723
Married: spouse Thomas, 2 children. **Occupation:** Home-maker. **Education:** Elementary education, St. Cloud State University. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Gleason, Mark S. (DFL) 63B
 313 State Office Building (651) 296-5375
E-mail: rep.mark.gleason@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Richfield
 *6434 Irving Ave. S. 55423 (612) 861-4542
Business: same.
Born: 11/26/53. **Married:** spouse Michelle, 2 children. **Occupation:** CPA. **Education:** BA, business administration, University of St. Thomas; JD, William Mitchell College of Law. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Howes, Larry (R) 4B
 431 State Office Building (651) 296-2451
E-mail: rep.larry.howes@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Hackensack
 *4390-44th St. N.W. 56452 (218) 675-6587
Business: Hackensack
 4384-44th St. N.W. 56452 (218) 675-6144
Born: 6/30/47. **Married:** spouse Myrna, 5 children. **Occupation:** Manager. **Education:** High School. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (DFL) 60A
 *231 State Office Building (651) 296-0171
E-mail: rep.margaret.kelliher@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Minneapolis
 229 Sheridan Ave. S. 55405 (612) 377-9836
Born: 3/68. **Married:** spouse David, 2 children. **Occupation:** Community Organizer/Writer. **Education:** BA, history, political science, Gustavus Adolphus College. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Skoe, Rod (DFL) 2B
 321 State Office Building (651) 296-4265
E-mail: rep.rod.skoe@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Clearbrook
 *Route 2, Box 80 56634 (218) 776-3420
Born: 8/9/54. **Married:** spouse Sarah Hoagberg, 2 children. **Occupation:** Farmer. **Education:** BA, psychology, BA, sociology, Augsburg College. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Larson, Dan (DFL) 40A
 *225 State Office Building (651) 296-7158
E-mail: rep.dan.larson@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Bloomington
 9025-13th Ave. S. 55425 (612) 854-8550
Born: 6/29/65. **Married:** spouse Sheila, 2 children. **Occupation:** Business. **Education:** BA, history, University of Minnesota. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Storm, Julie (R) 24B
 527 State Office Building (651) 296-7065
E-mail: rep.julie.storm@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: St. Peter
 *1202 S. Minnesota Ave. 56082-2208 (507) 931-1850
Business: same.
Married: spouse Chuck, 3 children. **Occupation:** Business. **Education:** Abbott-Northwestern-Macalester Nursing Program; state certification, interior design, Lawrence Institute, Sarasota, Fla. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Lenczewski, Ann (DFL) 40B
 337 State Office Building (651) 296-4218
E-mail: rep.ann.lenczewski@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Bloomington
 *10306 Humboldt Circle 55431 (612) 881-8627
Business: same. **Born:** 5/9/60. **Married:** spouse Nels Erickson, 4 children. **Occupation:** Full-time Legislator. **Education:** BA, psychology, College of St. Benedict; public policy, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Westerberg, Andrew (R) 51A
 523 State Office Building (651) 296-4226
E-mail: rep.andrew.westerberg@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Blaine
 *13070 Goodhue St. N.E. 55449 (612) 757-5097
Business: Coon Rapids
 10600 University Ave. N.W. 55448 (612) 754-1600
Married: spouse Catherine, 4 children. **Occupation:** Insurance. **Education:** AA, Anoka-Ramsey Community College; CLU designation, The American College. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Mahoney, Tim (DFL) 67A
 *223 State Office Building (651) 296-4277
E-mail: rep.tim.mahoney@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: St. Paul
 1157 Breen St. 55106 (651) 776-3200
Single: 2 children. **Occupation:** Pipe Fitter. **Education:** pipe fitting, St. Paul Technical College. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Wilkin, Tim (R) 38A
 413 State Office Building (651) 296-3533
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Home: Eagan
 *3364 Heritage Lane 55121 (651) 686-8179
Business: Mendota Heights
 1295 Northland Drive 55120 (651) 688-4679
Born: 11/5/65. **Married:** spouse Eileen, 2 children. **Occupation:** Business. **Education:** BBA, finance, University of Iowa. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.



Seifert, Jim (R) 57A
 577 State Office Building (651) 296-7807
E-mail: rep.jim.seifert@house.leg.state.mn.us
Home: Woodbury
 *3322 Churchill Drive 55125 (651) 731-2331
Married: 2 children. **Occupation:** Attorney. **Education:** MS, engineering, University of St. Thomas; JD, Creighton University, Omaha, Neb. **Elected:** 1998. **Term:** 1st.

The Dahl house . . .

Old house may find a new home with nonprofit group

By Paul Wahl

When William Dahl built his modest home on St. Paul's 13th Street between Robert and Jackson streets in 1858, he couldn't have imagined it would be a topic of discussion more than 130 years later. But it is.

The question of what to do with the house — one of St. Paul's oldest remaining residential structures — has been asked informally hundreds of times and has been formally considered at least three times in the past few years. The small wood-framed dwelling has sat forlornly at 625 Robert St. since Nov. 25, 1997, when it was moved from its original site about a block away.

Proposed uses for the old home have included a museum and a Capitol-area coffee shop.

Now, a private, nonprofit organization — the West 7th/Fort Road Federation — has stepped forward and offered to pay the state the \$1 purchase price for the house. The group proposes to relocate, refurbish, and potentially resell it as a single-family residence.

The group's proposal must be approved by an ad hoc committee, whose members repre-

The neighborhood organization—a collection of businesses, churches, community and government entities devoted to economic development — plans to rehabilitate the home, adding a kitchen and a garage, before eventually selling it.

Johnson said if the plan is approved, the next step would be moving the dwelling to its new site.

"Getting it moved down West Seventh and out to the site will be a challenge," Johnson said. "We're in the process of obtaining bids for that work."

He said he doesn't see any obstacle that would deter the group's plan.

"It would be a real focal point of the redeveloped neighborhood there," he added.

Minnesota was still a territory when William Dahl arrived from England. He was a man of many trades, working as a clerk, a census taker, a bookstore operator, and a part-time cordwood seller.

He married Catherine Margaret Murphy and a child was born in March 1854 while the family lived at the "Mansion House" on Third Street. With a growing family and a prospering business, Dahl planned and built the home he hoped his family would enjoy together for decades to come.

But he died young of consumption in September 1858, just a year after the house was completed. His widow lived in the house until 1901 when her son, Edward, inherited it. He lived there until 1936 when the property was sold to an investment firm.

The Roy E. Patterson family occupied the house from 1936 until

the state purchased it in 1974, at which time it was the last surviving single-family residence in the area and only one of three remaining structures on its block.

In 1977, the house was being considered for demolition to make way for growth in what is called the East Capitol Area.

Fearing the continued loss of historical assets, a group of concerned individuals from both the private and public sectors began the quest to have the house placed on the National

Register of Historic Places, citing its status as "the last surviving residence in Lowertown."

The group further invoked the home's significance as an example of how the "common man" lived in St. Paul in its status request, which was granted.

Eyeing further expansion into the area, state officials took another look at the Dahl house in 1992, when a study outlined a variety of options, including restoration, relocation, and use as a bookstore, information center, or adjunct to a major state building.

The study largely sat on the shelf until 1997, when a decision was made to build a new Department of Revenue building in the 600 block of North Robert Street.

The house was then moved about a block north of its original site, out of the way of the new construction.

The effort to find a use for the historic house intensified in December 1997 when the committee was formed to decide its fate.

The first idea was to tap funds from a program funding arts enhancements for state buildings. Plans called for a sculpture garden in front of the Department of Revenue complex, with the restored Dahl house as its centerpiece.

But that plan was short-circuited in March when inspectors from the City of St. Paul hinted that having the house in front of the building might create a safety hazard for the public and employees in case of emergency.

The panel then tried a new avenue, sending requests for information to business, civic, and community groups asking them if they would be willing to rent the refurbished Dahl house were the state to rehabilitate it and find a permanent site.

Only one response was received — from the company that operates St. Paul's trolleys, who proposed using it for office space but also allowing public access.

However, after state officials determined how much it would cost to do the renovation and calculated an annual rent of \$30,000, the trolley company backed away.

Finally, a letter was sent out in June saying the state would sell the Dahl house for a \$1. That's when the West 7th/Fort Road Federation stepped forward.



The historic Dahl house, with a selling price set at a whopping \$1, may be moved to the West Seventh Street neighborhood in St. Paul and restored as a single family dwelling.

sent several historical societies and the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board. The committee is expected to act on the proposal soon.

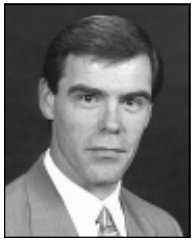
Ed Johnson, executive director of the neighborhood organization, said his group plans to move the house to a spot at Jefferson Avenue and West Seventh Street, near Minnesota Brewing (formerly the Schmidt brewery). It would join several other historical homes that the group hopes to relocate and restore.

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

Republican educator seeks voice in K-12 debates

By Paul Wahl

Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan) has been an educator all of his adult life, and he approaches life from an educator's viewpoint.



Rep. Mark Buesgens

In many ways, he views his recent election to the House as the latest in a series of assignments, albeit a formidable one.

"Educators get into the field not because they love to teach but because they love to learn," Buesgens said. "I look forward to the challenge of learning as much about the House as fast as I can."

Buesgens (pronounced Bisk-enz) is a native of Jordan, Minn., and is the youngest of nine children. After graduating from Jordan High School and later earning a degree in math education at Mankato State University, he took a teaching job at a private American school in balmy Guayaquil, on Ecuador's western edge.

"I had just graduated and had three brothers in the military overseas," Buesgens said. "I spoke one word of Spanish and that was 'no,' the same as in English."

The language barrier wasn't a problem during the day because courses were taught in English, but Buesgens had other reasons to learn Spanish.

He soon learned enough to say, "Quiero que me casen?" to his future wife, Sara, and the couple's first child was born in Ecuador. After four years, they returned to Minnesota.

"Ecuador is a beautiful country, but it's still the Third World and we wanted to raise our children in the States," Buesgens said. "With everywhere open to us, we ended up moving back to Minnesota just because of the quality of life."

They soon had three more children, and the family recently welcomed an Ecuadorian foster son.

Buesgens' teaching assignments since Ecuador have included seven years as a math instructor and curriculum planning positions in the Chaska and Rosemount/Apple Valley/Eagan school districts. His most recent job was assistant principal at Blackhawk Middle School in Eagan.

The family has continued to live in Jordan. Buesgens' introduction to public service came when he joined the town's volunteer fire department. In 1996, at the urging of his fellow firefighters, he ran for a seat on the Jordan City Council and won.

His interest in state office began with a phone call from state Sen. Claire Robling (R-Prior Lake) who urged him to consider running.

"And after months and months of soul-searching and talking to other people and talking with my wife, we decided to make a go of it," Buesgens said.

He knew the task would be gargantuan. His opponent, former Rep. Becky Kelso (DFL-Shakopee), had served 12 years in the House and had an excellent reputation as a leader on education issues. In fact, Kelso was chair of the

House panel that handled K-12 education finance.

As a Republican, Buesgens is in the minority among educators, and he said he takes good-natured ribbing from his colleagues. Upon moving into Buesgens' former office, one colleague declared, "That picture of Ronald Reagan has to come down."

The new lawmaker said he expects to spend the first part of the session learning and connecting with people.

As a member of the House Education and the K-12 Finance committees, he said he expects to delve into the issue of state and local funding splits for public schools. And although he said he doesn't have a target percentage in mind, he believes there must be a considerable local effort.

"One of the critical components in making public schools work is for the public to feel ownership of their schools," he said. "When we pay for something, versus when we get it free, we take more responsibility for making it successful."

District 35B

1995 Population: 37,256

Largest city: Shakopee

County: Scott

Location: southwest metropolitan area

Top concern: "I believe that the framers of our country envisioned that the most important vote a person could cast would be for mayor and city council members. I am motivated to help reverse the trend of the larger and expanding role of state government in people's lives."

—Rep. Mark Buesgens



The election of a Reform Party governor has caused several snags in how state government operates. The most recent of which involves an appointment to a vacancy on the state's Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.

State statute provides that one of the board's members "shall be a former member of the Legislature from the same political party as the governor." There are two former legislators on the board.

"There are no former members of the Leg-

islature from the same political party as the governor," said Jeanne Olson, executive director of the board.

The board will ask the Legislature to change the wording to solve the problem, allowing Gov. Jesse Ventura to fill the appointment. The board is suggesting appointments be either "two former members of the Legislature who shall not support the same political party" or "two former members of the Legislature from different major political parties."

The board term of Carolyn Rodriguez, a former DFL legislator, expires this month. She did not reapply. If the Legislature approves the statute change, Ventura will likely have to appoint another former DFL lawmaker to fulfill the criteria.

Hormel Foods Corp. executive Brian Stevens couldn't resist getting in a plug for one of his company's most popular Minnesota-produced products when he testified at a hearing on pork prices before a joint hearing of two House agriculture committees Jan. 7.

"Now I know that if I went around this room, not one of you would admit to eating Spam," Stevens said.

Nevertheless, he declared, someone is obviously eating it.

"We produce 450 cans of Spam a minute," he told the committee members.

Gray aims to create jobs, foster urban development

By Grant Martin

Newly elected Rep. Gregory Gray (DFL-Mpls) said that running for the House was the furthest thing from his mind following his



Rep. Gregory Gray

unsuccessful bid for the Minnesota Senate in 1996.

"I was not interested in ever running for office again," Gray said.

After that race, which may be remembered most for the controversy involving a misplaced newspaper photo of candidate John Derus, Gray remembers feeling "burned out."

He and his wife, Renee, had handled all aspects of his Senate campaign, from newsletters to finances, and he could not fathom the idea of starting all over again.

Following his failure to gain the DFL endorsement at the Senate district convention, Gray was about to pack up his things and leave when he was approached by then-Rep. Richard Jefferson (DFL-Mpls), who served Gray's home district in the House.

"He said he really thought I had done an excellent job and that I ought to keep an open mind about politics," Gray said. "He said he thought some good things might happen in the future."

Gray headed for home, not realizing the seed had been planted for a future run at Jefferson's seat when the six-term representative retired in 1998.

"I thanked him," Gray said. "But I didn't think much of it."

Later Jefferson was influential in recruiting Gray and putting together a larger group of supporters to assist with the campaign.

"That is one of the number one reasons I was successful this time was the fact that there was a large group of real supportive folks who helped me throughout the process," he said.

Born and raised in Minneapolis, Gray worked as an internal auditor for several Twin Cities corporations before getting his law degree from Hamline University. He currently works as director of member services for the Minnesota State Bar Association, and he has been an active volunteer with several redevelopment projects in north Minneapolis.

Gray said that campaigning for the House was difficult because he considers himself an introvert, but he feels it helped him refine his legislative goals.

"I learned that people really love the district and want it to be a better place than it is today," he said. "People are entrusting you to make their vision a reality."

Gray said he will focus attention on affordable housing, education, and jobs and economic development — issues he feels are important in his urban district.

"People are very optimistic about the district," he said. "The people I talk to don't want to leave. They want to build. They want better housing stock. And they want to make sure the system of public schools is not only good, it's the best."

Gray, who takes Jefferson's place as the only African-American member of the Legislature, said diversity is essential to the political process.

"I believe very strongly in diversity," he said. "Not only is it the right thing, it provides creativity and the mix of ideas that make the process run better."

He says he's excited about the prospect of working with the new Reform Party governor this session.

"I think it is good for the process," he said. "It will keep people thinking, keep people on their feet. We won't have quite as much partisanship because people will be trying to play for (Ventura's) approval."

Gray said that when it's his turn to leave the House, he hopes that people will remember him for his integrity.

"I want to leave respected, and that may mean some people don't like you," he said. "I'd like people to say he had some core values, he was honest, he told us where he stood, and he did what he said he'd do."

District 58B

1995 population: 32,096

Largest city: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

Location: inner city

Top concern: "I think if you were to poll the district the top concern would be economic development and jobs. The top concern I heard [when I was] door knocking is affordable housing."

—Rep. Gregory Gray

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Governor

Jesse Ventura

130 State Capitol

75 Constitution Ave.

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Lieutenant Governor

Mae Schunk

130 State Capitol

75 Constitution Ave.

St. Paul 55155 (651) 296-3391

Attorney General

Mike Hatch

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Suite 400

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St. Paul 55103 (651) 296-2551

State Treasurer

Carol Johnson

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House exhibit features information, not politics

By Nick Healy

Politics has always had a home at the Minnesota State Fair.

In the past, U.S. presidents, including Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, Teddy Roosevelt, and Dwight Eisenhower, have visited the fair to make speeches and push political initiatives, and each year a parade of candidates for state and federal offices stake out turf on the fairgrounds.

But, strange as it may sound, politics is one thing that is largely left off the agenda at the Minnesota House of Representatives' exhibit.

"It's really great to be out there, and everybody is relaxed and at ease," said Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin). "It's not a political thing, so there's less pressure. It's very comfortable for people to ask questions and get the information they need."

Each year the House and Senate run side-by-side exhibits in the Education Building at the fairgrounds. The nonpartisan booths feature no campaign literature or partisan slogans. The aim of the exhibits is to help fairgoers discover resources that can connect them to state government.

This year, 46 representatives volunteered to spend time at

no single issue — such as the 1997 stadium debate — that evoked passion from citizens of all corners of the state.

"People are interested in things that are specific to their lives, so you hear a lot of ideas on a lot of different issues," McGuire said. "The fair certainly broadens the scope of the issues you hear about."

Of all the lawmakers who worked at the exhibits, McGuire's ties to the fair may be the strongest. McGuire, whose legislative district includes the fairgrounds, grew up just blocks from that territory. As a teenager, she worked selling T-shirts at the fair, and now she spends time each year at the House exhibit and takes part in more political activities, such as her party's fair exhibit.

"There are three things I love to do at the fair," she said. "I love seeing the exhibits in the buildings. I love the food. And I love the people-watching."

The 12 days of the fair, which ran from Aug. 27, 1998, to Sept. 7, 1998, brought thousands of visitors to the House booth.

When not busy talking to lawmakers, visitors could load up on educational material about the House and the legislative process, and they could sign up to receive *Session Weekly*, as more than 2,500 fairgoers did.

The exhibit also included an unofficial opinion poll — long a fixture of the House booth. But this year's poll was different from the others because it allowed fairgoers to test an experimental electronic touch-screen voting system.

The 10-question survey gathered opinions on issues ranging from concealed weapons laws to personal watercraft regulations. (See poll results on the following page.)

Fairgoers also could test their knowledge of Minnesota history and state laws by taking computerized quizzes at the House booth.

Haas, who has worked at the House booth each of the four years he has held office, said he was pleased by the response from fairgoers who visited the House booth in 1998.

"First of all, it's a chance to help people become a part of the process and to get them involved," Haas said. "Secondly, it gives me a chance to talk to people to find out what they're thinking on the issues."



Fairgoers visiting the House exhibit could write messages to their legislators, register to vote, discuss political issues of the day, and take a public opinion poll.

the House exhibit to meet fairgoers and hear their concerns. Then-House Speaker Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center) and then-House Majority Leader Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda) were among those who appeared at the exhibit.

Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) said she would not miss the chance to spend time at the fair exhibit.

"It is a great opportunity to talk to people from all over the state," McGuire said. "I think it's important that we have a presence at the state fair and that state representatives are there to hear from people."

McGuire said she heard questions and concerns from fairgoers on an exceptionally wide range of issues. There was



Charissa, Nathaniel, Rebecca, and Anna Smith, left to right, Cottage Grove, test their knowledge of Minnesota state symbols — such as the state bird and the state flower — on a computer game at the 1998 House exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair.

Minnesota House of Representatives

1998 State Fair Poll Results

1. Should state law be changed to require that law enforcement officials issue a license to carry a concealed weapon to any adult who requests one, with exceptions for the mentally ill and convicted felons?

Yes 43.1% (1,282)
 No 50.2% (1,495)
 Undecided/
 No Opinion 6.7% (198)

2. Should school districts be allowed to begin the school year before Labor Day?

Yes 57.3% (1,709)
 No 37.7% (1,124)
 Undecided/
 No Opinion 5.0% (149)

3. The November 1998 ballot will include the following proposed constitutional amendment: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to affirm that hunting and fishing and the taking of game and fish are a valued part of our heritage that shall be forever preserved for the people and shall be managed by law and regulation for the public good?" How do you expect to vote?

Yes 56.5% (1,669)
 No 30.7% (906)
 Undecided/
 No Opinion 12.8% (377)

4. Would you support a constitutional amendment that would eliminate the state Senate and House of Representatives and replace them with a unicameral (one-house) legislature?

Yes 38.6% (1,138)
 No 50.3% (1,485)
 Undecided/
 No Opinion 11.1% (328)

5. Should personal watercraft be banned from small lakes — those less than 200 acres in surface area — in Minnesota?

Yes 62.3% (1,821)
 No 30.5% (891)
 Undecided/
 No Opinion 7.2% (209)

6. Should the state reduce the threshold of legal drunkenness for driving while intoxicated from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent blood-alcohol content?

Yes 60.5% (1,772)
 No 36.5% (1,069)
 Undecided/
 No Opinion 3.0% (88)

7. Should the state help finance the construction of a new stadium for the Minnesota Twins, Minnesota Vikings, or any other major sports team?

Yes 22.8% (668)
 No 72.2% (2,111)
 Undecided/
 No Opinion 5.0% (145)

8. Should the state place a moratorium on construction of large animal feedlots — those holding 750 heifers or the equivalent of other livestock — on Minnesota farms?

Yes 51.8% (1,503)
 No 28.3% (820)
 Undecided/
 No Opinion 19.9% (578)

9. What is your age range?

18-35 31.2% (862)
 36-50 40.3% (1,113)
 51-65 21.7% (601)
 66-over 6.8% (188)

10. Please indicate your opinion about the touch-screen voting system you are using to vote on this poll.

Easy/
 Very Easy to Use 86.2% (2,359)
 Average 11.9% (325)
 Difficult 1.9% (52)

House members who appeared at the fair

Bruce Anderson (R-Buffalo Township)
 Hilda Bettermann (R-Brandon)
 Fran Bradley (R-Rochester)
 Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal)
 Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center)
 Satveer Chaudhary (DFL-Fridley)
 Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph)
 Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings)
 John Dorn (DFL-Mankato)
 Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton)
 Geri Evans (DFL-New Brighton)
 Edwina Garcia (DFL-Richfield)
 Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls)
 Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville)
 Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont)
 Bill Haas (R-Champlin)
 Elaine Harder (R-Jackson)
 Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby)
 Richard Jefferson (DFL-Mpls)
 Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris)
 Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park)
 Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar)
 Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls)
 Henry Kalis (DFL-Walters)
 Luanne Koskinen (DFL-Coon Rapids)
 Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland)
 Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley)
 Arlon Lindner (R-Corcoran)
 Mark Mahon (DFL-Bloomington)
 Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul)
 Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights)
 Joe Mullery (DFL-Mpls)
 Mark Olson (R-Big Lake)
 Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City)
 Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount)
 Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope)
 Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park)
 Jim Rostberg (R-Isanti)
 Leslie Schumacher (DFL-Princeton)
 Marty Seifert (R-Marshall)
 Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls)
 Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey)
 Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior)
 Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover)
 Linda Wejcman (DFL-Mpls)
 Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda)

Minnesota House of Representatives 1999 Members

District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-	District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-
		Room*				Room*	
49A	Abeler, Jim (R)	581	1729	33A	Lindner, Arlon (R)	417	7806
45A	Abrams, Ron (R)	585	9934	47A	Luther, Darlene (DFL)	371	3751
19B	Anderson, Bruce (R)	411	5063	67A	Mahoney, Tim (DFL)	223	4277
3A	Anderson, Irv (DFL)	343	4936	55A	Mares, Harry (R)	401	5363
6A	Bakk, Thomas (Tom) (DFL)	345	2190	65B	Mariani, Carlos (DFL)	209	9714
59A	Biernat, Len (DFL)	303	4219	57B	Marko, Sharon (DFL)	221	3135
30B	Bishop, Dave (R)	453	0573	55B	McCollum, Betty (DFL)	239	1188
25B	Boudreau, Lynda (R)	473	8237	36B	McElroy, Dan (R)	437	4212
30A	Bradley, Fran (R)	559	9249	54A	McGuire, Mary Jo (DFL)	259	4342
53B	Broecker, Sherry (R)	533	7153	39B	Milbert, Bob (DFL)	243	4192
35B	Buesgens, Mark (R)	415	1072	35A	Molnau, Carol L. (R)	443	8872
46B	Carlson, Lyndon R. (DFL)	279	4255	21B	Mulder, Richard (R)	515	4336
47B	Carruthers, Phil (DFL)	217	3709	58A	Mullery, Joe (DFL)	387	4262
10B	Cassell, George (R)	421	4317	7A	Munger, Willard (DFL)	283	4282
52A	Chaudhary, Satveer (DFL)	311	4331	8A	Murphy, Mary (DFL)	357	2676
23A	Clark, James T. (R)	583	9303	20A	Ness, Robert "Bob" (R)	509	4344
61A	Clark, Karen (DFL)	307	0294	10A	Nornes, Bud (R)	471	4946
11A	Daggett, Roxann (R)	439	4293	19A	Olson, Mark (R)	501	4237
31B	Davids, Gregory M. (R)	367	9278	16A	Opatz, Joe (DFL)	281	6612
65A	Dawkins, Andy (DFL)	215	5158	60B	Orfield, Myron (DFL)	377	9281
14A	Dehler, Steve (R)	491	7808	29B	Osskopp, Mike (R)	449	9236
29A	Dempsey, Jerry (R)	549	8635	66A	Osthoff, Tom (DFL)	273	4224
27A	Dorman, Dan (R)	579	8216	11B	Otremba, Mary Ellen (DFL)	393	3201
24A	Dorn, John (DFL)	201	3248	37A	Ozment, Dennis (R)	479	4306
64A	Entenza, Matt (DFL)	213	8799	42B	Paulsen, Erik (R)	445	7449
42A	Erhardt, Ron (R)	591	4363	38B	Pawlenty, Tim (R)	459	4128
17A	Erickson, Sondra (R)	407	6746	64B	Paymar, Michael (DFL)	331	4199
1B	Finseth, Tim (R)	517	9918	32A	Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)	295	8637
44A	Folliard, Betty (DFL)	211	3964	13B	Peterson, Doug (DFL)	287	4228
4A	Fuller, Doug (R)	525	5516	39A	Pugh, Thomas W. (DFL)	267	6828
36A	Gerlach, Chris (R)	531	5506	46A	Rest, Ann H. (DFL)	277	4176
63B	Gleason, Mark S. (DFL)	313	5375	28A	Reuter, Doug (R)	507	5368
9A	Goodno, Kevin (R)	563	5515	44B	Rhodes, Jim (R)	409	9889
58B	Gray, Gregory (DFL)	229	8659	32B	Rifenberg, Michelle (R)	423	1069
62A	Greenfield, Lee (DFL)	207	0173	18A	Rostberg, Jim (R)	545	5364
54B	Greiling, Mindy (DFL)	253	5387	5A	Rukavina, Tom (DFL)	375	0170
26A	Gunther, Bob (R)	379	3240	17B	Schumacher, Leslie J. (DFL)	327	5377
52B	Haake, Barb (R)	429	0141	41A	Seagren, Alice (R)	477	7803
48A	Haas, Bill (R)	569	5513	57A	Seifert, Jim (R)	577	7807
50A	Hackbarth, Tom (R)	575	2439	21A	Seifert, Marty (R)	593	5374
22B	Harder, Elaine (R)	487	5373	2B	Skoe, Rod (DFL)	321	4265
12A	Hasskamp, Kris (DFL)	353	4333	62B	Skoglund, Wes (DFL)	251	4330
66B	Hausman, Alice (DFL)	245	3824	34A	Smith, Steve (R)	503	9188
8B	Hilty, Bill (DFL)	241	4308	3B	Solberg, Loren A. (DFL)	309	2365
37B	Holberg, Mary Liz (R)	433	6926	33B	Stanek, Rich (R)	543	5502
56A	Holsten, Mark William (R)	381	3018	14B	Stang, Doug (R)	597	4373
4B	Howes, Larry (R)	431	2451	24B	Storm, Julie (R)	527	7065
6B	Huntley, Thomas (DFL)	351	2228	28B	Swiggum, Steve (R)	463	2273
7B	Jaros, Mike (DFL)	291	4246	23B	Swenson, Howard (R)	539	8634
18B	Jennings, Loren Geo (DFL)	237	0518	43B	Sykora, Barb (R)	403	4315
48B	Johnson, Alice M. (DFL)	349	5510	50B	Tingelstad, Kathy (R)	567	5369
15A	Juhnke, Al (DFL)	329	6206	5B	Tomassoni, David J. (DFL)	233	0172
59B	Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)	255	4257	67B	Trimble, Steve (DFL)	289	4201
26B	Kalis, Henry J. (DFL)	317	4240	25A	Tuma, John (R)	369	4229
60A	Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (DFL)	231	0171	1A	Tunheim, Jim (DFL)	335	9635
20B	Kielkucki, Tony (R)	521	1534	34B	Van Dellen, Henry Todd (R)	571	5511
16B	Knoblach, Jim (R)	451	6316	51B	Vandever, Ray (R)	529	4124
49B	Koskinen, Luanne (DFL)	301	4231	63A	Wagenius, Jean (DFL)	227	4200
53A	Krinkie, Philip (R)	365	2907	61B	Wejzman, Linda (DFL)	203	7152
15B	Kubly, Gary W. (DFL)	315	4346	12B	Wenzel, Stephen G. (DFL)	389	4247
31A	Kuisle, William (R)	565	4378	51A	Westerberg, Andrew (R)	523	4226
56B	Larsen, Peg (R)	551	4244	9B	Westfall, Robert L. (Bob) (R)	553	6829
40A	Larson, Dan (DFL)	225	7158	13A	Westrom, Torrey (R)	557	4929
27B	Leighton, Rob (DFL)	261	4193	38A	Wilkin, Tim (R)	413	3533
40B	Lenczewski, Ann (DFL)	337	4218	22A	Winter, Ted (DFL)	247	5505
45B	Leppik, Peggy (R)	485	7026	41B	Wolf, Ken (R)	359	5185
2A	Lieder, Bernie L. (DFL)	323	5091	43A	Workman, Tom (R)	537	5066

House Public Information Office • 175 State Office Building • 100 Constitution Ave. • St. Paul, MN 55155 • (651) 296-2146

Note: Room numbers are subject to change.

List as of Jan. 7, 1999

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

Minnesota Senate 1999 Members

District/Member/Party	Room*	Phone (651) 296-	District/Member/Party	Room*	Phone (651) 296-
66 Anderson, Ellen R. DFL	G-24 Cap.	5537	8 Lourey, Becky DFL	G-9 Cap.	0293
26 Beckman, Tracy L. DFL	124G Cap.	5713	54 Marty, John DFL	326 Cap.	5645
41 Belanger Jr., William V. R	113 SOB	5975	39 Metzen, James P. DFL	303 Cap.	4370
13 Berg, Charles A. (IND.)	G-51 SOB	5094	2 Moe, Roger D. DFL	208 Cap.	2577
61 Berglin, Linda DFL	309 Cap.	4261	32 Morse, Steven DFL	G-24 Cap.	5649
48 Betzold, Don DFL	306 Cap.	2556	29 Murphy, Steve DFL	301 Cap.	4264
64 Cohen, Richard J. DFL	317 Cap.	5931	25 Neuville, Thomas M. R	123 SOB	1279
28 Day, Dick R	147 SOB	9457	52 Novak, Steven G. DFL	322 Cap.	4334
20 Dille, Steve R	103 SOB	4131	43 Oliver, Edward C. R	121 SOB	4837
14 Fischbach, Michelle L. R	149 SOB	2084	34 Olson, Gen R	119 SOB	1282
62 Flynn, Carol DFL	120 Cap.	4274	19 Ourada, Mark R	145 SOB	5981
49 Foley, Leo DFL	G-9 Cap.	4154	65 Pappas, Sandra L. DFL	120 Cap.	1802
23 Frederickson, Dennis R. R	139 SOB	8138	37 Pariseau, Pat R	109 SOB	5252
50 Hanson, Paula E. DFL	328 Cap.	3219	27 Piper, Pat DFL	G-9 Cap.	9248
58 Higgins, Linda I. DFL	227 Cap.	9246	59 Pogemiller, Lawrence J. DFL	235 Cap.	7809
24 Hottinger, John C. DFL	120 Cap.	6153	57 Price, Leonard R. DFL	235 Cap.	297-8060
5 Janezich, Jerry R. DFL	328 Cap.	8017	63 Ranum, Jane B. DFL	306 Cap.	297-8061
40 Johnson, Dave DFL	111 Cap.	9261	45 Robertson, Martha R. R	125 SOB	4314
15 Johnson, Dean E. R	117SOB	3826	35 Robling, Claire A. R	151 SOB	4123
6 Johnson, Douglas J. DFL	205 Cap.	8881	53 Runbeck, Linda R	107 SOB	1253
18 Johnson, Janet B. DFL	G-9 Cap.	5419	11 Sams, Dallas C. DFL	328 Cap.	297-8063
46 Junge, Ember R. DFL	205 Cap.	2889	12 Samuelson, Don DFL	124 Cap.	4875
44 Kelley, Steve DFL	321 Cap.	297-8065	31 Scheevel, Kenric J. R	129 SOB	3903
67 Kelly, Randy C. DFL	323 Cap.	5285	47 Scheid, Linda DFL	317 SOB	8869
30 Kiscaden, Sheila M. R	135 SOB	4848	7 Solon, Sam G. DFL	303 Cap.	4188
16 Kleis, Dave R	143 SOB	6455	60 Spear, Allan H. DFL	120 Cap.	4191
36 Knutson, David L. R	133 SOB	4120	17 Stevens, Dan R	105 SOB	8075
51 Krentz, Jane DFL	235 Cap.	7061	1 Stumpf, LeRoy A. DFL	G-24 Cap.	8660
56 Laidig, Gary W. R	141 SOB	4351	4 Ten Eyck, David J. DFL	G-24F Cap.	4913
9 Langseth, Keith DFL	122 Cap.	3205	42 Terwilliger, Roy R	115 SOB	6238
10 Larson, Cal R	153 SOB	5655	22 Vickerman, Jim DFL	226 Cap.	5650
21 Lesewski, Arlene J. R	131 SOB	4125	38 Wiener, Deanna L. DFL	303 Cap.	297-8073
3 Lessard, Bob DFL	111 Cap.	4136	55 Wiger, Charles W. DFL	325 Cap.	6820
33 Limmer, Warren R	127 SOB	2159			

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

Minnesota House and Senate Membership

1 A • Rep. Jim Tunheim-DFL B • Rep. Tim Finseth-R Sen. LeRoy A. Stumpf-DFL	15 A • Rep. Al Juhnke-DFL B • Rep. Gary W. Kubly-DFL Sen. Dean E. Johnson-R	29 A • Rep. Jerry Dempsey-R B • Rep. Mike Osskopp-R Sen. Steve Murphy-DFL	43 A • Rep. Tom Workman-R B • Rep. Barb Sykora-R Sen. Edward C. Oliver-R	57 A • Rep. Jim Seifert-R B • Rep. Sharon Marko-DFL Sen. Leonard R. Price-DFL
2 A • Rep. Bernie L. Liedler-DFL B • Rep. Rod Skoe-DFL Sen. Roger D. Moe-DFL	16 A • Rep. Joe Opatz-DFL B • Rep. Jim Knoblach-R Sen. Dave Kleis-R	30 A • Rep. Fran Bradley-R B • Rep. Dave Bishop-R Sen. Sheila M. Kiscaden-R	44 A • Rep. Betty Foliard-DFL B • Rep. Jim Rhodes-R Sen. Steve Kelley-DFL	58 A • Rep. Joe Mulleury-DFL B • Rep. Gregory Gray-DFL Sen. Linda I. Higgins-DFL
3 A • Rep. Irv Anderson-DFL B • Rep. Loren A. Solberg-DFL Sen. Bob Lessard-DFL	17 A • Rep. Sondra Erickson-R B • Rep. Leslie J. Schumacher-DFL Sen. Dan Stevens-R	31 A • Rep. William Kuisle-R B • Rep. Gregory M. Davids-R Sen. Kenric J. Scheevel-R	45 A • Rep. Ron Abrams-R B • Rep. Peggy Leppik-R Sen. Martha R. Robertson-R	59 A • Rep. Len Biernat-DFL B • Rep. Phyllis Kahn-DFL Sen. Lawrence J. Pogemiller-DFL
4 A • Rep. Doug Fuller-R B • Rep. Larry Howes-R Sen. David J. Ten Eyck-DFL	18 A • Rep. Jim Rostberg-R B • Rep. Loren Geo Jennings-DFL Sen. Janet B. Johnson-DFL	32 A • Rep. Gene Pelowski Jr.-DFL B • Rep. Michelle Rifenberg-R Sen. Steven Morse-DFL	46 A • Rep. Ann H. Rest-DFL B • Rep. Lyndon R. Carlson-DFL Sen. Ember R. Junge-DFL	60 A • Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher-DFL B • Rep. Myron Orfield-DFL Sen. Allan H. Spear-DFL
5 A • Rep. Tom Rukavina-DFL B • Rep. David J. Tomassoni-DFL Sen. Jerry R. Janezich-DFL	19 A • Rep. Mark Olson-R B • Rep. Bruce Anderson-R Sen. Mark Ourada-R	33 A • Rep. Arlon Lindner-R B • Rep. Rich Stanek-R Sen. Warren Limmer-R	47 A • Rep. Darlene Luther-DFL B • Rep. Phil Carruthers-DFL Sen. Linda Scheid-DFL	61 A • Rep. Karen Clark-DFL B • Rep. Linda Wejcman-DFL Sen. Linda Berglin-DFL
6 A • Rep. Thomas (Tom) Bakke-DFL B • Rep. Thomas Huntley-DFL Sen. Douglas J. Johnson-DFL	20 A • Rep. Robert "Bob" Ness-R B • Rep. Tony Kielucki-R Sen. Steve Dille-R	34 A • Rep. Steve Smith-R B • Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen-R Sen. Gen Olson-R	48 A • Rep. Bill Haas-R B • Rep. Alice M. Johnson-DFL Sen. Don Betzold-DFL	62 A • Rep. Lee Greenfield-DFL B • Rep. Wes Skoglund-DFL Sen. Carol Flynn-DFL
7 A • Rep. Willard Munger-DFL B • Rep. Mike Jarvis-DFL Sen. Sam G. Solon-DFL	21 A • Rep. Marty Seifert-R B • Rep. Richard Mulder-R Sen. Arlene J. Lesewski-R	35 A • Rep. Carol L. Molnau-R B • Rep. Mark Buegens-R Sen. Claire A. Robling-R	49 A • Rep. Jim Abeler-R B • Rep. Luanne Koskinen-DFL Sen. Leo Foley-DFL	63 A • Rep. Jean Wagenius-DFL B • Rep. Mark S. Gleason-DFL Sen. Jane B. Ranum-DFL
8 A • Rep. Mary Murphy-DFL B • Rep. Bill Hilty-DFL Sen. Becky Lourey-DFL	22 A • Rep. Ted Winter-DFL B • Rep. Elaine Harder-R Sen. Jim Vickerman-DFL	36 A • Rep. Chris Gerlach-R B • Rep. Dan McElroy-R Sen. David L. Knutson-R	50 A • Rep. Tom Hackbarth-R B • Rep. Kathy Tingelstad-R Sen. Paula E. Hanson-DFL	64 A • Rep. Matt Entenza-DFL B • Rep. Michael Paymar-DFL Sen. Richard J. Cohen-DFL
9 A • Rep. Kevin Goodno-R B • Rep. Robert L. (Bob) Westfall-R Sen. Keith Langseth-DFL	23 A • Rep. James T. Clark-R B • Rep. Howard Swenson-R Sen. Dennis R. Frederickson-R	37 A • Rep. Dennis Ozment-R B • Rep. Lyz Holberg-R Sen. Pat Pariseau-R	51 A • Rep. Andrew Westberg-R B • Rep. Ray Vandever-R Sen. Jane Krentz-DFL	65 A • Rep. Andy Dawkins-DFL B • Rep. Carlos Mariani-DFL Sen. Sandra L. Pappas-DFL
10 A • Rep. Bud Nornes-R B • Rep. George Cassell-R Sen. Cal Larson-R	24 A • Rep. John Dorn-DFL B • Rep. Julie Storm-R Sen. John C. Hottinger-DFL	38 A • Rep. Tim Wilkin-R B • Rep. Tim Pawlenty-R Sen. Deanna L. Wiener-DFL	52 A • Rep. Satveer Chaudhary-DFL B • Rep. Barb Haake-R Sen. Steven G. Novak-DFL	66 A • Rep. Tom Osthoff-DFL B • Rep. Alice Hausman-DFL Sen. Ellen R. Anderson-DFL
11 A • Rep. Roxann Daggett-R B • Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba-DFL Sen. Dallas C. Sams-DFL	25 A • Rep. John Tuma-R B • Rep. Lynda Boudreau-R Sen. Thomas M. Neuville-R	39 A • Rep. Thomas W. Pugh-DFL B • Rep. Bob Milbert-DFL Sen. James P. Metzen-DFL	53 A • Rep. Phillip Krinkie-R B • Rep. Sherry Broecker-R Sen. Linda Runbeck-R	67 A • Rep. Tim Mahoney-DFL B • Rep. Steve Trimble-DFL Sen. Randy C. Kelly-DFL
12 A • Rep. Kris Hasskamp-DFL B • Rep. Stephen G. Wenzel-DFL Sen. Don Samuelson-DFL	26 A • Rep. Bob Gunther-R B • Rep. Henry J. Kalis-DFL Sen. Tracy L. Beckman-DFL	40 A • Rep. Dan Larson-DFL B • Rep. Ann Lenczewski-DFL Sen. Dave Johnson-DFL	54 A • Rep. Mary Jo McGuire-DFL B • Rep. Mindy Greiling-DFL Sen. John Marty-DFL	
13 A • Rep. Torrey Westrom-R B • Rep. Doug Peterson-DFL Sen. Charles A. Berg-IND.	27 A • Rep. Dan Dorman-R B • Rep. Rob Leighton-DFL Sen. Pat Piper-DFL	41 A • Rep. Alice Seagren-R B • Rep. Ken Wolf-R Sen. William V. Belanger Jr.-R	55 A • Rep. Harry Mares-R B • Rep. Betty McCollum-DFL Sen. Charles W. Wiger-DFL	
14 A • Rep. Steve Dehler-R B • Rep. Doug Stang-R Sen. Michelle L. Fischbach-R	28 A • Rep. Doug Reuter-R B • Rep. Steve Sviggum-R Sen. Dick Day-R	42 A • Rep. Ron Erhardt-R B • Rep. Erik Paulsen-R Sen. Roy Terwilliger-R	56 A • Rep. Mark William Holsten-R B • Rep. Peg Larsen-R Sen. Gary W. Laidig-R	

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1999 House Standing Committee Schedule

Committee

Chair Phone
Meeting Day Room Time
(All Rooms are in the State Office Building)

Agriculture Policy

Finseth 296-9918
Wed. 10 12:30 p.m.

Agriculture & Rural Development Finance

Ness 296-4344
Tues., Thurs. 10 12:30 p.m.

Capital Investment

Knoblach 296-6316
Tues., Thurs. 5 12:30 p.m.

Civil Law

Smith 296-9188
Mon., Wed. B 10 a.m.

Commerce

Dauids 296-9278
Tues., Thurs. 200 12:30 p.m.

Crime Prevention

Stanek 296-5502
Tues., Thurs., Fri. B 10 a.m.

Education Policy

Mares 296-5363
Tues., Thurs. 5 10 a.m.

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Ozment 296-4306
Tues., Thurs. 10 10 a.m.

Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Holsten 296-3018
Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 10 a.m.

Ethics

Harder 296-5373
Call of the Chair

Family & Early Childhood Education Finance

Sykora 296-4315
Mon., Wed. 5 12:30 p.m.

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Rhodes 296-9889
Mon., Wed., Fri. B 8 a.m.

Health & Human Services Policy

Bradley 296-9249
Tues., Thurs. 10 8 a.m.

Health & Human Services Finance

Goodno 296-5515
Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 8 a.m.

Higher Education Finance

Leppik 296-7026
Mon., Wed., Fri. 300S 10 a.m.

Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Lindner 296-7806
Tues., Thurs. 200 8 a.m.

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

McElroy 296-4212
Mon., Wed., Fri. 200 8 a.m.

Judiciary Finance

Broecker 296-7153
Tues., Thurs. 300S 8 a.m.

K-12 Education Finance

Seagren 296-7803
Mon., Wed., Fri. 5 10 a.m.

Local Government

Larsen 296-4244
Mon., Wed. 200 12 :30 p.m.

Rules & Legislative Administration

Pawlenty 296-4128
Call of the Chair

State Government Finance

Krinkie 296-2907
Tues., Thurs. B 8 a.m.

Taxes

Abrams 296-9934
Tues., Thurs., Fri. 200 10 a.m.

Property Tax Division

Erhardt 296-4363
Mon., Wed. 200 10 a.m.

Transportation Policy

Workman 296-5066
Tues., Thurs. 5 8 a.m.

Transportation Finance

Molnau 296-8872
Mon., Wed. 5 8 a.m.

Ways & Means

Bishop 296-0573
Call of the Chair

B-Basement Hearing Room

Bill Introductions

HF1-HF47

Thursday, Jan. 7

HF1—Abeler (R) **Taxes**

One-time individual income tax rebate provided, and money appropriated.

HF2—Dorman (R) **Taxes**

Individual income and property tax class rates modified, HMO and nonprofit insurance premiums tax repealed, health care taxes phased out, education home-
stead credit increased, and general education levy reduced.

HF3—Seifert, J. (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

Early elementary class size reduced, and money appropriated.

HF4—Paulsen (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Initiative and referendum provided and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF5—Wilkin (R) **Taxes**

Three-fifths legislative majority vote required for sales and income tax and general education levy increases.

HF6—Hackbarth (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Snowmobile metal traction device use restrictions modified, and recreational vehicle rulemaking authority modified.

HF7—Haake (R) **Transportation Policy**

Motor vehicle emissions inspection program repealed.

HF8—Westfall (R) **Taxes**

Agricultural property tax credit and state reimbursement provided, and money appropriated.

HF9—Sviggum (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Former legislators prohibited from lobbying for one year after leaving office.

HF10—Pawlenty (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

School stability initiative for homeless children established under the housing finance agency, and money appropriated.

HF11—Abeler (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

General education basic formula allowance inflationary increase provided, and money appropriated.

HF12—Seifert, J. (R) **Crime Prevention**

Three strikes; mandatory life sentence imposed for persons convicted of a third violent felony offense.

HF13—Stanek (R) **Crime Prevention**

Criminal gang oversight council and strike force operation funded, grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF14—Fuller (R) **Education Policy**

Persons convicted of criminal sexual conduct considered ineligible to be a licensed teacher.

HF15—Kielkucki (R) **Education Policy**

Graduation standards advisory panel recommendations implemented, Profile of Learning requirements modified, state performance packages eliminated, and advisory group established.

HF16—Pawlenty (R) **Education Policy**

Public school students entitled to an education without serious classroom disruption, and remedy provided.

HF17—Hasskamp (DFL) **Taxes**

Nisswa tax increment financing district duration extension authorized.

HF18—Anderson, I. (DFL) **Education Policy**

School district bond sale limitations removed for certain outstanding capital loans.

HF19—Jaros (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Companies required to show financial need to qualify for subsidies.

HF20—Jaros (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

International trade promoted in East Central Europe, India, Southeast Asia, and Latin America; and money appropriated.

HF21—Jaros (DFL) **Civil Law**

Family statutory definition expanded for the purposes of state administered programs.

HF22—Jaros (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Minnesota office of international affairs established, and money appropriated.

HF23—Jaros (DFL) **Commerce**

Shopping cart child protective device requirement established.

HF24—Jaros (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Simulated elections provided for minors at polling places.

HF25—Pawlenty (R) **Taxes**

Charitable contributions federal income tax subtraction allowed for persons who do not itemize deductions.

HF26—Solberg (DFL) **Education Policy**

Mississippi Education Center previous grantee changed to the city of Grand Rapids, and condition imposed.

HF27—Seifert, M. (R) **Education Policy**

Profile of Learning portion of high school graduation rule repealed.

HF28—Anderson, I. (DFL) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Lifetime crossbow permits provided for persons with permanent physical disabilities.

HF29—Tunheim (DFL) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Snowmobiles with metal traction devices operation prohibition on certain public lands repealed.

HF30—Murphy (DFL) **Taxes**

Property tax rebate made permanent, and money appropriated.

HF31—Folliard (DFL) **Education Policy**

Nonpublic schools subject to the fair pupil dismissal law if families of

students have claimed education-related expenses tax credits.

HF32—Anderson, I. (DFL) **Commerce**

International Falls authorized to issue a temporary on-sale liquor license.

HF33—Anderson, I. (DFL) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

All-terrain vehicle operation provisions modified.

HF34—Greiling (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Unicameral legislature provided with 135 members, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF35—Haas (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Tobacco settlement money transferred from the general fund to the health care access fund, and MinnesotaCare premium and provider taxes repealed.

HF36—Erickson (R) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Onamia permitted an extension for commencement of tax increment financing district activities.

HF37—Erickson (R) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Milaca authorized tax increment financing district expenditures outside the district.

HF38—Luther (DFL) **Transportation Policy**

Anatomical gift donor designation automatically included on driver's license and identification card renewals.

HF39—Lieder (DFL) **Transportation Policy**

Motor vehicle sales tax proceeds dedicated to roads and public transit, passenger automobile registration tax rate reduced, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF40—Bradley (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Nursing facility residents allowed to request the use of restraints.

Continued on page 23

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

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MONDAY, Jan. 11

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: member and staff introductions; subcommittee discussion; Mark Shepard, House Research; review of 1997-1998 government operations committee, Rep. Phyllis Kahn.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: member and staff introductions; joint House Research/House Fiscal Analysis Department presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Trade and Economic Development review of 1998 performance report.

10 a.m.

Joint AGRICULTURE POLICY/TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chrs. Rep. Tim Finseth, Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HFXXXX (Westfall) farm property tax relief.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: new member orientation — the ABCs of K-12 finance.

Legislative Audit Commission

107 State Capitol

Chr. Sen. Deanna Wiener

Agenda: release evaluation report on juvenile out-of-home placement.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD

EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: member and staff introductions; committee procedures; agency overview of Department of Children, Families and Learning.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

TUESDAY, Jan. 12

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: continuation of joint House Research/House Fiscal Analysis Department presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: member and staff introductions; House Research presentation; plan for January meetings; questions and comments.

Joint TRANSPORTATION POLICY/TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chrs. Rep. Tom Workman,

Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: to be announced.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkle

Agenda: introductions and scope of committee jurisdiction; update on state agency preparations for Y2K, Department of Administration; update on Year 2000 Task Force, Rep. Bill Hilty.

10 a.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: education overview by Tim Strom, House Research, and Greg Crowe, House Fiscal Analysis Department.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: introduction of members and staff; issue update and preview by John Helland and Jeanne Cochran, House Research.

TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF1 (Abrams) tax rebate.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: review of 1997-1998 Department of Agriculture programs and projects.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: introduction of members and staff; organizational issues; role of committee; informational presentation by Peter Sausen, Department of Finance; presentation on the flow of legislation, Jeanne LeFevre, House Research.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: introduction of members and staff; rules and procedures of committee; presentations by House Research staff.

2:30 p.m.

WAYS & MEANS

454 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: discussion on National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) services in the fiscal area, Ron Snell, NCSL.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 13

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: Department of Veterans Affairs overview, Commissioner Bernie Melter; Department of Military Affairs overview, General Gary Le Blanc; video presentation, history of benefits, Rep. Jim Rostberg; veterans issues, Jim Cleary, House Research.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: presentation by Department of Health.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: to be announced.

10 a.m.

**ENVIRONMENT &
NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: member and staff introductions;
committee operation and organizational
details.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: introduction of committee rules and
other guidelines; history of K-12 finance and
planning estimates.

**Property Tax Division/
TAXES**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt
Agenda: member and staff introductions;
presentation by House Research.

12:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

After Session

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth
Agenda: overview of Department of
Agriculture.

**FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION FINANCE**

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: fiscal overview; legislative history of
committee programs.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT &
METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen
Agenda: member and staff introductions; to be
announced.

1:30 p.m. or Immediately
Following Session

WAYS AND MEANS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop
Agenda: bill(s) referred from House Taxes
Committee.

THURSDAY, Jan. 14

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: presentation by Department of
Human Services.

**JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
POLICY**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: to be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: member and staff introductions;
committee mission statement, goals, rules,
procedures and expectations; committee time
line and deadlines, agencies that receive
appropriations from committee, Gary Karger,
House Fiscal Analysis Department; reports
that are due to committee, member ranking of
reports to be heard by committee, House
Research.

**Joint TRANSPORTATION POLICY/
TRANSPORTATION FINANCE**

5 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Tom Workman,
Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: to be announced.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: history and overview of the
Minnesota Office of Technology, House
Research; review of the legislative auditor's
financial audit of the
Minnesota Office of Technology,
Claudia Gudvangen, Deputy Legislative
Auditor, Jeanine Leifeld, Audit Manager;
update on master plan and expenditure
tracking, Minnesota Office of Technology.

10 a.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares
Agenda: overview of the Task Force on
Transitional Issues report; public testimony.

**ENVIRONMENT &
NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: HF6 (Hackbarth) repeal of
snowmobile stud ban.

12:30 p.m.

**AGRICULTURE &
RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness
Agenda: review 1997-1998 Agricultural
Utilization Research Institute programs and
projects.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch
Agenda: continuation of presentation by Peter
Sausen, Department of Finance; presentation
on the flow of legislation, Jeanne LeFevre,
House Research; information on the debt
capacity forecast.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids
Agenda: agency overviews and presentations
by the Office of Tourism, Department of
Trade and Economic Development, and
Department of Commerce.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

4 p.m.

Legislative Audit Commission

107 State Capitol
Chr. Sen. Deanna Wiener
Agenda: release and discuss program
evaluation report on mosquito control.

FRIDAY, Jan. 15

8 a.m.

**GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS &
VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY**

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: to be announced.

**JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
FINANCE**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: Department of Commerce review of
1998 performance report.

Bill Introductions continued from page 21

HF41—Pelowski (DFL)

Education Policy

Minnesota science and mathematics foundation es-
tablished, and money appropriated,

HF42—Folliard (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Medical malpractice action statute of limitations modi-
fied.

HF43—Juhnke (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Green Lake sanitary sewer and water project wastewa-
ter infrastructure funded, bonds authorized, and
money appropriated.

HF44—Osskopp (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Wabasha water and sewer extended to Reads Landing,
and money appropriated.

HF45—Folliard (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

City councils authorized to establish procedures for
imposing ordinance violation civil penalties.

HF46—Bakk (DFL)

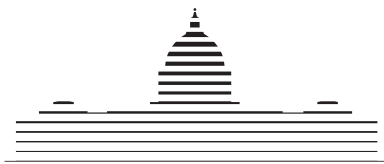
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Snowmobile metal traction device use restrictions and
definitions modified.

HF47—Bishop (R)

Civil Law

Domestic abuse victim civil cause of action provided.



MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
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Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota House of Representatives: Election 1998

Republican members	71
DFL members	63
Number of men	99
Number of women	35
DFL women	20
Republican women	15
Women serving at the end of the 1998 session (record high)	40
Percent of current first-termers who are women	23.8
Percent of all members who are women	26.1
Percent of House members who did not serve last session	15.7
Number of newly elected members	21
Newly elected Republican members	14
Newly elected DFL members	7
Percent of incumbents re-elected	94.9
Number of incumbents who lost	6
Number of those who were Republicans	0
Open seats	15
Open seats previously held by a DFLer, now held by a Republican	2
Open seats previously held by a Republican, now held by a DFLer	1
Uncontested House races, 1998	6
Number of those in DFL-held districts	0
Change in DFL Caucus membership from January 1997 level	-7
Change in Republican Caucus	+7
Republican Caucus' cumulative loss of legislative experience since the end of the 1998 session, in years	58
DFL Caucus' loss, in years	112
Votes cast in Minnesota for the 1998 general election	2,105,377
As a percent of all eligible voters	60.45
Districts with a Reform Party candidate, 1996	14
Districts with a Reform Party candidate, 1998	14
Greatest percentage of votes garnered by a Reform Party candidate, District 35A	20.6
By a Grassroots Party candidate, District 59A	9.7
By a Libertarian Party candidate, District 27B	8.4
By a Better Life Party candidate, District 34A	4.9

Sources: Office of the Secretary of State, Legislative Reference Library, and House Public Information Office.

For more information



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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ January 15, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 2

MINNESOTA

MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 81ST LEGISLATIVE SESSION 1999-2000 MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 81ST LEGISLATIVE SESSION 1999-2000



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
EIGHTY-FIRST SESSION 1999-2000

Session Weekly is a nonpartisan publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Office. During the 1999-2000 Legislative Session, each issue reports daily House action between Thursdays of each week, lists bill introductions and upcoming committee meeting schedules, and provides other information. The publication is a service of the Minnesota House. No fee.

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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • January 15, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 2

Reflections

A highly important official in state government is the speaker of the house, who presides over the largest legislative body.

On Jan. 5 when Rep. Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) was elected speaker of the house, he became the 60th person to hold the office since Minnesota's territorial government began in 1849. The last Republican speaker (then called an Independent-Republican) was David Jennings (IR-Truman), who presided from 1985 to 1987.

As Minnesota prepares to celebrate its 150th year since becoming a territory and 141st year as a state, Speaker Sviggum joins a historically unique and politically diverse cadre of elected officials. This group — 58 men and one woman — helped to shape, lead, and direct the passage of laws that now govern the state and its residents.

Speakers have come to the Capitol from many political parties and all parts of the state. They've come from northern, north-central, southwestern, northwestern, and west-central parts of the state, including the cities of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and the metropolitan-area suburbs.

In 1849, Joseph W. Furber (Cottage Grove) controlled the gavel as Minnesota's first speaker. He served in the House as a member of the Whig Party. Another Whig speaker, John Quincy Farmer of Spring Valley also served as a Republican.

Unlike the political makeup of the 1999 Minnesota state government — there is a Republican-controlled House, a DFL-controlled Senate, and a Reform Party governor — many early speakers and Senate leaders were members of the same political party as the governor. One speaker, Ezra T. Champlin (Garden City) was a member of the lesser known Democratic Alliance Party. Others were the Conservative, Liberal, Conservative/Republican, Independent, Liberal/Democrat, Farmer-Labor, Independent Republican, and Democratic Farmer-Labor parties.

In 1913, when Henry Rines (Mora) was elected speaker, the Progressives controlled both houses. Speaker William I. Nolan (Minneapolis), a Conservative/Republican whose party gained control in 1919 from the Progressives, was elected with the endorsement of members of the Nonpartisan League and the Working People's Nonpartisan Political League.

Over the years, other rare activities took place. The speaker in 1859, Amos Cogswell (Aurora), was in the Republican Constitutional Convention, then ran as the Democratic candidate for secretary of state in 1867. Lawrence M. Hall (St. Cloud) was elected to serve as a Democrat in 1934, but he caucused with the Conservatives in 1939 to become the youngest speaker.

A very different election for speaker took place exactly 20 years ago in 1979 when the House was evenly divided. Rod Searle (IR-Waseca) was elected as a compromise. When changes in members necessitated elections that put the DFL in the majority by two members, and factions split the party, a coalition of 26 DFLers and 49 IRs elected Norton as speaker.

Speaker Sviggum joins a unique group of officials who served their state in a most honorable manner.

—LeClair G. Lambert

INSIDE

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On the cover: A photo illustration depicts the 134 Minnesotans who serve in the House of Representatives.

—Photo illustration by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

Giving it back . . .

Tax rebate plans top the 1999 legislative agenda

By Paul Wahl

A proposed rebate of much of the state's budget surplus was a major topic of conversation in the House during the first full week of the 1999 session. But the tone of the conversation changed as the week progressed.

Monday, hearings were announced on a House bill that would provide a rebate based on income tax paid. But by week's end, a plan that would provide a refund based on sales tax paid appeared to have the upper hand.

In a televised appearance Jan. 11, Gov. Jesse Ventura said he favors the sales tax proposal because he sees it as simpler to implement and he believes it has a better chance of being exempt from federal taxes. A formal rebate plan was expected from Ventura before the week's end.

House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) said he was "all ears" to the idea. However, the bill (HF1) that contains the House Republicans' rebate plan was heard in the House Taxes Committee Jan. 12 and is expected to come up for a vote in that committee after the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday Jan. 19.

The rebate plan, sponsored by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), would refund about \$1.1 billion. Most taxpayers would receive a rebate of about 20 percent of their 1997 state income taxes.

A separate bill (HF8) would provide a mechanism for returning \$80 million to Minnesota farmers. Language from that bill was adopted as an amendment to HF1 in the Taxes Committee Jan. 12.

Under provisions of HF1, all individuals or couples who paid up to \$150 or less in state income taxes for 1997 would get the entire amount back. Those who paid more than \$150 would get back the \$150 plus 20 percent of all taxes paid over that amount.

The maximum rebate would be \$7,600 for married couples and \$3,800 for all other taxpayers. Taxpayers would receive their rebate checks 60 to 90 days after final passage of the bill.

The average taxpayer would receive a \$575 check, according to statistics supplied by Minnesota Department of Revenue.



Tax bills being debated in the House would send money back to Minnesotans. One plan would provide an income tax rebate, and another proposal would send money to farmers.

Photo illustration by Tom Olmscheid

Meanwhile, the farm rebate language aims to give "true farmers" a boost, said Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus), chair of the House Agriculture Policy Committee and an architect of the legislation.

"Currently, farmers are in great need of on-hand cash to help pay their upcoming property taxes or [to buy] farm supplies for the spring," Finseth said.

The proposal is separated into aid for livestock and for cropland-intensive farmers. Livestock farmers with 160 acres or less would receive half their property tax payment, not including taxes due for their house, garage, and one acre of land for their home.

Farmers with more than 160 certifiable acres for the 1998 crop year would receive \$4 per acre to apply toward their property taxes.

Farmers would have to complete a simple form and send it to the Department of Revenue to receive the rebate. Rebates would be capped at \$10,000 per farmer.

Both plans faced scrutiny in hearings before the Taxes Committee Jan. 12 and before a joint meeting of the Taxes Committee and the House Agricultural & Rural Development Finance Committee Jan. 11.

Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) said there is no way of knowing whether the farm proposals would benefit those most in need, and

he asked for a distributive analysis of the potential rebates.

Orfield said it appears to him that large farmers would get the most aid, and he wondered whether they would be considered the most needy.

But Finseth said that help would be channeled to every farmer "who's taking the risk out there." He said it was unfair to say that because a farmer owns 2,500 acres he is more prosperous than a farmer with only 500 acres. He added that three or four members of a family may be making their living from the larger acreage.

Rep. Rod Skoe (DFL-Clearbrook) was concerned that farmers who grow minor crops that don't require certification, including wild rice growers like himself, wouldn't benefit from the legislation.

Under the proposal, only acres growing crops that are part of a federal program are eligible for the per-acre payment.

"If you're trying to benefit all the farmers of the state, then you should benefit all the farmers of the state," Skoe said.

Finseth said 90 percent or more of the state's 19.6 million acres are planted in certifiable crops.

"The attempt was to include the largest number [of farmers] possible," he said,

adding that he hasn't found a farmer yet that isn't hurting.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virgina) said he would like to see the state's 4,800 loggers — tree farmers, as he described them — included in the proposal.

"They've had three bad years in a row," he said.

Several legislators questioned why agriculture was being singled out for help when other sectors of the economy are also in dire straits.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) said he represents an inner-city neighborhood where additional money for police protection is needed because "families believe it's too dangerous to let their children play outside. They're also in dire straits."

Finseth said there are probably thousands of things the state should be doing, but added that agriculture is 40 percent of the state's economy and the agricultural rebate plan is targeted specifically at keeping that sector healthy.

"This spring, you're going to see more foreclosures in agriculture than ever before," Finseth said.


Representatives from a handful of organizations whose members are concerned about taxes and state spending also testified on the proposals, mostly lauding the effort to provide the rebate immediately.

According to some, any dollars refunded under both the farm rebate plan and the income tax rebate plan would be taxable under federal income tax statutes. That provides impetus for the plan that Ventura and some DFLers have advanced to base rebates on established estimates of sales tax paid, linked to income.

No one was prepared to say conclusively that the sales tax based refund wouldn't be taxable by the federal government, but most admitted chances were better than those of the rebate based on income taxes.

Between \$100 million and \$200 million would be paid in taxes to the federal government under the income tax rebate plan as it's written, according to some estimates.

Hints that the rebate may grow even larger were also sounded by the revenue department Jan. 12 when officials revealed that state revenues for November and December were \$98 million over projections.

One plan to permanently reduce income tax rates is contained in another bill (HF2), sponsored by Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea), that has not yet received a hearing in a House committee. 

Amendments and the 'extraordinary majority'



You can't sit on the fence when it comes to constitutional amendments in Minnesota. If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.

In fact, it says so right on the ballot: "Failure to vote on a constitutional amendment will have the same effect as voting no for the amendment."

That's because Minnesota's constitution requires that amendments be approved by a "majority of all electors voting at said election." For an amendment to pass it must be approved by an extraordinary majority — a majority of all voters voting in the election, not just those voting on that particular question.

Prior to 1898, the process to amend the Minnesota Constitution was one of the easiest in the country. Amendments had to be approved by a simple majority of the Legislature and a simple majority of voters voting on that question.

Critics argued that the constitution could be amended too easily, subjecting the document to the whims of an often-fickle electorate. Minnesota's first governor, Henry Sibley, lambasted the fact that the state's answer to the Magna Carta could be so easily altered.

In 1897, legislators sent an amendment to the voters that put the current extraordinary majority requirement in place. Voters approved the amendment in the 1898 election.

That amendment is often referred to as the "brewers' amendment" because the proposal was allegedly pushed through the Legislature by anti-prohibition forces who wanted to make it difficult to regulate liquor.

The effects of the 1898 amendment can be seen in the numbers. From 1858 to 1898, voters approved 48 of 66 amendments to the constitution, a 73 percent approval rate. In contrast, from 1898 to 1998, voters approved 71 of 145 amendments, slightly less than 50 percent.

Ironically, the 1898 amendment would not have passed under its own terms. The change was approved by a majority of voters who voted on that particular ballot question. However, the amendment fell 55,866 votes short of a majority of all voters who went to the polls that year.

In effect, about 28 percent of Minnesota voters in the 1898 election decided that all future constitutional amendments would have to be ratified by over 50 percent of all voters.

In 1974, legislators passed a proposed constitutional amendment that would have eased the extraordinary majority requirement. Under the proposal, an amendment would have become law upon receiving 55 percent of the votes on that

particular question.

Although the 1974 amendment was approved by almost 59 percent of voters voting on the question, it failed to meet the 1898 extraordinary majority requirement and was not approved.

Constitutional amendments have done well for themselves in the last 10 years. Despite the 1898 requirement, voters have approved nine out of 10 amendments, including the three amendments approved in November 1998 — one giving constitutional protection to hunting and fishing; one abolishing the state treasurer's office; and one extending state lottery proceeds to an environmental trust fund.



An 1898 amendment to the Minnesota Constitution made it more difficult to amend the constitution.

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Turning waste to watts

A British firm is considering building a power plant in Minnesota that would turn poultry manure into electricity and leave behind a high-quality farm fertilizer.

Rupert Fraser, who represents London-based Fibrowatt, outlined his plans before the House Agriculture Policy Committee Jan. 13.

Fibrowatt has developed a high-tech system for burning poultry "litter" that Fraser said would benefit growers as well as the state's environment and economy.

The company's three operating power stations in the United Kingdom obtain poultry droppings from surrounding farms. The waste is transported in tightly covered trucks to the station's fuel-receiving site and kept at negative pressure to prevent odors from escaping.

At the plant, a furnace burns the manure at 1,500 degrees, heating water in a boiler to produce steam, which drives a turbine linked to an electricity generator. The ash is recovered and sold as fertilizer.

Fraser said the plan is deceptively simple.

The idea drew mixed response from committee members.

Responding to concerns of Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls) about emissions from the plant, Fraser said the plants meet stringent U.K. limits for emissions and that officials of the Environmental Protection Agency said preliminarily that the plant would pass muster here.

Rep. Leslie Schumacher (DFL-Princeton) said she is skeptical of the plan because Minnesota is notorious for creating systems for environmental protection that end up being costly. She pointed to the state's refuse dried fuels program as an example.

She suggested the current method of spreading poultry waste on fields might be adequate.

Greg Langmo, a poultry farmer from Litchfield, Minn., who accompanied Fraser to the hearing, said the existing method of poultry manure disposal is cumbersome.

"In the spring, farmers don't want you on the fields, and in the fall, you may only have a few days to spread because of the weather," Langmo testified. "We can't move enough of it far enough at the right time."

He said more than 600,000 tons of poultry waste is generated each year in Minnesota.



Rupert Fraser, representing the British company Fibrowatt, testifies before the House Agriculture & Rural Development Policy Committee Jan. 13. Fibrowatt built the world's first power station fueled by poultry "litter."

Fraser said he isn't ready to ask the Legislature for anything specific at this time, but he said federal subsidies were under consideration. Langmo said it would be helpful to include poultry manure in any renewable energy language in existing renewable energy programs.

The committee took no action.



BONDING

High hurdle awaits bond shift

Any proposal to repeal the 1998 law requiring the state to pay \$400 million in cash for that year's capital projects will require 81 House votes and 41 Senate votes, according to an interpretation issued by the state's bond counsel.

In a letter provided to members of the House Capitol Investment Committee Jan. 14, the counsel says that it will not certify the sale of bonds unless they are authorized in the form of a bonding bill, which requires a three-fifths majority under the state constitution.

According to the letter, the 1998 law "has terminated the authority to issue bonds for the projects in question and the appropriation of funds necessary to pay the bonds; the authorization of bonds for such projects must be

accomplished by a bonding bill complying with the stated language of the constitution; and the bond counsel opinion standard would prevent us from approving bonds not authorized by such a bonding bill."

The firm does not believe that a new bonding bill would require the detail of the 1998 bonding law.

"As an aside, we note that bonding bills typically contain language amplifying and describing projects already identified," the letter states. "We do not believe such provisions are constitutionally required here, so long as the purposes for the bonds and proceeds allocated to those purposes are clearly set forth."

Wishing to free up surplus funds for potential tax rebates, House Republicans had expressed interest in repealing the 1998 law which replaces the bonds with cash.

With the ruling of the counsel, Republicans said that they won't pursue the bond funds.

House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) said that his caucus does not need the bond funds because its \$1.1 billion tax rebate plan makes use of the first tobacco settlement payments. He said that the governor and the Senate DFLers may need the bond money because their rebate plans don't call for using the settlement money.

Last year's \$999 million capital projects law authorized the state to issue bonds and pay cash for a myriad of capital improvements statewide. Under the law, the state was to bond for approximately half of the projects and pay cash for the other half.

A provision in last year's tax law directed the Department of Finance to replace \$400 million of the bonded sum with a \$400 million cash payment if a sufficient budget surplus was projected for the remainder of the 1998-1999 biennium.

In November 1998, the Department of Finance announced a \$1.56 billion projected surplus. Of that amount, \$400 million is scheduled to pay for the capital projects.

The law firm of Dorsey and Whitney in Minneapolis has acted as the state's general obligation bond counsel since the 1960s. The firm was selected to certify and give opinions concerning state bonds by the attorney general.

Peter Sausen, assistant commissioner with the Department of Finance, provided the Jan. 13 letter to members of the Capital Investment Committee.



DEVELOPMENT

Job one: finding workers

Minnesota's high employment rate has forced the Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) to adjust priorities, officials told legislators at the House Jobs & Economic Development Finance Committee meeting Jan. 11.

Gary Fields, deputy commissioner with the DTED Business and Community Development Division, reported that the agency is working hard to respond to the labor shortage.

"Workforce availability is our greatest challenge," he said.

According to the department's 1998 performance report, statewide employment increased 16.9 percent from 1991 to 1997. Nationally, employment increased only 12.1 percent in that period.

Fields told the committee that the department is working on issues such as employee recruitment and affordable housing projects to attract and retain workers. He also said that the department is concerned with the creation of high-quality, livable-wage jobs.

"Such targeted job creation is important so that all regions have an adequate number of well-paying jobs which will enhance future career opportunities for all Minnesotans and fuel the state's long-term economic prosperity," the performance report states.

Recently-appointed DTED Commissioner Jerry Carlson responded to questions during his first appearance before a committee of the Legislature.

Rep. Mike Jaros (DFL-Duluth) asked the Ventura appointee if he thought that it was fair for welfare recipients to have to prove the need for assistance when businesses often receive assistance without much scrutiny.

"I think that it's dangerous ground to try and make some black-and-white comparison between the human welfare side and what I hesitate to call the business welfare side," Carlson said.

He told the committee that he feels business results can often be quantified, while results for individuals should be qualified.

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EDUCATION

Disbanding the state board

The nuts and bolts of dissolving the State Board of Education were discussed at a meeting of the House Education Policy Committee Jan. 14.

A measure signed into law in 1998 by then-Gov. Arne Carlson included a provision to abolish the 80-year-old board effective Dec. 31 of that year.

Under the law, the board's duties will be transferred to the commissioner of the Department of Children, Families and Learning, unless the Legislature passes other recommendations this session.

And it's likely that lawmakers will come up with those additional recommendations partly based on a Dec. 15, 1998, report issued by the Task Force on Transitional Issues.

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) and Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls), both members of the task force, briefed their fellow committee members on the report.

While most of the duties will be handed over to the commissioner, the report suggests that some responsibilities be transferred elsewhere to prevent overload at the department. Suggestions include allowing school boards to appeal commissioner decisions to administrative law judges, and finding new home bases for licensing administrators and for overseeing bilingual and English as a second language teachers.

In addition, the report recommends that advisory committees be set up to handle charter schools and rulemaking.

But some witnesses and legislators questioned the need for advisory committees. They pointed out that if open meeting laws are followed, members of those committees (who often serve on other boards or committees together) would be in danger of violating the law if they happen to meet quorum somewhere other than the actual meeting — at a different committee meeting, for instance — and happen to discuss relevant issues.

And creating a suitable organization for licensing administrators drew fire from some witnesses, who advocated that the process be kept separate from teacher licensing and also subject to peer review.

Representatives from the state academies for the deaf and blind in Faribault, and the State Special Education Advisory Council also testified at the committee. Both favored repealing the 1998 law and reinstating the board, citing benefits the board brings to their organizations.

Originally, the House version of the 1998 omnibus education bill did not call for abolishing the nine-member board. A Senate provision to eliminate the board was added in conference committee. But the process was left largely undefined.

"Anything done in haste should be examined later on," Greiling said.



EMPLOYMENT

League offers labor solutions

The Minnesota Citizens League presented its plan to address the state's labor shortage to members of the House Jobs & Economic Development Finance Committee Jan. 13.

The nonprofit public interest group released "Help Wanted: More Opportunities than People" in November 1998. The report consists of a review of the state's labor situation and policy recommendations.

Janna King, a member of the Citizen League's Twin Cities Labor Shortage Committee, said that policymakers have dealt with labor surpluses for 63 of the last 68 years. She said the switch to dealing with a shortage is difficult.

"This is such a huge shift," she said. "I don't think we have a clue how to act. It presents a lot of challenges."

In its report, the Citizens League articulates a new approach for economic development and labor policy.

"New paradigms, programs, and collaboratives should look to improve the productivity of the regional economy, making up through sheer innovation what it lacks in terms of sheer numbers of workers," the report says.

Here are some of the policy recommendations made in the report.

- Policy makers should move away from generic job creation to improved productivity, including focusing on "industry clusters" over individual businesses. The report advocates supporting strong niche industries, such as computers and medical devices, that can have long-term effects on quality job creation.
- The Legislature should pass tax policies that encourage technology-based investments. A new economy based on a labor shortage will rely heavily on technology.
- Education and training programs should provide longer term assistance to entry-level workers and those who are underemployed. These programs should focus on meeting the needs of employers, especially employers identified in the industry clusters. Training should also provide workers who are

underemployed with skills not only to get a job, but to keep that job and advance.

Legislators were interested in recommendations on how to make employment training programs more effective. The report outlines a "best practices" review process that would give funding bodies the power to reward effective programs and eliminate those which don't produce.

The report also suggests introducing more competition by placing the funding power directly with the trainee. One suggestion is a voucher system, where a worker could choose the program that most suits his or her needs.

State Demographer Tom Gillaspay also testified before the committee. He said that Minnesota's labor growth since World War II was based on the natural aging of a young population and the entry of women in to the work force. These factors have leveled off.

He said that employment growth averaged 1.6 percent annually over the last seven years, while the labor force only grew by an average of 1.4 percent per year over the same period.



ENVIRONMENT

New plan targets stud ban

A statewide ban on the use of snowmobile studs would be removed under a proposal approved Jan. 14 by the House Environment & Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), sponsor of the bill (HF6), said it would cause state



Mark Hugunin, from the Minnesota Parks and Trails Council, testifies against a bill that would repeal the snowmobile stud ban. Critics of the bill say that the ban is necessary because of damage to the state's paved trails.



Doug Franzen, representing the Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association, testifies in favor of a bill that would repeal the 1998 snowmobile stud ban. The bill was approved by the House Environment & Natural Resources Policy Committee Jan. 14.

snowmobiling rules to revert to 1997 law. Snowmobiling with studs would still be prohibited on paved trails, but it would be legal in other public areas.

A 1998 law is set to ban the use of snowmobile studs on any public lands, roads, or trails after July 1. In other words, this is the last winter studs will be allowed in the state, except on private lands and frozen lakes.

Hackbarth's plan also would eliminate the current \$50 annual surcharge for snowmobiles with studs. The temporary surcharge, mandated by the 1998 law to be in place until the ban takes effect, is earmarked for the repair of paved state trails.

Greg Sorenson and Doug Franzen of the Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association appeared in support of the bill. Sorenson said banning the use of studs would be devastating to businesses in the tourism industry. And Franzen said studs improve snowmobile safety by enabling people to stop faster, especially on ice.

But Mark Hugunin, of the Minnesota Parks & Trails Council, said snowmobiles with studs have caused tremendous damage to trails. Repairing the damage on state-operated trails would cost about \$1 million, he said. Repairing trails that are maintained by counties or townships would increase the amount to \$3 million.

Hugunin recommended that any legislation include establishing a fund to pay for repairs to trails and enforcement of the rules. Money should also be designated for public education efforts, he said.

Hackbarth said preventing future damage to trails could be addressed in a separate bill.

"I think a lot of snowmobilers were not aware that they couldn't go on paved trails (when using studs). But this has been a hot topic, and I would hope to see a decline," Hackbarth said.

The bill now goes to the House Environment & Natural Resources Finance Committee.



GOVERNMENT

The rules have changed

"Windbag" was the word of the day during a Jan. 11 floor debate over proposed changes to the permanent rules of the House.

Members adopted the permanent rules of the House on a 79-52 vote, but only after nearly five hours of lengthy debate — or "wind-bagging," as some members called it.

Much of the time was spent discussing changes to the "previous question" motion, which allows excessive debate to be terminated and an immediate vote to be taken on the proposal in question.

Approved changes call for minimum time limits before the previous question can be called, including a two-hour debate allowance for major finance or revenue bills, one hour for other bills, and 20 minutes for debate on amendments or motions.

DFL members questioned the need to change the previous question rule, which has rarely been used. They said that creating time limits would encourage members to invoke the rule and effectively impose censorship and create artificial time limits on debate.

"I need to hear the debate," said Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby). "I don't make up my mind before I get here."

Republican members countered that the changes in fact provided for minimum debate times, whereas the old rules allowed the previous question to be called at any time.

"This is a modest, gentle reform that on its face gives the minority more rights than they currently have," said Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan).

In another rule change, members approved an amendment offered by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), that adds the word "non-denominational" to the description of the type of prayer allowed in the House chamber. (Each floor session begins with a prayer by the House chaplain or, as is often the case, by a visiting chaplain for the day.) The amendment also added that the prayer must "respect the religious diversity of the House."

Members also passed significant changes to the rules governing bills.

The General Orders calendar (once the list of bills awaiting floor action) is no more. It has been replaced by the General Register. The Committee of the Whole process that went along with General Orders bills also has been eliminated.

The Special Orders calendar (the list of bills designated for floor action on a given day) is gone, too. It has been replaced with the Calendar of Day.

There also is a new deadline on selecting bills for the Calendar of the Day. The House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee must set the Calendar of the Day by 5 p.m. on the day before the floor session. But that rule only applies until late April, allowing more flexibility in the weeks before adjournment. (Previously, Special Orders were often designated just minutes before the beginning of a floor session, and critics said that provided too little notice for interested parties.)

There will no longer be "Rule 1.10" bills. The list of fiscal bills called up on the floor by the chair of the House Ways and Means Committee will now be called the Fiscal Calendar. Also, the number of co-sponsors allowed for a bill has been increased from five to 35.

Other changes to the House rules require recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance at each floor session (instead of weekly) and require the process by which budget priorities are set to be publicized.

The new rules took effect immediately.



HUMAN SERVICES

Report: programs need help

Some lawmakers have questioned whether the state should build more facilities for juvenile out-of-home placements, but a Legislative Audit report recommends increasing the quality of services rather than the number of beds.

Legislative Auditor Jim Nobles said out-of-home placement is often associated with juvenile crime, but the majority of such placements are made because of the conduct of parents, not children.

The report says placements are caused by a child's behavior only 30 percent of the time. Parents' conduct, such as abusing or neglecting a child, is the cause 46 percent of the time. Other placements are ordered because children have drug or alcohol problems or are emotionally disturbed.

The variety of reasons for placements makes it a challenge to design and administer appropriate programs, Nobles said. The adminis-

tration — and funding — of those programs is handled primarily by county governments in Minnesota. Approaches vary between counties, as do the costs of providing services in different counties. The state spends \$225 million annually on out-of-home placements.

The auditor's report involved interviews and surveys of human services directors and corrections supervisors who work with out-of-home placement throughout the state. Among suggestions for improving "treatment care" foster homes, group homes, and correctional, mental health, and chemical dependency facilities are:

- Increase options for short-term placement. (Some officials said "standard" programs are longer — and more costly — than necessary.);
- Tailor programs to meet the needs of families;
- Preserve family ties by allowing more frequent parental visits, especially in correctional facilities and group homes;
- Provide more "aftercare" services for children who have returned home after completing programs; and
- Improve sensitivity to cultural and ethnic differences in children served. The report showed disproportionate percentages of out-of-home placements involve children of ethnic minorities.

Other major recommendations of the report include a proposal to require courts to set more specific placement goals and to require state agencies to monitor and report on the success of those goals.

The report also suggests that counties be required to establish juvenile screening teams and to develop community-based alternatives to out-of-home placements.

Joel Alter, program evaluation coordinator with the Office of Legislative Auditor, said the task that remains is determining how successful the programs are.

Most counties evaluate the success of programs, but gathering statewide information is just getting started, said Erin Sullivan Sutton, Director of the Family & Children's Services Division of the Department of Human Services. She said her department will be releasing reports that evaluate outcomes of child welfare programs and other related areas. Sullivan Sutton said the reports, which were requested by the 1998 Legislature, will create a base of information that will make it easier to continue gathering data in future years.

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



TRANSPORTATION

Growing transit demands

Officials from the Metropolitan Council gave lawmakers a glimpse of their public transit budget request at a joint meeting of the House Transportation Finance and House Transportation Policy committees Jan. 12.

The council's \$120.6 million request includes provisions for basic operations and investment packages to provide for future planning. In addition, Metro Transit is asking for \$52 million in bond revenue for capital projects.

Metro Transit officials and representatives from the Suburban Transit Association briefed lawmakers on their budgets and operations as part of the committees' first meeting of the legislative session.

The two organizations make up the majority of public transit services in the metro area, with the Suburban Transit Association providing small, suburban-based commuter routes and carpool programs in cities that are not part of the Metro Transit system, such as Burnsville, Eagan, Shakopee, Rosemount, and Prior Lake. Metro Transit runs the area's public bus system and Metro Mobility, a transit service for people with disabilities.

Jim Solem, a regional administrator with the Metropolitan Council, told committee members that in order to keep up with the growing traffic congestion in the Twin Cities metro area, the transit system will have to be doubled by 2020.

Art Leahy, general manager for Metro Transit, said ridership is at its highest rate in five years and is exceeding service increases.

To keep pace with that growth, Metro Transit would use the state funding to increase service by 8.3 percent and increase Metro Mobility service by 7.7 percent.

The package also would provide additional funding for the Hiawatha Avenue Corridor project, a planned light-rail transit line from downtown Minneapolis to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America. Funds also would be earmarked to help with adjustments in property taxes as service increases.

Metro Transit would use the \$52 million in bond funds to replace 292 buses, construct five new park-and-ride lots and nine transit hubs, and complete a garage in the eastern metropolitan area. The money also would cover matching funds for federal transportation grants.

Minnesota House of Representatives

1999 Committee Assignments by Member

Abeler, Jim (R)-Anoka 49A Education Policy Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Health & Human Services Policy K-12 Education Finance	Carruthers, Phil (DFL)-Brooklyn Center ... 47B Civil Law, DFL lead Capital Investment Rules & Legislative Administration Taxes	Entenza, Matt (DFL)-St. Paul 64A Commerce Education Policy K-12 Education Finance Ways & Means
Abrams, Ron (R)-Minnetonka 45A Taxes, chair Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Property Tax Division Rules & Legislative Administration Ways & Means	Cassell, George (R)-Alexandria 10B Agriculture Policy Education Policy Higher Education Finance Jobs & Economic Development Policy	Erhardt, Ron (R)-Edina 42A Property Tax Division, chair Commerce Taxes
Anderson, Bruce (R)-Buffalo Township ... 19B Crime Prevention, vice chair Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy State Government Finance	Chaudhary, Satveer (DFL)-Fridley 52A Education Policy Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Jobs & Economic Development Policy	Erickson, Sondra (R)-Princeton 17A Education Policy Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy K-12 Education Finance
Anderson, Irv (DFL)-International Falls 3A Capital Investment Environment & Natural Resources Policy Jobs & Economic Development Policy	Clark, James T. (R)-Springfield 23A Transportation Policy, vice chair Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Property Tax Division Taxes	Finseth, Tim (R)-Angus 1B Agriculture Policy, chair Agriculture & Rural Development Finance Environment & Natural Resources Finance Environment & Natural Resources Policy Ways & Means
Bakk, Thomas "Tom" (DFL)-Cook 6A Commerce Environment & Natural Resources Finance Environment & Natural Resources Policy	Clark, Karen (DFL)-Minneapolis 61A Commerce Jobs & Economic Development Finance Jobs & Economic Development Policy	Folliard, Betty (DFL)-Hopkins 44A Education Policy Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Higher Education Finance
Biernat, Len (DFL)-Minneapolis 59A Education Policy K-12 Education Finance Transportation Policy	Daggett, Roxann (R)-Frazee 11A Taxes, vice chair Capital Investment Jobs & Economic Development Policy Property Tax Division	Fuller, Doug (R)-Bemidji 4A Capital Investment Crime Prevention Judiciary Finance Ways & Means
Bishop, Dave (R)-Rochester 30B Ways & Means, chair Capital Investment Civil Law Crime Prevention	Dauids, Gregory M. (R)-Preston 31B Commerce, chair Agriculture Policy Ethics Jobs & Economic Development Finance Transportation Policy	Gerlach, Chris (R)-Apple Valley 36A Commerce Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy State Government Finance
Boudreau, Lynda (R)-Faribault 25B Health & Human Services Policy, vice chair Civil Law Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Health & Human Services Finance	Dawkins, Andy (DFL)-St. Paul 65A Civil Law Jobs & Economic Development Policy Taxes	Gleason, Mark S. (DFL)-Richfield 63B Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs State Government Finance
Bradley, Fran (R)-Rochester 30A Health & Human Services Policy, chair Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Health & Human Services Finance Rules & Legislative Administration	Dehler, Steve (R)-St. Joseph 14A Higher Education Finance, vice chair Education Policy Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy	Goodno, Kevin (R)-Moorhead 9A Health & Human Services Finance, chair Crime Prevention Health & Human Services Policy
Broecker, Sherry (R)-Vadnais Heights 53B Judiciary Finance, chair Civil Law Crime Prevention	Dempsey, Jerry (R)-Hastings 29A Capital Investment, vice chair Education Policy K-12 Education Finance	Gray, Gregory (DFL)-Minneapolis 58B Education Policy Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Buesgens, Mark (R)-Jordan 35B Education Policy K-12 Education Finance Transportation Policy	Dorman, Dan (R)-Albert Lea 27A Agriculture Policy Jobs & Economic Development Policy Property Tax Division Taxes	Greenfield, Lee (DFL)-Minneapolis 62A Health & Human Services Finance, DFL lead Health & Human Services Policy Ways & Means
Carlson, Lyndon R. (DFL)-Crystal 46B Education Policy, DFL lead Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Higher Education Finance Ways & Means	Dorn, John (DFL)-Mankato 24A Education Policy Health & Human Services Policy Higher Education Finance	Greiling, Mindy (DFL)-Roseville 54B Education Policy Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy K-12 Education Finance

Gunther, Bob (R)-Fairmont 26A Jobs & Economic Development Finance, vice chair Agriculture Policy Commerce Jobs & Economic Development Policy	Jaros, Mike (DFL)-Duluth 7B Jobs & Economic Development Policy, DFL lead Civil Law Jobs & Economic Development Finance	Kuisle, William (R)-Rochester 31A Property Tax Division, vice chair Taxes Transportation Finance Transportation Policy
Haake, Barb (R)-Mounds View 52B Crime Prevention Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Transportation Finance Transportation Policy	Jennings, Loren Geo (DFL)-Harris 18B Commerce, DFL lead Health & Human Services Policy Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Taxes	Larsen, Peg (R)-Lakeland 56B Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs, chair Crime Prevention Judiciary Finance
Haas, Bill (R)-Champlin 48A Ways & Means, vice chair Commerce Environment & Natural Resources Policy Health & Human Services Policy	Johnson, Alice M. (DFL)-Spring Lake Park.. 48B K-12 Education Finance, DFL lead Education Policy Transportation Policy Ways & Means	Larson, Dan (DFL)-Bloomington 40A Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Transportation Finance Transportation Policy
Hackbarth, Tom (R)-Cedar 50A Environment & Natural Resources Finance, vice chair Environment & Natural Resources Policy Jobs & Economic Development Policy	Juhnke, Al (DFL)-Willmar 15A Agriculture Policy Transportation Finance Transportation Policy	Leighton, Rob (DFL)-Austin 27B Civil Law Jobs & Economic Development Policy Rules & Legislative Administration Taxes
Harder, Elaine (R)-Jackson 22B Ethics, chair Agriculture Policy Agriculture & Rural Development Finance Property Tax Division Taxes	Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)-Minneapolis 59B Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy, DFL lead Commerce State Government Finance	Lenczewski, Ann (DFL)-Bloomington 40B Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Property Tax Division Taxes
Hasskamp, Kris (DFL)-Crosby 12A Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs, DFL lead Commerce Property Tax Division Taxes	Kalis, Henry J. (DFL)-Walters 26B Capital Investment, DFL lead Transportation Policy Ways & Means	Leppik, Peggy (R)-Golden Valley 45B Higher Education Finance, chair Capital Investment Education Policy
Hausman, Alice (DFL)-St. Paul 66B Transportation Policy, DFL lead Environment & Natural Resources Policy Transportation Finance	Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (DFL)- Minneapolis 60A Environment & Natural Resources Policy Transportation Policy Ways & Means	Lieder, Bernie L. (DFL)-Crookston 2A Transportation Finance, DFL lead Commerce Transportation Policy
Hilty, Bill (DFL)-Finlayson 8B State Government Finance, DFL lead Commerce Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy	Kielkucki, Tony (R)-Lester Prairie 20B Education Policy Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy K-12 Education Finance	Lindner, Arlon (R)-Corcoran 33A Jobs & Economic Development Policy, chair Capital Investment Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Holberg, Mary Liz (R)-Lakeville 37B Judiciary Finance, vice chair Civil Law Commerce Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs	Knoblach, Jim (R)-St. Cloud 16B Capital Investment, chair Civil Law Rules & Legislative Administration Taxes Ways & Means	Luther, Darlene (DFL)-Brooklyn Park 47A Capital Investment Education Policy Health & Human Services Policy
Holsten, Mark William (R)-Stillwater 56A Environment & Natural Resources Finance, chair Commerce Environment & Natural Resources Policy Ways & Means	Koskinen, Luanne (DFL)-Coon Rapids 49B Health & Human Services Finance Health & Human Services Policy Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs	Mahoney, Tim (DFL)-St. Paul 67A Civil Law Crime Prevention Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Howes, Larry (R)-Hackensack 4B Commerce Environment & Natural Resources Finance Environment & Natural Resources Policy Health & Human Services Policy	Krinkie, Philip (R)-Shoreview 53A State Government Finance, chair Capital Investment Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Ways & Means	Mares, Harry (R)-White Bear Lake 55A Education Policy, chair Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy K-12 Education Finance
Huntley, Thomas (DFL)-Duluth 6B Health & Human Services Policy, DFL lead Commerce Health & Human Services Finance	Kubly, Gary W. (DFL)-Granite Falls 15B Agriculture Policy Agriculture & Rural Development Finance Jobs & Economic Development Finance Jobs & Economic Development Policy	Mariani, Carlos (DFL)-St. Paul 65B Education Policy Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Health & Human Services Policy
		Marko, Sharon (DFL)-Cottage Grove 57B Capital Investment Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Transportation Policy

McCollum, Betty (DFL)-North St. Paul 55B Environment & Natural Resources Finance Environment & Natural Resources Policy Health & Human Services Policy Rules & Legislative Administration	Opatz, Joe (DFL)-St. Cloud 16A Education Policy Higher Education Finance Transportation Policy	Reuter, Doug (R)-Owatonna 28A Commerce Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs State Government Finance
McElroy, Dan (R)-Burnsville 36B Jobs & Economic Development Finance, chair Jobs & Economic Development Policy Property Tax Division Taxes	Orfield, Myron (DFL)-Minneapolis 60B Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Property Tax Division Taxes	Rhodes, Jim (R)-St. Louis Park 44B Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy, chair Capital Investment State Government Finance Ethics (alternate)
McGuire, Mary Jo (DFL)-Falcon Heights 54A Family & Early Childhood Education Finance, DFL lead Crime Prevention Judiciary Finance	Osskopp, Mike (R)-Lake City 29B State Government Finance, vice chair Environment & Natural Resources Policy Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy	Rifenberg, Michelle (R)-La Crescent 32B Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Taxes Transportation Policy
Milbert, Bob (DFL)-South St. Paul 39B Ethics, co-chair Property Tax Division, DFL lead Rules & Legislative Administration Taxes	Osthoff, Tom (DFL)-St. Paul 66A Environment & Natural Resources Finance, DFL lead Commerce Environment & Natural Resources Policy Ways & Means	Rostberg, Jim (R)-Isanti 18A Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy, vice chair Agriculture Policy Agriculture & Rural Development Finance Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Molnau, Carol L. (R)-Chaska 35A Transportation Finance, chair Capital Investment Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Transportation Policy Ways & Means	Otremba, Mary Ellen (DFL)-Long Prairie 11B Agriculture Policy Education Policy Health & Human Services Finance Health & Human Services Policy	Rukavina, Tom (DFL)-Virginia 5A Jobs & Economic Development Policy Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Taxes
Mulder, Richard (R)-Ivanhoe 21B Health & Human Services Finance, vice chair Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Health & Human Services Policy Ways & Means	Ozment, Dennis (R)-Rosemount 37A Environment & Natural Resources Policy, chair Commerce Environment & Natural Resources Finance Rules & Legislative Administration	Schumacher, Leslie J. (DFL)-Princeton 17B Agriculture Policy Education Policy K-12 Education Finance
Mullery, Joe (DFL)-Minneapolis 58A Civil Law Crime Prevention Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy State Government Finance	Paulsen, Erik (R)-Eden Prairie 42B Commerce, vice chair Property Tax Division Rules & Legislative Administration Taxes	Seagren, Alice (R)-Bloomington 41A K-12 Education Finance, chair Education Policy Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Ways & Means
Munger, Willard (DFL)-Duluth 7A Environment & Natural Resources Policy, DFL lead Environment & Natural Resources Finance Ways & Means	Pawlenty, Tim (R)-Eagan 38B Rules & Legislative Administration, chair	Seifert, Jim (R)-Woodbury 57A Civil Law, vice chair Commerce Health & Human Services Finance Health & Human Services Policy
Murphy, Mary (DFL)-Hermantown 8A Judiciary Finance, DFL lead Capital Investment Crime Prevention Ethics	Paymar, Michael (DFL)-St. Paul 64B Crime Prevention Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Judiciary Finance	Seifert, Marty (R)-Marshall 21A Education Policy Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Higher Education Finance Rules & Legislative Administration
Ness, Robert "Bob" (R)-Dassel 20A Agriculture & Rural Development Finance, chair K-12 Education Finance, vice chair Agriculture Policy Education Policy	Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)-Winona 32A Higher Education Finance, DFL lead Education Policy Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs	Skoe, Rod (DFL)-Clearbrook 2B Agriculture Policy Agriculture & Rural Development Finance Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Nornes, Bud (R)-Fergus Falls 10A Family & Early Childhood Education Finance, vice chair Education Policy Health & Human Services Policy K-12 Education Finance	Peterson, Doug (DFL)-Madison 13B Agriculture & Rural Development Finance, DFL lead Agriculture Policy Environment & Natural Resources Policy	Skoglund, Wes (DFL)-Minneapolis 62B Crime Prevention, DFL lead Civil Law Judiciary Finance
Olson, Mark (R)-Big Lake 19A Education Policy, vice chair Civil Law Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Health & Human Services Policy	Pugh, Thomas W. (DFL)-South St. Paul 39A Rules & Legislative Administration Ways & Means	Smith, Steve (R)-Mound 34A Civil Law, chair Crime Prevention Judiciary Finance
	Rest, Ann H. (DFL)-New Hope 46A Taxes, DFL lead Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Property Tax Division Ways & Means	Solberg, Loren A. (DFL)-Bovey 3B Ways & Means, DFL lead Capital Investment Rules & Legislative Administration

Stanek, Rich (R)-Maple Grove 33B
 Crime Prevention, chair
 Civil Law
 Judiciary Finance

Stang, Doug (R)-Cold Spring 14B
 Education Policy
 Higher Education Finance
 Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Ways & Means

Storm, Julie (R)-St. Peter 24B
 Jobs &
 Economic Development Policy, vice chair
 Agriculture Policy
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Sviggum, Steve (R)-Kenyon 28B
 Rules & Legislative Administration
 Taxes
 Ways & Means

Swenson, Howard (R)-Nicollet 23B
 Agriculture & Rural Development Finance,
 vice chair
 Agriculture Policy
 Environment & Natural Resources Finance
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 Transportation Policy

Sykora, Barb (R)-Excelsior 43B
 Family & Early Childhood
 Education Finance, chair
 Education Policy
 Jobs & Economic Development Finance
 Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Rules & Legislative Administration
 Ways & Means

Tingelstad, Kathy (R)-Andover 50B
 Environment & Natural Resources Finance
 Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Health & Human Services Policy

Tomassoni, David J. (DFL)-Chisholm 5B
 Commerce
 Education Policy
 K-12 Education Finance

Trimble, Steve (DFL)-St. Paul 67B
 Jobs &
 Economic Development Finance, DFL lead
 Capital Investment
 Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Tuma, John (R)-Northfield 25A
 Local Government &
 Metropolitan Affairs, vice chair
 Capital Investment
 Education Policy
 Higher Education Finance
 Rules & Legislative Administration

Tunheim, Jim (DFL)-Kennedy 1A
 Agriculture Policy
 Education Policy
 K-12 Education Finance

Van Dellen, Henry Todd (R)-Plymouth 34B
 Property Tax Division
 Taxes
 Transportation Policy
 Ways & Means

Vandever, Ray (R)-Forest Lake 51B
 Transportation Finance, vice chair
 Capital Investment
 Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Transportation Policy

Wagenius, Jean (DFL)-Minneapolis 63A
 Commerce
 Environment & Natural Resources Finance
 Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Ethics (alternate)

Wejcman, Linda (DFL)-Minneapolis 61B
 Agriculture Policy
 Capital Investment
 Health & Human Services Policy
 Rules & Legislative Administration

Wenzel, Stephen G. (DFL)-Little Falls 12B
 Agriculture Policy, DFL lead
 Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
 Crime Prevention
 Ways & Means

Westerberg, Andrew (R)-Blaine 51A
 Crime Prevention
 Jobs & Economic Development Finance
 Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Westfall, Robert L. "Bob" (R)-Rothsay 9B
 Environment &
 Natural Resources Policy, vice chair
 Agriculture Policy
 Environment & Natural Resources Finance
 Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Westrom, Torrey (R)-Elbow Lake 13A
 Agriculture Policy, vice chair
 Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
 Transportation Finance
 Transportation Policy

Wilkin, Tim (R)-Eagan 38A
 Health & Human Services Finance
 Health & Human Services Policy
 Taxes

Winter, Ted (DFL)-Fulda 22A
 Agriculture Policy
 Property Tax Division
 Rules & Legislative Administration
 Taxes

Wolf, Ken (R)-Burnsville 41B
 Commerce
 Education Policy
 K-12 Education Finance

Workman, Tom (R)-Chanhasen 43A
 Transportation Policy, chair
 Commerce
 Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Transportation Finance

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
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Minnesota State Agencies

(all numbers are area code 651)

Agriculture	297-2200
Commerce	296-4026
Corrections	642-0200
Children, Families and Learning	582-8200
Economic Security	296-3644
Employee Relations	297-1184
Job Information	296-2616
Finance	296-5900
Gaming	
Gambling Control Division ...	639-4000
MN State Lottery Division	635-8100
Toll Free	1-800-475-4000
Health	623-5000
Human Rights	296-5663
Toll Free	1-800-657-3704
Human Services	296-6117
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Revenue	
Taxpayer Assistance	296-3781
Toll Free	1-800-652-9094
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Pugh hopes to fare well in his new role guiding DFL

By Sandy Donovan

Ask a lawmaker from either side of the aisle to describe new House Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul), and chances are the word "fair" will be mentioned.

"I do think he'll be fair to deal with," said House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon).

And colleagues agree. "He strikes me as a fair person, trying to preserve a congenial attitude," said Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson), an assistant majority leader.

Pugh's caucus elected him to the top DFL post in the House last November, after the elections reduced the 70-seat DFL majority to a 63-seat minority.

"My style has always been one of consensus builder rather than bomb thrower," Pugh said. "The choice is to deadlock on partisan issues or to bridge differences and to find solutions. That's been my style and I was elected because of that. If the party felt we needed a table pounder, I wouldn't have been the choice."

As a lawmaker since 1989, Pugh has worked on issues from tobacco restrictions to property tax relief. Now, he said, he's ready to focus on finding ways to keep DFL-friendly legislation afloat in a Republican-controlled House.

To that end, he'll be working closely with the DFL-controlled Senate and new Reform Party Gov. Jesse Ventura.

"There are certainly opportunities for what we see as basic DFL positions," Pugh said. "Ventura has talked about issues that are similar to DFL positions — lower class sizes, opposing school vouchers. We have a new political experiment in Minnesota with three-party government, so really the chances for one party controlling even one branch of government is gone."



House Minority Leader Tom Pugh aims to be a consensus builder — not a bomb thrower — as he guides the DFL Caucus.

He said he'll lead his caucus with the same style he's maintained throughout his career.

"Your leadership style has to be similar to your style in real life," Pugh said. "My style has always been to get a lot of information, to have people involved, and to reach common ground. That's especially important in our current climate, with people extremely upset and tired of partisan politics. I think the November elections spoke a bit to that."

Pugh called himself a moderate DFLer who's less partisan than some and said that those

qualities will lead to enhanced cooperation between all three parties this session.

"Also, I come from a suburban district, which is an area Democrats have been struggling with," he said. "The need for a suburban voice was one of the topics within the caucus. The alliance between rural and big-city districts has squeezed the suburbs on tax and education issues."

The new minority leader said he's particularly optimistic about working with new Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan). The two grew up just seven houses away from each other in South St. Paul and continue to play hockey together.

"I'm definitely encouraged by Tim's election. He's also more of a consensus builder than a bomb thrower," he said. "We looked at [his election] as a sign that there's not going to be open warfare."

Substitute "Tom" for "Tim" and those words could be a comment from any number of Republican members about Pugh himself. In addition to noting the minority leader's sense of fairness on the floor, members say he has often reached out with a friendly hand.

"My first encounter with Rep. Pugh was two years ago as a freshman when he and [Rep.] Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington) led the new members' retreat," recalled Assistant Majority Leader Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie). "I found him very cordial and easy to work with, and he made everybody feel very welcome to the Minnesota House of Representatives."

"I look forward to working with him," Kielkucki said. And he added a final, familiar opinion: "I think he'll be fair to work with."



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Anoka lawmaker hoping for a successful rookie year

By Sarah Hallonquist

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) said he feels a little bit like Minnesota Twins rookie Chuck Knoblauch during the 1991 World Series.



Rep. Jim Abeler

Abeler, 44, is a freshman legislator serving in public office for the first time, and his party is in the majority in the House for the first time in 13 years.

"I'm a man very blessed," he said.

Abeler fills the District 49A seat vacated by former Rep. Charlie Weaver — now the state's public safety commissioner — who ran an unsuccessful bid for state attorney general last November.

Abeler narrowly defeated DFLer Jerry Newton, a Coon Rapids City Council member, with 51 percent of the vote. During his campaign, Abeler focused on three issues: education, taxes, and crime.

His House committee membership will only allow him to work directly on one of his campaign platform issue. He serves on three important education-related panels.

And Abeler said he plans to work in other ways to fulfill campaign promises to lower taxes and support law enforcement.

One of his main legislative priorities is changing the formula for compensatory funding for school districts. He is one of 17 legislators representing the Anoka-Hennepin School District, one of the largest districts in the state. Some districts, Abeler said, have a large population of students with special needs, but they are spread out over a large area and the money doesn't always go where it's needed most.

Abeler serves on the House Education Policy, K-12 Education Finance, Family and Early Childhood Education Finance, and Health and Human Services Policy committees.

Even though he's a first-termer, he's confident his personal abilities will help him succeed in his legislative career. In his committee work, Abeler said he hopes to focus on the big picture when considering complex, controversial issues.

"I'm good at deciding where to plant the next tree in the forest," said Abeler. "I'm not a detail guy."

He said he believes his strengths will balance with those who tend toward an interest in technicalities.

Abeler is well-versed in education concerns. He and his wife, Barb, co-founded a charter school, Parents Allied with Children and Teachers (PACT), now in its fifth year of operation. Five of his sons have attended the school.

Helping to establish PACT is a good example of Abeler's support of local control.

Parents, he said, should be actively involved with their children's education. And local school boards should be given more freedom to make decisions that best suit their districts, he said.

"It's not one-size-fits-all," he said.

Abeler believes community members will become better leaders if they are given the chance to make decisions — and mistakes — on their own.

After attending Hamline University and the University of Minnesota, Abeler graduated from Northwestern College of Chiropractic. He owns and operates Abeler Chiropractic Clinic in Anoka with his brother. The clinic

was founded by Abeler's father in 1951.

Twenty years working in health care have provided him with an understanding of all different kinds of people in many facets of society, Abeler said.

"I have a real spot in my heart for the working poor," he said. "You have to help them transition."

To explain his views, Abeler uses a favorite analogy of government acting as the training wheels on a bicycle. He said at some point, the training wheels do have to come off to let people ride on their own. He wants to use job development to help people come off state welfare rolls and enter the work force.

"It's important to recognize the lower and lower-middle classes aren't static," Abeler said. "My dream is to help them on their way through."

One way Abeler would like to help is finding ways to get more child care for poor families. Too many people are on waiting lists for sliding-fee child care subsidies, he said.

Abeler and his wife live in Anoka with their children: Jamie, 16; Jesse, 14; Jordan, 11; Josiah, 9; Jude, 6. The couple's sixth son, Judson, was born Jan. 5. In his spare time, Abeler plays piano, enjoys novels by Tom Clancy and John Grisham, sails, and cross-country skis.

District 49A

1995 population: 34,469

Largest city: Coon Rapids

County: Anoka

Location: Northwestern Twin Cities suburbs

Top concern: "The top concerns I have for my district are strong academics, lower taxes, less government, strong families, and an infrastructure that works."

— Rep. Jim Abeler

NOTES

Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley) donned a black feather boa and white gloves during the first meeting of the House Higher Education Finance Committee, which she chairs.

"I do feel thoroughly prepared to meet with the governor — at least halfway," she said, throwing the boa over her shoulder.

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) noticed Leppik's newfound attitude as she scolded him for being tardy to the meeting.

"Not only do you look like him, you're as tough as he is," Tuma said.

"Basically, Minnesota is a very hard working state," State Demographer Tom Gillaspay told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee Jan. 13.

According to Gillaspay, the state ranks third among states in the proportion of population employed (72 percent). It ranks second in participation of women in the labor force (69 percent). It ranks third in participation of men in the labor force (81 percent). And it

ranks first in proportion of workers with more than one job (10 percent).

Gillaspay said that the demand for workers will only increase, given the state's labor shortage. He said that while high employment is good, it does raise serious policy questions about the costs — physically, emotionally, and financially — on the state.

"We also need to be concerned about people working too much," he said.

Gleason's House career takes off with airport action

By Paul Wahl

The din of everyday activity in the Minnesota House should not be a problem for newly elected Rep. Mark Gleason (DFL-Richfield).



Rep. Mark Gleason

He's accustomed to noise, living adjacent to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

In fact, the airport and its impact on his district will likely consume much of his time this coming session.

On Dec. 22, 1998, Gleason filed a suit against the Metropolitan Airport Commission (MAC) challenging the validity of an Environmental Impact Statement prepared for a proposed runway expansion. The commission wants to build a new runway in the buffer zone between the airport and residences in east Richfield.

Gleason said that the environmental document completed didn't adequately address noise and other issues. And when the Richfield City Council voted to strike an accord with the commission and not contest the study, Gleason saw few options.

"I went home that night and began drafting my lawsuit," said Gleason. "It was always assumed the city would file a suit against MAC on the grounds of noise and that the investigation of noise concerns was inadequate."

Gleason said he didn't believe MAC's "vague promise to work with the city to get the Legislature to provide money to address noise issues" went far enough. And he didn't believe the city should give up its rights to challenge the project on an environmental basis.

Oddly enough, concern over the airport expansion was not Gleason's pivotal issue during his House campaign.

It was education — particularly improving public education.

The airport issue "took on a life of its own," he said. And it will continue to live and breathe throughout the upcoming session.

Gleason, who will serve on the House Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs, Local Government, and State Government Finance committees, believes he can have an impact on the airport issues from his seat in the House.

"The Legislature has the ultimate responsibility for making people whole when they've been harmed or injured by the action of a state agency like the MAC," he said. "This district needs a strong voice to make sure people are protected."

Gleason's bid for the District 63B seat began with a contested endorsement. His opponent for the DFL endorsement was Richfield City Councilor Susan Rosenberg.

Gleason said there were hard feelings at the time, but the two have since patched up their differences. Rosenberg, who voted against the Richfield decision not to challenge the environmental study of the airport expansion, was at Gleason's side when he held a press conference last December to announce the filing of his suit.

Among the items Gleason would like to see accomplished this session is making the MAC an elected body, but he admits it's probably too late to introduce that concept and push it through this year.

He said the main benefit of that change

would be to make the commission more responsive. Currently, the governor appoints members.

"Right now, the MAC doesn't have a lot of empathy for people," he said.

As an accountant and tax attorney, Gleason also has views on how the state's taxes should be restructured and the state budget surplus returned to the people.

"I campaigned on property-tax reductions because property taxes are the most unfair," Gleason said.

He will also work to increase the state's share of finance for public education.

Gleason, whose wife is a physician, is also an advocate of patients' rights when it comes to dealing with health insurance companies.

This was Gleason's first campaign for public office, although he's not a complete stranger to the House. For six months in 1994, he served as the House controller.

Gleason said he found campaigning to be a lot of fun, but also a lot of hard work.

District 63B

1995 population: 32,603

Largest city: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

Location: South Minneapolis/Richfield

Top concern: "Because of the airport and other transportation issues and how they impact residents, representing this district poses a special challenge."

— Rep. Mark Gleason



While advocating that the 4,800 loggers in Minnesota be included in a tax rebate program aimed at Minnesota's farmers, Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) couldn't help but get in a plug for the many Finnish loggers in his area, who he says are among the world's best.

When the first television shots of the moon were transmitted back to Earth, his father-in-law — who is Finnish — told him it was no big deal, the Finns had already been there.

Incredulous, Rukavina asked how he knew that.

"You don't see any trees there, do you?" his father-in-law responded.

Gene Hugoson had been appointed commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture by Gov. Jesse Ventura just three hours before he stepped in front of the House Agriculture Policy Committee Jan. 13 to provide an overview of his department.

But he was well prepared. Hugoson had served in the commissioner's seat since July 1995 when he was appointed by then-governor Arne Carlson. His appointment expired at noon Jan. 4.

Hugoson, a corn and soybean farmer in Martin County near East Chain, Minn., is also

no stranger to House committees. He served in the House from 1986 to 1995, logging four years as assistant minority leader.

Committee members and others applauded enthusiastically as Hugoson took his seat at the witness table.

He thanked those present, and said his only regret was that Sharon Clark would now have to return to deputy commissioner of agriculture status. Clark moved into the commissioner's chair after Hugoson's appointment expired.

Model government is no joke to Minnesota students

By Jon Fure

While the real 1999 Legislative Session was just getting started, a group of high school students completed an entire model session Jan. 7-10.

And although it's only a model session, students in the YMCA Youth in Government program approach the four days with a level of seriousness that rivals that of their adult counterparts.

Meagan Shea, a senior at Hopkins High School who was selected as governor for the mock government, said one of her goals was to pass model legislation that would enable youth to seek health care for eating disorders or other concerns without notifying their parents.

She also advocates a tobacco tax to fund health care reform. She said her own experience influenced her emphasis on health-related issues.

"My dad died of a heart attack about five years ago when he was 40, partly because he didn't get treatment that we thought was necessary," she said.

Shea and Lt. Gov. Kelli Snaza of Mankato ran as a ticket. Shea said the two campaigned at several schools and events, and their experience was a key to their success.

"We've both been in the program four years," she said. "Kelli was secretary of state last year, and I was attorney general. I think our experience was important, especially with all the changes. We added two new lower houses, and we gave the lieutenant governor signing power so we can get more bills passed. So it helps that we both have been involved."

Jordan Janke of Spring Lake Park participated in the model House of Representatives this year for the first time. He said a friend had asked him to participate in previous years, and he has been pleasantly surprised since he agreed to give it a try this year.

He said he's had fun spending time in the Capitol, and it's given him a better understanding of how government works. Janke describes himself as "fiscally conservative" and had no trouble articulating his political philosophy.



Tia Tilbury, House speaker for the model session and a junior from Savage, Minn., and Shana Kalland, a junior from Minnetonka, Minn., who was chief clerk for the session, take part in floor activities Jan. 8.

"I think our government has gotten too big, and I would like to make it more efficient and preserve as many liberties as possible," he said.

Janke was enjoying a friendly conversation with Kyla Hynes of Blue Earth, a first-year senator who finds herself on the other end of the political spectrum from Janke.

"I'm more concerned with social issues," Hynes said. "I'm extremely liberal. I believe in basic human rights. That matters more to me than money."

Nevertheless, she said she was impressed by the opposing arguments in committee meetings. The whole session, she said, made her realize how complicated legislative decisions are.

One bill that was being discussed would

have required greater accessibility in Minnesota's state parks. While Hynes supports the concept, she said she voted against it because of the high costs of paving miles of trails and the shaky environmental impacts.

That's exactly the kind of thoughtfulness that Peter Rodosovich, state executive director of the Youth in Government program, likes to see.

The program, which began in 1946, is designed to make the students' version of the session as much like the real session as possible. Students seek election for various offices, including governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, state treasurer, state auditor, and seats in the state House of Representatives and Senate. Other students participate as lobbyists, journalists, administrative staff, Supreme Court justices and appellate court judges.

There are some obvious differences between the real and model sessions, Rodosovich said. The language of the bills in the Youth in Government session isn't quite up to the standards of the Office of the Revisor of Statutes, for example. But students perform basically all of the tasks and have similar constraints as if it were a real session. For example, the student governor has exactly one hour to sign or veto a bill before it automatically becomes law—the *real* governor has at least three days.

"These are highly motivated kids," Rodosovich said. "They spend a lot of time trying to prepare arguments and draft bills. What's impressive is that they seriously consider these issues and get a feel for how difficult it is, and how to listen to contrasting opinions and try to come up with solutions."

Adult advisors are a vital part of the program's success. About 250 attorneys, lobbyists, and community journalists help teach students what it's like to walk in their shoes.

The program has enjoyed tremendous support from former participants. Roger and Andrine Nelson donated \$35,000 in memory of their son Brian Nelson. He had participated as a student, including being chosen by his peers to be a speaker pro-tempore in the 1990 - 91 session, and as an adult advisor. He died in February 1998 due to complications of



Tia Tilbury presides over the House of Representatives.

a degenerative muscular disease.

"It was a pretty moving experience to visit with the Nelson family, reminiscing about what [Youth in Government] meant to their son," Rodosovich said.

Major donations also have been made by alums Tad and Skip Wilke. They recently donated \$10,000 for the second time. Skip Wilke was the executive director before Rodosovich.

The donations are added to the program's endowment, which was started by former Minnesota Congressman Tim Penny in 1996. Penny contributed \$25,000 and challenged the YMCA to match it with another \$25,000. Rodosovich said they have far exceeded those goals: The endowment is now at about \$95,000. Costs of operating the program and scholarships come from the endowment's interest revenue. About 5 percent of the interest pays the costs for one year, and the rest is returned to the principle, Rodosovich said.

The success of the Youth in Government program is also apparent in the increasing number of participants. Orville Lindquist, state

program director, said 1,469 students from 30 delegations participated this year. Youth in Government has expanded its scope to accommodate the participants. Besides the regular House and Senate, it has four lower legislative bodies: the Humphrey House, Sibley House, Ramsey Senate, and Stassen Senate.

A somewhat controversial new rule was initiated this year: No joke bills. In past years, gag

bills have received some media attention, giving the program a less serious image than its board of directors would like. Some student lobbyists protested the rule, but Lindquist said they plan to keep it.

"We want it to be some fun and a good educational objective, and I think it can be fun if you stay on that course — focusing on serious issues that are designed to make Minnesota a better place," he said. "Students are encouraged to come up with ideas about how government could be changed or laws that could be added based on their personal experience. It was a very good event. There were very productive and high-level debates on issues that are being discussed in real government like tax refunds and educational issues."

The bills that were introduced in the House in the 45th Youth in Government session included proposals that would:

- Automatically give back any tax surplus at the end of each session. (Surplus revenue would be divided among taxpayers, based on how much they paid in income and property taxes, within three months of the end of the legislative session.);
- Reduce estate (inheritance) tax by 40 percent;
- Reimburse jurors for travel, child care, parking expenses, and lost wages;
- Require all public schools to recycle paper;
- Require public high schools to offer classes on practical living skills — managing credit cards, debit cards, checking accounts, bank loans, and taxes;

- Give students unrestricted access to Internet and e-mail;
- Require school boards to have a student representative;
- Legalize fireworks;
- Reduce the legal drinking age to 18;
- Establish a death penalty for repeat murder offenders;
- Legalize prostitution;
- Abolish statute of limitations on sexual abuse cases;
- Ban curfew laws; and
- Legalize marijuana for medical purposes.



Gov. handles job pressures

Meaghan Shea, governor in the YMCA's Youth in Government model session held at the Capitol Jan. 7-10, got at least one opportunity to practice keeping her cool under pressure.

She stopped in to check on the progress of an education committee meeting just as Sen. Ryan Rasmussen — whose back was to the door — was telling fellow committee members, "I feel the governor is misinformed on this issue." The other members laughed, prompting Rasmussen to turn around and see Shea standing behind him.

Rasmussen was commenting on a bill that would give unrestricted e-mail and Internet access to students in schools throughout the state.

"I go to the same school (Hopkins High School) as the governor, and we have Internet access and e-mail available to all students," he continued. "All they need is their parents' consent. I feel that all students in Minnesota should have easy access to e-mail and the Internet."

Shea, who had voiced opposition to the proposal, listened to the debate briefly and left without interrupting the discussion. However, in an interview she clarified her position on the bill.

"I support having Internet access, but e-mail can be abused a lot of times," she said. "If somebody sends something out that's offensive, the school gets blamed. I just don't think it's necessary at this time."



Neil Ellingson, an 11th grader from Hopkins High School, debates a bill during a YMCA Youth in Government mock session Jan. 8. Neil's father, Bob Ellingson, served as a state representative from 1977 to 1986.

Name Pronunciation Guide

1999 Minnesota House of Representatives

Abeler, Jim	ABE-ler	Holsten, Mark William		Ozment, Dennis	AHZ-ment
Abrams, Ron		Howes, Larry		Paulsen, Erik	
Anderson, Bruce		Huntley, Thomas		Pawlenty, Tim	paw-LENTY
Anderson, Irv		Jaros, Mike	Yahr-ohs	Paymar, Michael	
Bakk, Thomas (Tom)	BOCK	Jennings, Loren Geo		Pelowski Jr., Gene	
Biernat, Len	BE-AIR-nat	Johnson, Alice M.		Peterson, Doug	
Bishop, Dave		Juhnke, Al	JUNK-ee	Pugh, Thomas W.	PEW
Boudreau, Lynda	boo-DROH	Kahn, Phyllis		Rest, Ann H.	
Bradley, Fran		Kalis, Henry J.	KAH-liss	Reuter, Doug	ROOT-er
Broecker, Sherry	BROKE-er	Kelliher, Margaret Anderson	KELL-a-her	Rhodes, Jim	
Buesgens, Mark	BISK-ens	Kielkucki, Tony	keel-COO-ski	Rifenberg, Michelle	RIFF-en-berg
Carlson, Lyndon R.		Knobloch, Jim	NOB-lock	Rostberg, Jim	
Carruthers, Phil	ka-RUH-thers	Koskinen, Luanne	KOS-ka-nen	Rukavina, Tom	roo-ka-VEEN-a
Cassell, George	CASTLE	Krinkie, Philip		Schumacher, Leslie J.	SHOE-mocker
Chaudhary, Satveer	CHAW-dree, SUT-veer	Kubly, Gary W.	KOO-blee	Seagren, Alice	
Clark, James T.		Kuistle, William	KWEEZ-lee	Seifert, Jim	SY-fert
Clark, Karen		Larsen, Peg		Seifert, Marty	SY-fert
Daggett, Roxann	DAG-et	Larson, Dan		Skoe, Rod	SKOY
Davids, Gregory M.		Leighton, Rob	LAY-ton	Skoglund, Wes	SKOHG-lund
Dawkins, Andy		Lenczewski, Ann	len-CHESS-key	Smith, Steve	
Dehler, Steve	DAY-ler	Leppik, Peggy		Solberg, Loren A.	
Dempsey, Jerry		Lieder, Bernie L.	LEED-er	Stanek, Rich	
Dorman, Dan		Lindner, Arlon		Stang, Doug	
Dorn, John		Luther, Darlene		Storm, Julie	
Entenza, Matt		Mahoney, Tim		Sviggum, Steve	SWIG-um
Erhardt, Ron	AIR-hart	Mares, Harry	MAIRS	Swenson, Howard	
Erickson, Sondra		Mariani, Carlos	mar-ee-AH-nee	Sykora, Barb	sick-OR-ah
Finseth, Tim		Marko, Sharon		Tingelstad, Kathy	
Folliard, Betty	FOLLY-ard	McCollum, Betty	mah-CALL-um	Tomassoni, David J.	tom-a-SONY
Fuller, Doug		McElroy, Dan	MACK-el-roy	Trimble, Steve	
Gerlach, Chris	GER-lock	McGuire, Mary Jo		Tuma, John	TOO-ma
Gleason, Mark S.		Milbert, Bob		Tunheim, Jim	TON-hyme
Goodno, Kevin		Molnau, Carol L.	MOLE-now	Van Dellen, Henry Todd	
Gray, Gregory		Mulder, Richard		Vandever, Ray	
Greenfield, Lee		Mullery, Joe		Wagenius, Jean	wa-GHEEN-yus
Greiling, Mindy	GRY-ling	Munger, Willard		Wejcman, Linda	WAITS-man
Gunther, Bob		Murphy, Mary		Wenzel, Stephen G.	WEN-zel
Haake, Barb	HOCKEY	Ness, Robert "Bob"		Westerberg, Andy	
Haas, Bill	HAHZ	Nornes, Bud	NOR-ness	Westfall, Robert L. (Bob)	
Hackbarth, Tom		Olson, Mark		Westrom, Torrey	
Harder, Elaine		Opatz, Joe	OH-patz	Wilkin, Tim	
Hasskamp, Kris		Orfield, Myron		Winter, Ted	
Hausman, Alice		Osskopp, Mike	AHZ-cop	Wolf, Ken	
Hilty, Bill		Osthoff, Tom	AHST-hoff	Workman, Tom	
Holberg, Mary Liz		Otremba, Mary Ellen	oh-TREM-ba		

Bill Introductions

HF48-HF149

Monday, Jan. 11

HF48—Wolf (R) Commerce

Performance-based gas purchasing plans sunset abolished.

HF49—Ozment (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Health coverage for survivors of police officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty expanded to include spouses.

HF50—Dempsey (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Goodhue County levy limit adjustment authorized for certain payments in lieu of tax.

HF51—Finseth (R) Taxes

Agricultural assistance provided to Minnesota farmers and livestock producers in the form of property tax relief and payments, and money appropriated.

HF52—Haas (R) Taxes

Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF53—Biernat (DFL) Civil Law

Uniform child custody jurisdiction and enforcement act adopted.

HF54—Finseth (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Personal watercraft surcharge removed.

HF55—Tomassoni (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Trained force of firefighters maintained by the commissioner of natural resources, and public employee definition expanded.

HF56—Van Dellen (R) Health & Human Services Policy

Health care provider civil action limitation provisions modified.

HF57—Paymar (DFL) Taxes

Local governing bodies required to disclose and vote on property tax increases due to declining market value.

HF58—Erickson (R) Education Policy

Independent School District No. 912, Milaca, retroactively authorized to begin its school year prior to Labor Day.

HF59—Bakk (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Snowmobile trail grants-in-aid provisions modified to include maintenance of Voyageurs National Park trails.

HF60—Haas (R) Health & Human Services Policy

Supplemental private duty nursing services reimbursement allowed for spouses and others meeting financial hardship criteria.

HF61—Haas (R) Transportation Policy

Trunk Highway No. 252 three-lane construction project provided.

HF62—Rukavina (DFL) Commerce

Automobile insurance nonrenewals regulated relating to physical damage portion of policies.

HF63—Marko (DFL) Taxes

Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF64—Kahn (DFL) Agriculture Policy

Hemp; industrial hemp classified as an agricultural crop, regulation and registration required, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF65—Huntley (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy

Health care conscience and religious liberty protection provided.

HF66—Johnson (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Spring Lake Park police civil service commission abolished.

HF67—Luther (DFL) Crime Prevention

Killing or injuring a search and rescue dog provided felony penalties.

HF68—Rukavina (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Eveleth police and fire trust fund benefit increases provided.

HF69—Rest (DFL) K-12 Education Finance

General education basic formula allowance increased, and money appropriated.

HF70—Daggett (R) Crime Prevention

Law enforcement agencies authorized to sell forfeited firearms, ammunition, and accessories to eligible persons.

HF71—Rest (DFL) Taxes

Sales and use tax rates reduced; and June accelerated sales, liquor, and tobacco tax payments abolished.

HF72—Rukavina (DFL) Taxes

Biwabik community pavilion construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF73—Hilty (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Year 2000; local government units mutual aid authority clarified, health department required to collect and disseminate information regarding possible problems and solutions, immunity provided, and money appropriated.

HF74—Luther (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy

Health care directive suggested form modified.

HF75—Wenzel (DFL) Taxes

Sales and use tax rate reduced.

HF76—Seagren (R) Education Policy

K-12 education technical changes provided; governor's workforce development council, state interagency coordinating council, and certain lease purchase installment buys and transportation aid repealed.

HF77—Stang (R) Transportation Policy

Surviving spouses authorized to continue to purchase special license plates issued to veterans.

HF78—McCollum (DFL) Taxes

Sales and use tax rate reduced.

HF79—Solberg (DFL) Taxes

Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF80—Solberg (DFL) Transportation Policy

Passenger automobile and hearse additional registration tax rate reduced, and motor vehicle sales tax revenue distribution provided.

HF81—McCollum (DFL) Taxes

Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

Thursday, Jan. 14

HF82—Seifert, M. (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

State correctional facility art acquisition with the use of state appropriations prohibited.

HF83—Murphy (DFL) K-12 Education Finance

School district debt service equalization eligibility modified.

HF84—Greiling (DFL) Education Policy

Nonpublic schools subject to state graduation requirements if families of students have claimed education-related expense tax reimbursements.

HF85—Dehler (R) Agriculture Policy

Feedlot operators' names and addresses provided data classification.

HF86—Rest (DFL) Taxes

Pollution control and solar energy equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF87—Kahn (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Minnesota Twins community ownership process provided.

HF88—Milbert (DFL) Taxes

Market value limits increased for 1998 property tax purposes.

HF89—Rest (DFL)**Taxes**

Nonprofits provided grants for volunteer assistance to low-income taxpayers, and money appropriated.

HF90—Sviggum (R)**Civil Law**

Joint and several liability apportionment regulated.

HF91—Erickson (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Pollution control agency required to terminate the Mille Lacs water resources agreement for the purposes of implementing the underground injection control program.

HF92—Carruthers (DFL)**Civil Law**

Driver's license revocation for chemical test implied consent violations, judicial review petition content requirements modified, and scope of discovery limited.

HF93—Tunheim (DFL)**Education Policy**

Adult basic education aid funding formula modified to include eligibility for a sparsity allowance, and money appropriated.

HF94—Jaros (DFL)**Education Policy**

International study opportunities provided for foreign language teachers, and international education emphasis established.

HF95—Jaros (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Certain place identification signs required to display the Ojibwe or Dakota language equivalent, and money appropriated.

HF96—Kuisle (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Environmental assessment worksheet signature requirements modified.

HF97—Dehler (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Gambling tax exemption provided to certain organizations.

HF98—Osskopp (R)**Taxes**

Property tax refund payments provided to personal representatives of deceased claimants.

HF99—Osskopp (R)**Taxes**

Television commercials and production materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF100—Jaros (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Consumer protection office and human rights department decentralized.

HF101—Rostberg (R)**Transportation Policy**

Identification card fees specified for persons with serious and persistent mental illness.

HF102—Osskopp (R)**Taxes**

Local government aid base increased for certain cities.

HF103—Marko (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Passenger automobile tax rate reduced, transportation trust fund created and revenue dedicated, state patrol funded through the general fund, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF104—Hackbarth (R)**Taxes**

Local government base aid increased for certain cities.

HF105—Tunheim (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Farm relief; Congress memorialized to designate and implement financial relief for livestock and grain farmers.

HF106—Rukavina (DFL)**State Government Finance**

Eveleth, Gilbert, Mountain Iron, and Virginia; Iron Range Veterans Memorial Park construction provided, and money appropriated.

HF107—Dehler (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

24-hour angling license fee reduced, and lottery machine issuance authorized.

HF108—Pawlenty (R)**Taxes**

Charitable contribution income tax credit provided.

HF109—Pawlenty (R)**Taxes**

Charitable contribution income tax credit provided.

HF110—Pawlenty (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Term limits imposed on legislative and executive offices, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF111—Rest (DFL)**Commerce**

Homeowner's insurance policy nonrenewals regulated, and automobile and homeowner's insurance discriminatory practices prohibited.

HF112—Bishop (R)**Crime Prevention**

Fraudulent use of another's personal identity provided felony penalties, and civil forfeiture of property authorized.

HF113—Broecker (R)**Judiciary Finance**

Bomb disposal expense reimbursement provided to the commissioner of public safety, and money appropriated.

HF114—Stanek (R)**Judiciary Finance**

FBI drugfire computer program grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF115—Ness (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Willmar and Litchfield; volunteer rescue squad relief associations and service pensions authorized.

HF116—Erhardt (R)**Transportation Policy**

Passenger automobile registration tax rate reduced.

HF117—Gunther (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Fairmont Police Relief Association additional annual postretirement adjustment mechanism provided, and surviving spouse benefits clarified.

HF118—Erickson (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

State agency and department heads to be confirmed by the Senate within one year of appointment.

HF119—Jaros (DFL)**Jobs &****Economic Development Policy**

State policy declared that no one be homeless, hungry, or without health care; and money appropriated.

HF120—Rostberg (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Snowmobile metal traction device use restrictions, rulemaking authority, and definitions modified.

HF121—Nornes (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

State primary election date changed, and precinct caucuses eliminated.

HF122—Rukavina (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Elective office age eligibility lowered.

HF123—Carruthers (DFL)**Taxes**

Partial compensation earned for service in the armed forces income tax exemption provided.

HF124—Murphy (DFL)**Taxes**

Prefabricated home sales tax provided.

HF125—Erhardt (R)**Taxes**

Noncommercial seasonal residential recreational property second tier property tax class rates reduced.

HF126—Erhardt (R)**Taxes**

MinnesotaCare provider tax reduced then repealed.

HF127—Luther (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Minnesota organ donor decision campaign funded, and money appropriated.

HF128—Rostberg (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Seniors accompanying persons under age 16 provided angling license requirement exemption.

HF129—Greiling (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

State agency legislative rulemaking notification requirements modified.

HF130—Finseth (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District Nos. 2854, Ada-Borup, 2176 Warren-Alvarado-Oslo, 846, Breckenridge, and 595, East Grand Forks provided declining pupil unit aid.

HF131—Harder (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 330, Heron Lake-Okabena, provided Southwest Star Concept School grant extension.

HF132—Ness (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Bingo conducted by senior citizen organizations exempt from regulation.

HF133—Stanek (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Minneapolis and St. Paul local residency requirements repealed.

HF134—Erickson (R)**Jobs &****Economic Development Policy**

Marketing and infrastructure changes due to Ontario waters and Mille Lacs Lake limitations funded, and money appropriated.

HF135—Bishop (R)**Crime Prevention**

Repeat assault offenders with prior delinquency adjudications provided enhanced penalties.

HF136—Rostberg (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Persian Gulf War veterans bonus application period extended.

HF137—Rostberg (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Collector watercraft licensing requirement exemption provided.

HF138—Seifert, M. (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Lazarus Creek/LQP-25 floodwater retention project appropriated money.

HF139—Rhodes (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board member qualifications specified.

HF140—Dehler (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

State-administered financial assistance programs catalog provided, and money appropriated.

HF141—Dehler (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Snowmobile metal traction device use restrictions modified.

HF142—Pawlenty (R)**Crime Prevention**

Subsequent controlled substance conviction definition expanded to include convictions subsequent to a stay of adjudication.

HF143—Pawlenty (R)**Crime Prevention**

Domestic assault enhanced penalty provisions expanded to include malicious punishment of a child convictions.

HF144—Seifert, M. (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Joint county drainage authority membership modified.

HF145—Ness (R)**State Government Finance**

National World War II memorial contribution funded, and money appropriated.

HF146—Kahn (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Ticket scalping crime repealed.

HF147—Rest (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

New Hope; Civil service merit system abandonment allowed.

HF148—Marko (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Trunk highway fund expenditures required, transportation spending goals established, transportation trust fund created and revenue dedicated, state patrol funded through the general fund, and money appropriated.

HF149—Osskopp (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Snowmobiles equipped with metal traction devices operation on public lands, roads, and trails prohibition repealed, and prohibition on paved public trail maintained.

Correction

The Bill Introductions section of the Jan. 8 *Session Weekly* included an error. The following is the correct entry for the first bill introduced this year.

HF1—Abrams (R)**Taxes**

One-time individual income tax rebate provided, and money appropriated.

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

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Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.
For information updates, call
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delivered to your e-mail address, send a
message to:
listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us
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MONDAY, Jan. 18

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day observed. No
House committee meetings scheduled.**

TUESDAY, Jan. 19

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: HF74 (Luther) Health care directive
suggested form modified.
HF60 (Haas) Supplemental private duty
nursing services reimbursement allowed for
spouses and others meeting financial hardship
criteria.
Discussion of member initiatives.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: Department of Trade and Economic
Development overview;
HF44 (Osskopp) Wabasha water and sewer
extended to Reads Landing, and money
appropriated.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman
Agenda: to be announced.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkle
Agenda: performance report presentations,
departments of finance and employee
relations.

10 a.m.

Joint CRIME PREVENTION/ JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Rich Stanek,
Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: criminal justice process and state
judicial branch presentation, House Research.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares
Agenda: Profile of Learning history overview,
Lisa Larson, House Research; Profile of
Learning rule overview, George Beck,
administrative law judge;
HF15 (Kielkucki) Graduation Standards
advisory panel recommendations
implemented, Profile of Learning
requirements modified, state performance
packages eliminated, and advisory group
established.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: tour 520 Lafayette Road,
St. Paul, MN.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: HF1 (Abrams) One-time individual
income tax rebate provided, and money
appropriated.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness
Agenda: testimony from farm groups and
individual farmers representing corn, wheat,
soybean, barley, potato, rice, and sunflower
producers.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach
Agenda: to be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids
Agenda: industry overviews of issues before
committee: Insurance Federation of
Minnesota, Minnesota Bankers Association,
and Office of Tourism.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 20

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: confirmation hearing of
Gov. Arne Carlson's Campaign Finance and
Public Disclosure Board appointees;
HF139(Rhodes) Campaign finance and public
disclosure board member qualifications
specified.
Veterans benefits, Rep. Jim Rostberg.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: discussion of tobacco settlement and
current spending relating to tobacco cessation
and prevention; presentations, Joe Flores,
House Fiscal Analysis Department, and
Department of Health.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: 1998 performance report reviews,
Department of Public Service, and Public
Utilities Commission.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: overview by John Williams, House
Research.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: member and staff introductions;
committee procedures.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares
Agenda: Department of Children, Families
and Learning overview and preview of agency
performance report, Deputy Commissioner
John Hustad.

11 a.m.

Working Group/ JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

400N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Gunther
Agenda: discussion and development of
results-based criteria for state funded job
training programs.

12:30 p.m.

**FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION FINANCE**

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: Adult Basic Education (ABE)
Supervisor Barry Shaffer, Department of
Children, Families and Learning;
Carlye Peterson, manager, Minneapolis Adult
Literacy; past and present ABE participants.

1:15 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth
Agenda: HF105(Tunheim) Farm relief;
Congress memorialized to designate and
implement financial relief for livestock and
grain farmers.
HF85 (Dehler) Feedlot operators' names and
addresses provided data classification.
Department of Agriculture overview,
Commissioner Gene Hugoson and division
directors.

THURSDAY, Jan. 21

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: nursing home bed rails.

**JOBS & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: Housing Finance Agency overview;
workforce investment act presentation,
Department of Economic Security.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: performance report presentation,
Department of Administration.

10 a.m.

**Joint CRIME PREVENTION/
JUDICIARY FINANCE**

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Rich Stanek,
Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: gang strike force overview, retail
protection; introduction to identity fraud,
Rep. Dave Bishop.

**ENVIRONMENT &
NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY**

Department of Natural Resources
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: tour 500 Lafayette Road,
St. Paul, MN.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: to be announced.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: Department of Children, Families
and Learning overview, executive staff and
managers.

12:30 p.m.

**AGRICULTURE &
RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness
Agenda: testimony from farm groups and
individual farmers representing sugar, canola,
dairy, beef, poultry, sheep, and horse
producers.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach
Agenda: to be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids
Agenda: industry overviews of issues before
the committee: Minnesota Association of
Realtors, Minnesota Credit Union Network,
and Minnesota Business Partnership.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

4 p.m.

Hennepin County Delegation

118 State Capitol
Chrs. to be announced
Agenda: election of co-chairs; unit market
value discussion, county officials.

FRIDAY, Jan. 22

8 a.m.

**GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS &
VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY**

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: HF9 (Sviggum) Former legislators
prohibited from lobbying for one year after
leaving office.
Testimony: Dave Schultz, Common Cause.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: tobacco settlement and current
spending relating to tobacco cessation and
prevention discussion continued;
Blue Cross Blue Shield presentation.

**JOBS &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: 1998 performance report review,
Minnesota Housing Finance Agency.

10 a.m.

**Joint CRIME PREVENTION/
JUDICIARY FINANCE**

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Rich Stanek,
Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: panel on state crime statistics:
Department of Corrections, Sentencing
Guidelines Commission, House Research, and
a court system representative.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: to be announced.

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Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Income growth and taxes

1997 per capita personal income in Minnesota	\$26,295
in United States	\$25,298
Minnesota's rank in nation	13
1996 percentage of Minnesotans age 16 to 64 who are employed	84.1
in United States	74.6
Minnesota's rank in nation	1
1995 percentage of Minnesotans with income below the federal poverty level	9.5
in United States	13.8
1996 median Minnesota income for family of four	\$56,200
in United States	\$51,518
1992-97 per capita income growth in Minnesota, in percent	24.5
in United States	23.1
1996-97 per capita income growth in Minnesota, in percent	4.1
in United States	4.7
1992-97 per capita income growth in seven county metro area, in percent	20.8
in 80 counties outside metro area	21.2
1992-96 per capita income growth in Jackson County (highest in state), in percent	39.4
in Kittson County (lowest in state)	2.2%
1996 per capita income in Hennepin County (highest in state)	\$34,574
in Todd County (lowest in state)	\$15,391
in Ramsey County	\$29,170
1992-96 average annual pay increase in Minnesota, in percent	14
in United States	11.7
Total Minnesota state income tax collections in fiscal year 1997, in billions	\$4.4
in fiscal year 1996	\$4.1
in fiscal year 1995	\$3.7
Minnesota's lowest individual income tax rate in 1998, in percent	6
Highest rate	8.5

Sources: *The Book of the States*, 1998-99, Council of State Governments; *Minnesota Milestones 1998: Measures that Matter*, 1998, Minnesota Planning; *Population Notes*, 1998, Minnesota Planning.

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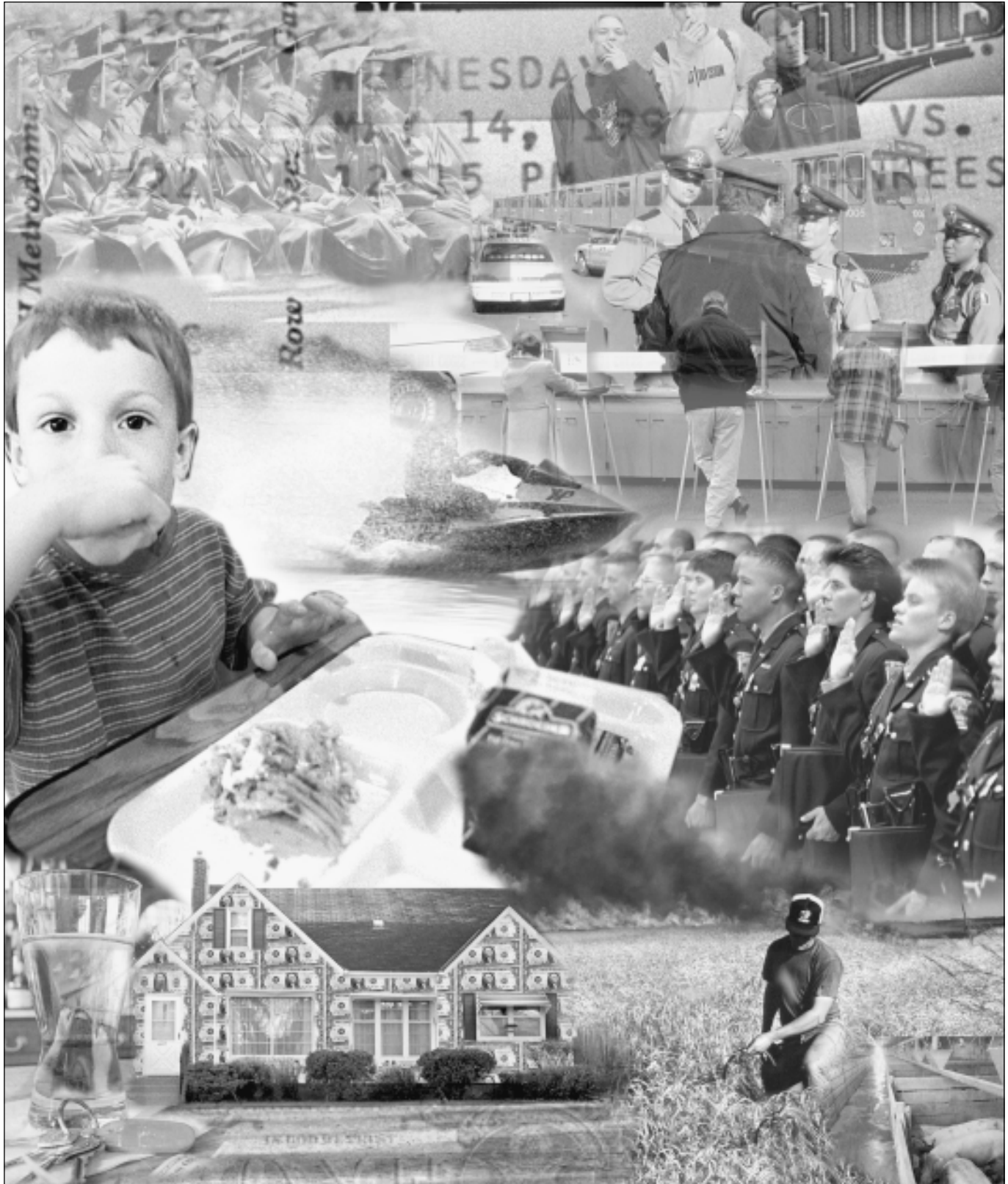
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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ January 22, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 3



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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • January 22, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 3

Reflections



Each January, people across the country commemorate the life of one of America's great men, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In 1999, many Minnesotans highlighted his commitment to equal rights for all by celebrating his 70th birthday Jan. 15 with marches, speeches, and song. Some paid homage by visiting a bust dedicated to him in the Minnesota State Capitol.

Dr. King's bust is located in a small niche near the foot of the east grand staircase that leads to the second floor of the Capitol. The bust faces west toward the rotunda, the building's spiritual center designed by architect Cass Gilbert.

The idea of a bust in the Capitol to honor Dr. King was generated by a citizens' group in the local African-American community to create a fitting and lasting monument devoted to America's renowned advocate for nonviolence. The bust was conceived as a significant tribute to a man who was called a "drum major for peace" and one who led marches for justice and freedom for everyone.

The group, headed by Mrs. Phyllis Ellis of Minneapolis, held meetings early in 1985 to select a sculptor. Once selected, a bust was completed and even presented in the Capitol's rotunda. But the artist's work was oversized and did not meet approval standards.

Later in the year, the bust that now resides near the Capitol's east wing was created by a different sculptor and approved by the citizens' group and the Minnesota Historical Society.

And on Jan. 20, 1986, the bronze bust of Dr. King, on a black marble base, was installed for posterity in its southeast niche. Then-Gov. Rudy Perpich addressed 1,500 people at the ceremony.

Sculptor George M. Bassett aptly captured the strength and dignity once seen in Dr. King's facial expressions.

Bassett is a Minnesota native known around the Capitol for other busts he executed. These include a bust of conservationist Sigurd F. Olson and one of Hubert H. Humphrey, the former U.S. senator and vice president of the United States.

If the paintings on the walls and ceiling are not included, King's bust is possibly the only artwork of an individual in the building who was not a Minnesota resident.

But the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a Nobel Peace Prize recipient. As "a seeker of peace, justice, and truth for all mankind," he devoted his life for others to live out the true meaning of democracy.

Dr. King's bust occupies a reverent place in the state Capitol as a gift "From the People of Minnesota."

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: A photomontage depicts issues faced by lawmakers in recent years, several of which may crop up again this session.

—Photo illustration by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

Profile of Learning . . .

K-12 initiative faces tough test in the Legislature



Lawmakers this session are considering changes to the state's graduation requirements. The members of the class of 1998 from Mounds View High School in Arden Hills, Minn., finished school before the controversial Profile of Learning — now the center of debate — began to take effect. This photo shows the students as they prepared to receive their diplomas during commencement exercises last June.

By Sarah Hallonquist

Legislators got their first official crack at the controversial Profile of Learning this session during a Jan. 19 meeting of the House Education Policy Committee.

Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie) is sponsoring **HF15**, one of several proposals to change the current academic standards and guidelines that students must meet in order to graduate from a Minnesota high school.

Since the beginning of the state's two-pronged graduation rule in 1993, the Legislature has tinkered with details in response to public opposition to the standards and recommendations from various advisory groups. The Profile of Learning has been roundly criticized by some teachers, parents, and lawmakers alike for being too rigorous and too difficult to implement and document.

Mandatory standardized tests taken in math, reading, and writing — the other half of the graduation standards initiative — have already been implemented statewide.

Meanwhile, the deadline for districts to start adhering to the entire Profile of Learning under current law is the 2001-02 school year. Some districts began implementing parts of the profile at the beginning of the current school year, and those districts will receive additional funding for early implementation.

However, as outside criticism grows and

there is still time left before the final deadline, some lawmakers are committed to amending the Profile of Learning in some form this session.

Kielkucki's bill contains five parts which are based on recommendations from the Graduation Standards Advisory Panel. The panel was established in 1998 to examine how the profile plan should generally be carried out in schools and if any changes were necessary.

sory panel to create a plan for students who do not pass standardized tests or meet other graduation requirements.

Kielkucki said the Profile of Learning has generated many comments from his colleagues and constituents. And since he introduced the bill, he said he has been inundated by calls and e-mails — positive and negative — about the changes he's proposing.

"I have received more comments on this bill than I did on the Twins stadium," he said.

In explaining his position to his colleagues on the education panel, Kielkucki stressed his experience as a teacher.

"Looking at this from an educator's standpoint, there was no way I would have taught those performance packages," he said.

Much of the controversy surrounding the new standards includes the plan's performance packages, which are state curriculum models. Although their use is not mandatory, teachers are encouraged to develop their own packages that match or exceed the state's examples. But many teachers and school administrators have complained that the sample performance packages are too difficult to teach and will dramatically change what is expected of students in the K-12 system.

The new rule has also been criticized for having too many learning areas. Currently, the 10 areas are Read, View, and Listen in English; Write and Speak in English; Litera-

"Looking at this from an educator's standpoint, there was no way I would have taught those performance packages,"

—Rep. Tony Kielkucki

Kielkucki's proposal would reduce the core learning areas from 10 to five and allow districts to add other areas if desired. It would also reduce the number of content standards required in each learning area. It would provide delayed plans for districts who have not yet implemented the plan, eliminate state performance packages, and require schools to assess students in 11th grade using standardized tests that compare with other states and nations. Finally, the bill would set up an advi-

ture and the Arts; Mathematical Applications; Inquiry; Scientific Applications; People and Cultures; Decision Making; Resource Making; and World Languages (optional).

Under the 10 learning areas, there are groups of content standards. The content standards describe certain subjects students must master, such as academic writing or chemistry concepts. In order to graduate from high school, students are required to complete a minimum of one content standard from each

group in learning areas one through nine (each area has one to four groups) and from two of the groups in area six. They must satisfy a total of 21 content standards.

Last year, lawmakers approved \$70 million for school districts to implement the Profile of Learning. A phased-in system was developed for schools so they would not have to implement all 10 learning areas at once.

And about the same time legislators were drawing up the 1998 K-12 omnibus bill, administrative law judge George Beck was completing a report on the Profile of Learning that examined the reasonableness of the plan. He reviewed his March 1998 report for the House education committee. The report includes his recommendation that the required content standards be brought from 21 to 18.

Although he cannot rule on the profile's policy or give his personal opinion, Beck did say he would label the program as "rigorous."

"It will require students, parents, and teachers to work harder than they have in the past," he said.

HF15 was referred to the House Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Committee for approval of the advisory panel provision of the bill. The education committee is slated to hear additional public testimony on the bill Jan. 26.

Meanwhile, the Senate is scheduled to take up a similar measure, and there is a separate House plan that calls for the repeal of the Profile of Learning statutes altogether. That bill, **HF27**, sponsored by Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) has not yet been heard in committee. 🗽

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Report says the future is in the suburbs



If you live in the Twin Cities metro and find it a bit more crowded than you like, this is bad news.

About 87 percent of Minnesota's population growth from 1995 to 2025 will occur in nine primarily suburban counties in the metropolitan area, according to a report prepared by Minnesota Planning and released in September 1998.

Where will all of those people come from? Most likely, the state's rural areas.

Minnesota Planning projects that 42 of the state's 87 counties will experience population losses during the 30 years preceding 2025. Western Minnesota is projected to have the highest rates of loss.

Many of the report's projections are based on underlying assumptions about how the economy will perform in different regions of the state, with fertility and mortality factored in.

In rural areas, large population losses are expected to be produced by continued farm consolidation, an older age structure, and the flight of young people.

From 1995 to 2005 the state's total population is projected to increase about 7 percent, the report reveals.

But the population will continue to age, which carries an inevitable result — the number of deaths is expected to rise and births to fall.

Rapidly growing suburban counties, however, are projected to have a rising number of births because those areas will likely be populated by many young families.

Deaths are projected to go up in most counties, with large numerical increases in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Suburban counties will see a large gain in deaths because their populations are both growing and aging.

Statewide, the number of children ages

14 and under is projected to fall about 10 percent between 1995 and 2005. The annual number of Minnesota births has fallen in the 1990s, as women born during the baby bust of the 1960s and 1970s are now the prime child-bearing population.

Only a handful of counties, mostly in the Twin Cities suburbs, will see growth in child population in the near future.

By 2025, more than half of Minnesotans will be older than 40, and about 17 percent will be African-American, Asian, American Indian, or Hispanic, the report states. The state's population is expected to top 5.3 million in 2025 — up from today's estimated population of 4.6 million.

"The numbers are higher than those in our 1993 projections, mainly because the strong economy has attracted more new residents," said Ann Schluter, director of Minnesota Planning at the time the report was written. "However, the basic trends are the same — slower growth, more diversity, and a noticeable aging of the population."

The number of Minnesotans older than 45 is projected to grow substantially as the baby boomers move into their later years.

As the population ages there will be fewer births and more deaths, leading to slower population growth overall.

"These projections are used by government planners, businesses, schools and many others," said Tom Gillaspay, state demographer. "For example, state budget analysts look at the projected number of working-age people to get an idea of

trends in future income tax revenues."

The Minnesota Demographic Center — operated by the planning department — tracks the state's population and economy, and is Minnesota's link with the U.S. Bureau of Census. The center helps develop long-range plans for the state, stimulates public participation in Minnesota's future, and coordinates activities among all levels of government.

TOP GROWING COUNTIES

County	Percent Change 1995-2025
Sherburne	92%
Scott	73%
Carver	79%
Washington	57%
Chisago	54%

TOP SHRINKING COUNTIES

County	Percent Change 1995-2025
Lac Qui Parle	-28%
Big Stone	-28%
Lincoln	-24%
Traverse	-22%
Murray	-22%

Source: *Faces of the Future*, September 1998, Minnesota Planning.

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Company brews ethanol plan

It's a short trip from making beer to making ethanol, but it can take a long time to get there.

That's what officials from the Minnesota Brewing Company told the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee Jan. 19.

The firm has been attempting to secure financing for ethanol production since last fall to no avail.

Minnesota Brewing purchased the former Schmidt Brewery in St. Paul from G. Heilman Brewing in 1991 and has most recently been turning out Grain Belt, Pig's Eye, and Yellow Belly products.

Bruce Hendry, chairman of the board of Minnesota Brewing, said the plant has consistently lost money — as much as \$100,000 a month — and would be closed, idling its roughly 200 employees, if not for the hope that ethanol production could boost profits.

He estimates it will cost about \$20 million to refit the plant, which he said is ideal for ethanol production.

"We'll have the best-tasting ethanol available," he joked.

While there are subsidies in place to promote ethanol production, Hendry told the committee that federal money isn't available because the plant is in an urban area and state guarantees don't amount to enough to convince bankers of the viability of the plant.

In addition, Minnesota Brewing's production costs are high because of union contracts and the fact that it doesn't have a mechanism to purchase corn directly from farmers as cooperative-owned plants do.

Minnesota Brewing President Jack Lee told the committee the company is also planning to capture and sell its carbon dioxide byproduct, adding another \$3 million annually to the operation.

Lee said that if the company's small production payment from the state were increased by \$600,000, bankers would probably be convinced of the viability of the plan, jobs would be saved, and a demand for Minnesota-grown corn assured.

Committee members expressed sympathy for the company's plight.

But Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) wondered why a committee devoted to agriculture should



Bruce Hendry, chairman of the board of the Minnesota Brewing Company, *right*, uses a drawing to illustrate to members of the House Agriculture & Rural Development Finance Committee how the St. Paul plant could be retrofitted to produce ethanol. Minnesota Brewing CEO Jack Lee, *left*, also appeared before the committee Jan. 19.

fund an operation in the middle of St. Paul.

Hendry said his plant would strengthen rural ethanol programs and added that Minnesota Brewing had their support. He also pointed out that the plant would be a tour facility for city residents who would gain a better understanding of ethanol, its use, and its production.

"To a lot of folks in urban areas, ethanol is just a big scam to raise the price of corn," Hendry said.

Several committee members suggested that the company look closely at farmer-direct purchase of the 5.5 million to 6 million bushels of corn it would use annually.

Lee said that no firm plan had been fashioned for obtaining corn but that transportation costs would be a major consideration.

Hendry said he wasn't sure exactly how much longer Minnesota Brewing would continue to operate at a loss, but he said the company has come too far to abandon the plan to convert to ethanol production without trying every avenue to obtain the funding.

The committee took no action on the matter.

Fostering ag innovation

Entrepreneur Cliff Larson knew he was on to something when he noticed that exposure to soybeans seemed to soothe the rough, chapped hands of electricians working at his Meeker County plant.

He soon developed Soysoft, the first lotion made from soy lipids, but with product in hand, he still needed marketing assistance.

That's where the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute came in. The group, headed by former Rep. Edgar Olson, aims to provide markets for Minnesota products like Larson's.

"Without (the institute), we'd probably still be standing at the gate," Larson told the House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee at a Jan. 14 meeting.

The research institute provides development and marketing services, such as product assessment, research, business development, and technical assistance, to producers of Minnesota products. With its help, Larson was able to launch Soysoft. The lotion is currently available in gift shops around the state and will soon be featured on the Home Shopping Network.

The institute, now in its 10th year, receives about \$4 million a year from the state. Olson said that funding is matched with about \$6 from grower cooperatives and commodity

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boards for every \$1 invested by the state.

Some of the more prosperous relationships have been with the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association and, more recently, the Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council.

"Over the past number of years, numerous people and companies, both large and small, have come to our office with what seem to be fantastic ideas or concepts for new products that utilize soybeans or soybean products," said Doug Proehl, head of the growers association.

"Most of the time they were seeking more than funding to get their product to the marketplace; they were also seeking assistance with questions like: Is this product unique? Will it work? Can I produce this product competitively? Will it sell?"

The institute can help answer all of those questions, Proehl said.

Recent projects include a plan to develop fast-growing hybrid poplars as a cash crop on poor-quality land. The trees would be sold for their fiber and used in a variety of products.

Olson shared with committee members some samples of Minnesota products, including Great River Vineyards wine, molded bird feeders, Capt. Ken's Beans, and Prairie Smoke Barbecue Sauce.

The institute will return to the committee with a formal budget request.

Seeking federal farm help

Two resolutions calling on Congress to act immediately to alleviate problems down on the farm were approved by the House Agriculture Policy Committee Jan. 20.

Rep. Jim Tunheim (DFL-Kennedy) is sponsoring one bill (**HF105**), and Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson) is carrying the other (**HF151**).

Tunheim said that to get a complete picture of how bad things are in agriculture, you need only look at the rising cost of nearly everything farmers buy in relationship to what they are paid for commodities such as wheat.

He told the committee that in 1950, wheat sold for \$2.09 a bushel and a full-size Ford automobile sold for \$1,600. In July 1998, wheat was selling for \$3.16 a bushel and a full-size Ford cost \$24,800.

"Everything is going up except the price farmers get for a bushel of wheat," Tunheim said.

Noting that in Kittson County, with a population of 5,500, there were only 20 births in 1998, he said continued struggles in the agricultural sector could lead to the devastation of much of rural Minnesota.

Tunheim's resolution calls upon Congress to repeal the Freedom to Farm Act of 1996, to purchase more pork and pork products to help drive prices up, and to investigate the proposed merger between Cargill Inc. and Continental Grain Co., among other things.

Meanwhile, Harder's resolution calls for increasing available livestock slaughter capacity in the U.S. and Canada, expanding food exports, and reviewing the Freedom to Farm Act, among other requests. Harder said the federal government has the largest role in providing broad-based relief to farmers.

Adhering to the wishes of Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus), committee chair, there was no discussion on either proposal prior to a vote.

Both resolutions now move to the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee.



CRIME

Fraud victims want action

Law enforcement agencies, bankers, and retailers are seeking changes to make the investigation and prosecution of check and identity fraud crimes more efficient and effective. Members of the House Crime Prevention and House Judiciary Finance committees heard presentations on the issue during a joint meeting Jan. 21.

Jane Chase of St. Louis Park told the com-

mittees that she had \$7,000 in forged checks written against her account after her checkbook was stolen. She said that although she did not have to accept the loss because she had canceled the checks, the incident has been a major inconvenience.

"I understand that this is seen as a victimless crime," she said. "But in reality, we are victims."

Chase said that she was surprised that local police departments would not invest energy in investigating and prosecuting cases in other jurisdictions.

"I was appalled at how limited the authorities were at prosecuting individuals who steal checkbooks," she said.

Anoka County Attorney Bob Johnson said that local police have no idea when other cases involving the same suspect or suspects exist in other jurisdictions. He said that local police do not place a high priority on these investigations because they don't realize how large the crime actually is.

"Our structure — our criminal justice system — calls for a lot of local control," he said. "And it may not be as flexible as it could be."

Current law allows cases to be aggregated and prosecuted in one jurisdiction. However, local law enforcement agencies do not investigate cases that involve retailers and financial institutions in many different jurisdictions, Johnson said.

John McCullough of the Minnesota Retail-

Former speaker, new commissioner



Newly appointed as commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Commerce, former House Speaker David Jennings, *left*, shares a laugh with Gov. Jesse Ventura. The governor noted at the Jan. 20 news conference that Jennings' sons had voted for Ventura in the 1998 election. Asked which gubernatorial ticket he cast his vote for, Jennings, the last Republican to be speaker until this year replied, "Humphrey-Moe."

ers Protection Association demonstrated how technology designed for employers who issue paychecks is being used for check fraud. He showed the committee how easy it is to use software to create fake payroll checks and deposit slips.

Representatives of the groups told the committees that they will be bringing ideas to legislators on how the law could be changed to make investigation and prosecution more effective.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) is sponsoring a bill (**HF112**) that would make it a felony to use another person's identity. The bill was not before the committees at the time of the hearing.

Bishop told the committees that he hopes to work with the groups and to have the bill ready soon for presentation before the Crime Prevention Committee.



ENERGY

Energy program blown off

Helping Minnesota farmers harvest the wind was the goal of a program approved by the 1997 Legislature. So far, the crop has been sparse.

A report prepared by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture reveals that not a single farmer has applied to the Rural Finance Authority for a loan of up to \$500,000 to cover 45 percent of costs to build a wind energy conversion facility.

The report was presented to the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee Jan. 19.

Jim Boerboom, director of the Agricultural Finance Division of the agriculture department, said a survey of farmers and bankers in western Minnesota unearthed several reasons for the lack of activity in the program.

Farmers cited high capital costs, lack of understanding of wind energy economics, lack of operating knowledge, difficulty in selling electricity, and low profits. Lenders said the technology is unproven and indicated they would make credit decisions based on an applicant's resources unrelated to the wind project.

Turning a profit in the wind-to-electricity business can be an involved process. According to the agriculture department's testimony, there is no shortage of the supply — average wind-speed is clocked at between 15.7 and 16.8 miles per hour in western Minnesota, specifically on the Buffalo Ridge near Lake Benton.

The wind machines required to produce electricity are big and expensive. The 143 units

on a wind farm built by Enron Wind Corporation near Lake Benton are each as tall as a 25-story building. Each 750-kilowatt machine generates enough power for 250 homes.

A single 600-kilowatt machine to run one turbine costs just under \$600,000. Although pricey, the machines take up only a small portion of land, and farmers can grow traditional crops in and among the turbines.

Additionally, a market for wind-generated electricity has been assured. In 1994, Northern States Power committed to purchase 425 megawatts of wind-generated energy by 2002 in exchange for extended storage of nuclear waste at Prairie Island Nuclear Facility.

Wind power is more expensive than electricity produced from coal or natural gas.

To encourage the development process, the Legislature adopted a host of incentives and subsidies to help farmers get a piece of the action.

A survey of farmers in western Minnesota revealed that many of them would be interested in some type of wind energy cooperative, but they had little interest on an individual basis.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), who chairs the House agriculture panel, said there was nothing in the original legislation that specifically prohibited co-ops from qualifying for funding.

Boerboom said the wind-energy situation is not quite analogous to Rural Electric Cooperatives, which are a more familiar concept for farmers. He said most cooperatives are farmer-owned and a benefit is derived from patronage. In the case of electrical generation from wind, the product is sold to NSP, a private corporation, and most of the farmers don't receive their electricity from NSP.

The department has suggested the committee look at fashioning incentives directed toward a rural electric cooperative or other farmer ownership models.

The committee took no action.



ENVIRONMENT

Stud plan passes floor

The House passed a bill Jan. 21 that would remove a statewide ban on snowmobile studs. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), now moves to the Senate.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) said the bill (**HF6**) is necessary because legislation that was passed in the 1998 session did not have enough public input.

That law, which bans stud use on any public lands after July 1, includes a \$50 sticker fee to

be charged to snowmobilers who want to use metal studs until that date. However, it does not include a mechanism to spend that money, which was intended to go toward trail repairs.

"What we want to do is take this back to the citizens so that all can have fair input," Ozment said.

Ozment, chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee, and Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee, have established the Outdoor Recreation Task Force to address concerns related to snowmobile studs.

One of the major concerns is how to pay for damage to paved trails in the state. Hackbarth, who will chair the task force, said snowmobiles with studs are still banned on state-owned paved trails, and he will work toward solutions to repair the damage caused by snowmobiles. Other members of the task force will be Reps. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover), Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul), and Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook).

Holsten said the task force has not met, but he intends to deal with the issues and introduce trail repair legislation this session.

Hackbarth said the statewide ban on snowmobile studs is causing the state to lose tourism revenue and it should be removed as soon as possible. He said repealing the statewide ban is necessary to start the process of resolving the other issues.

Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul) proposed an amendment that addressed repairing the damage to trails and private property, but the amendment was voted down.

Hackbarth said McCollum's proposal represented just one of many possible ways of dealing with the problem.

"There are many different ideas and many safety issues," he said. "This is the problem. We don't have enough input on this issue."



GOVERNMENT

Reform Party getting on board

The election of Gov. Jesse Ventura has prompted action on a bill that would clarify state law that assumes certain appointees would come from either the DFL or Republican party.

The bill (**HF139**), sponsored by Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park), was approved Jan. 20 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee.

The law in question outlines the makeup of the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board to avoid having too many board members from the same political party. The board

responds to questions about campaign finance and economic interest disclosure of candidates for state offices.

Current law requires two members to be former legislators — one from the same political party as the governor and one of a different political party than the governor — and no more than three board members who support the same political party.

But the law has no provisions for how to proceed with appointments when there are no former legislators from the governor's political party, as is the case with Ventura's Reform Party.

The bill would remove the reference to the governor's political party. Under the bill, it would be mandated only that the board include two former legislators who belong to different parties.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

The committee also confirmed the appointments of three attorneys to the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.

Wilbur Fluegel of Maple Grove, Thomas Heffelfinger of Eden Prairie, and Nancy Wilson of Minnetonka were appointed to the six-member board by former Gov. Arne Carlson before he left office. The appointments must be confirmed by three-fifths majorities of the House and Senate.

Fluegel is a partner at Wentzel & Fluegel; Heffelfinger is a partner at Bowman and Brooke; and Wilson is in private practice.

Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope) asked if it's necessary to be an attorney in order to be on the board. Wilson said it is not a requirement, and that in fact none of the current members are attorneys. However, she said a legal background is helpful because laws on campaign finance are complex.



HEALTH

Bed rail policy disputed

Controversy over the use of restraints in Minnesota's nursing homes was the topic of a Jan. 21 hearing before the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Family members, nursing home administrators, and representatives from the Minnesota Department of Health shared their views on the issue and on pending legislation.

Linda Sutherland, head of the health department's Division of Facility and Provider Compliance, said the controversy surfaced last April when her department began levying fines on nursing homes for improper use of restraints as defined in federal law.

The department conducts nursing home



Joan Kaiser of Stacey, Minn., speaks in favor of reducing restrictions on the use of bed rails in Minnesota nursing homes. Kaiser, whose mother was severely injured when she fell out of her nursing home bed after the rails were removed, appeared before the House Health & Human Services Policy Committee Jan. 21.

inspections for the federal government's Food and Drug Administration.

"The nursing homes were never told to remove bed rails," one of the more common forms of restraints used, Sutherland told the committee.

But to avoid fines, which could run as high as \$1,000 for each day a home was deemed out of compliance, most facilities reacted by removing the rails completely, Sutherland said. In many cases rails were removed without contacting family and with disregard for the wishes of patients and physicians.

Sutherland said the inspections came after nearly 10 years of warning that the federal government wanted reductions in the use of restraints. She said action was only taken against facilities that were putting residents in "immediate jeopardy" by using restraints.

The overnight disappearance of bed rails seemed punitive to patients and their families.

But health department officials said that a doctor's order to keep bed rails in place could be honored without fear of retribution.

However, Greg Carlson, administrator of Grandview Christian Home in Cambridge, Minn., said his home was eventually fined \$85,000 and its nursing assistant training program lost its accreditation after an incident in

which a patient was restrained as prescribed.

Concerns were also expressed about retaining the dignity of nursing home residents and providing them with choice.

Without bed rails, some homes resorted to placing residents' mattresses directly onto the floor to avoid falls.

"It's a shame that the system can take the decision for care out of your hands," said Joan Kaiser of Stacey, Minn., whose mother fell and suffered a severe injury following the removal of her bed rails. Her mother died in September 1998.

While the health department argued that restraints are unsafe and contribute to more than 100 deaths annually nationwide, most who spoke said they believe more injuries were caused from falls after the restraints were removed.

But proponents of limiting the use of restraints said the only risk without restraints is from falling; however, with restraints, strangulation, pressure sores, agitation, frustration, incontinence, and others are possibilities.

Sutherland said research clearly shows there is more danger from having the restraints in place, especially when a patient slides between the rails or attempts to climb over them.

Under federal guidelines, restraints may not be used to punish a resident or for the convenience of staff but may be used to treat a medical symptom when ordered by a doctor.

Committee members are slated to continue the discussion when a bill that would clarify the law on the use of restraints comes up for debate.

Tobacco money debated

Lawmakers are now debating how Minnesota will spend the windfall coming from tobacco companies.

Under terms of a settlement with the companies announced last summer, the Legislature eventually will have more than a half-billion dollars to spend on "diminishing the human consequences" of tobacco use.

The House Health and Human Service Finance Committee took up the matter during a hearing Jan. 20.

The tobacco companies will pour \$6.1 billion in dedicated and undedicated revenue into the state in the next 25 years. That amount could be adjusted up or down, depending upon sales volume of cigarettes and whether the federal government is successful in taking a portion of the money. Regardless of those factors, there will be a huge sum available for state efforts to mitigate the impacts of smoking.

The committee began its work by looking at existing tobacco prevention and control programs.

About \$2.1 million in state health department funds is spent annually on anti-tobacco programs. Another \$276,000 is received from the Food and Drug Administration, but that amount is targeted primarily for undercover compliance checks conducted at establishments that sell tobacco.

Jan Jernell, director of the health department's Division of Family Health, told the committee that other agencies and departments spend additional funds on anti-smoking programs, making the total state investment much more than the amount spent on health department initiatives alone.

The committee also heard testimony from Kim Miner, a research scientist with the health department, who detailed both the need for programs and the recommended approach.

Miner said cigarette smoking in Minnesota has remained static among adults (about 22 percent), noting that nationwide the number of smokers has dropped 15 percent in recent years.

She said smoking among youth is increasing in Minnesota and exceeds the national average.

She suggested that a comprehensive approach be taken to any anti-smoking program to assure its effectiveness, and she listed specific areas for potential action.

Committee members weighed in on several of the options.

Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie) said she believes there are more "gentle ways" of preventing youths from using tobacco than compliance checks on retailers.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) said he is skeptical about a health department approach outlined in Miner's testimony to hike the price of cigarettes as a deterrent to smoking.

"The price has gone up regularly, yet the number of smokers hasn't gone down," he said. "With all of the young people I've talked with, price is a factor only for a short while."

Miner said nationally statistics point to a relationship between higher prices and a lower number of smokers.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) said his main concern is that whatever programs are funded produce the desired effects.

"We can't just be throwing money at the problem," he said. "If we look down the road five, 10, or 15 years and more kids are smoking than ever, we'll have wasted it."

He asked Jernell whether existing anti-smoking programs would provide any clues as to effectiveness. Jernell said none of them had

been in place long enough to produce empirical data.

The committee took no action on the matter.

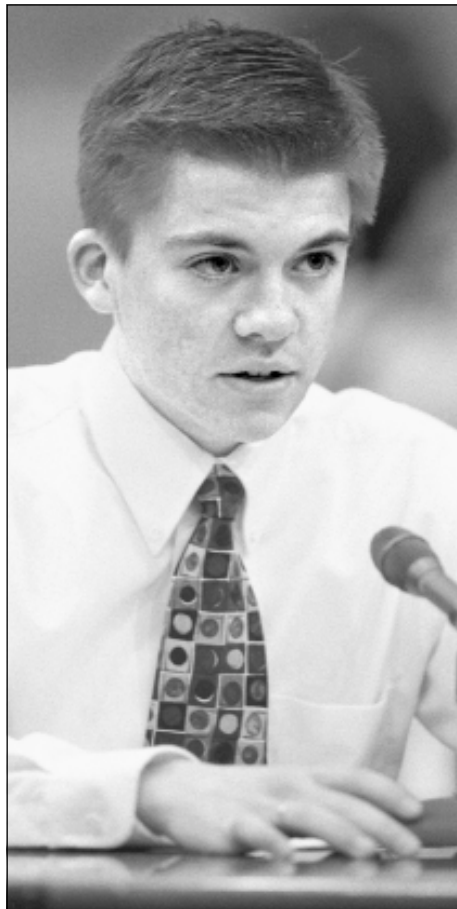
Clarification for organ donors

Most doctors know that human tissue and eyes are organs, but the average person considering donating his or her organs upon death may not always consider that fact.

That's why Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park) is sponsoring **HF74**.

Luther told members of the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Jan. 19 that her bill would make a small change in the state's health care directive. The committee approved the bill.

A person can use a health care directive to address all aspects of advanced planning for health care by appointing an agent to make the person's health care decisions or by making statements about how the person's health care should be handled.



Benson Lund, 17, of Edina, recalls how a cornea transplant saved his eyesight after he accidentally splashed hydrochloric acid in his right eye two years ago. Lund appeared in favor of a bill that would clarify organ donation laws. The plan was approved by the House Health & Human Services Policy Committee Jan. 19.

Luther's bill modifies the suggested form for the directive by allowing a person who signs a directive to authorize their health care agent to decide whether the person's tissue and eyes are donated upon death.

Under current law, the form allows a person completing the directive to give the health care agent the power to decide whether the person's organs are donated upon death.

The proposal perplexed Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), who is a physician. He wondered whether the bill might be in response to a court ruling that may have held that tissue or eyes weren't "organs."

Luther said there was no such decision she is aware of. She said the proposed addition of wording related to tissue and eyes is an attempt at clarification.

Susan Gunderson, executive director for LifeSource, an organ donation and procurement organization, said it is her firm's experience that potential donors don't always understand the full meaning of the word "organ."

"Under informed consent, donors must specify which organs they are giving consent for," Gunderson explained. "Usually, they only consider major organs."

She added that there is a shortage of donated tissue. Only 30 percent of the skin needed for burn patients is immediately available.

More than 1,300 people are awaiting transplants in Minnesota. Approximately 100 individuals die each year waiting.

The committee also heard from Benson Lund, a 17-year-old from Edina who was the recipient of a cornea and other eye tissue in late 1997 and early 1998.

Lund had hydrochloric acid splashed into his right eye during a chemistry experiment outside of school.

Doctors determined he needed a certain treatment prior to a corneal transplant. The procedure uses a central "button" of corneal tissue from an eye donor to replace the patient's damaged tissues.

Lund said donors made it possible for him to see again and added that he was thankful.

Luther told the committee that changing the directive form would not result in additional cost to the state.

The bill moves to the House Civil Law Committee.

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HIGHER EDUCATION

Yudof seeks budget boost

University of Minnesota President Mark Yudof introduced himself to lawmakers Jan. 21 at a meeting of the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

It was his first official visit to the Legislature since the U of M received its unusually large windfall last year. Almost \$243 million went to the university in 1998, including capital improvement funds, debt-service forgiveness, and a supplemental budget increase.

This year, university officials plan to ask the state for roughly \$1.28 billion for the next biennium. After Gov. Jesse Ventura releases his budget, which could be as soon as Jan. 28, the school will come back to the committee to present its formal biennial budget request.

Some of that money would be earmarked for lowering faculty-student ratios and for adding more freshman seminars. The seminars are designed to be small discussion-based classes in which new students can get to know each other early in their academic careers. Yudof taught one himself last fall, called Students and the Constitution.

"I learned a lot about tattoos and body piercing," Yudof said. "They learned something about the Constitution."

While Yudof's presentation was intended to serve as an introduction to the university system, committee members quizzed him on enrollment statistics and graduation rates. Some were also concerned with the size of the school's administration, which Yudof acknowledged was too big even though it's an average-sized staff.

"That's one area I don't even want to be average," he said.

And Yudof outlined some of his other philosophical goals for the U of M, including preserving its heritage, improving the school's research ranking, bettering its service to students, and providing hands-on education.

"The university is in the business of producing human capital," he said. "Minnesota will stand or fall on its human capital."

Yudof came flanked by several other university officials including Board of Regents Chair William Hogan II, Regent David Metzen, and institutional relations vice president Sandra Gardebring, a former member of the Minnesota Supreme Court.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Repealing residency rules

A bill that would repeal residency requirements for city employees in Minneapolis and St. Paul was approved Jan. 20 by the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), who is sponsoring the bill (**HF133**), said requiring city employees to live within the city limits has reduced the number of applicants for jobs and made it difficult to retain workers.

Carri Sampson, an emergency dispatcher in Minneapolis, said her department has had a lot of turnover, and the residency requirement for new employees has made it difficult to fully staff the department. In turn, she said, the stress level has risen.

"We don't have work that can wait," she said. "When we're shorthanded, employees work 12-hour shifts."

Al Berryman, president of the Police Officers Federation of Minneapolis, said the Minneapolis Police Department has received fewer applicants for jobs than cities that don't have residency requirements. Minneapolis has recently received 47 applications for 30 jobs available, he said. In that time, West St. Paul has had 120 applications for two positions, and the State Highway Patrol has had more than 900 applications for 30 positions, Berryman said.

Living in Minneapolis can be unsafe for

some city employees, said Lisa Thomas, who works in the city's attorneys office. She said her car has been vandalized twice and she has been harassed when recognized by people who have been prosecuted by her office.

A similar bill passed out of committee during the 1998 session, but the measure did not come up for a vote on the House floor.

Stanek said that then-Speaker Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center) encouraged the labor organizations and city officials to try to work out their differences. The groups met many times throughout the year but did not reach consensus, Stanek said.

The Minneapolis City Council approved a program Jan. 8 that allows employees or departments to request a waiver from the residency requirement, said Kathy Thurber, a council member. The waiver could resolve hardships such as those that had been discussed, she said, and the city has made good-faith efforts to resolve the problems.

"It became clear that short of repealing (residency requirements), nothing we could do would satisfy the labor groups," she said.

The overall labor shortage in the Twin Cities contributes to the low number of applicants for city jobs, said Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton, especially in information technology and other high-demand areas. The city is responding by offering competitive wages and benefits, she said. She and Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) added that their constituents have expressed strong support for requiring city employees to live in Minneapolis.



Rebecca and Reid Brown, both Minneapolis police officers, testify about the difficulty they have maintaining two homes because of the city's residency rule. She has a home in Minneapolis while her husband, who was exempt from the rule because of a grandfather clause, has a home in the Annandale, Minn., area. The couple appeared before the House Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Committee Jan. 20.

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"This is a local decision made by the city with the support of its residents," Sayles Belton said. "Some decisions are best made locally."

She also said the residency requirement is fiscally responsible. The city employs about 5,000 people, and having people with good jobs living within the city contributes to the tax base. It also promotes community involvement and strengthens neighborhoods, she said.

Orfield said Michigan prohibits residency requirements for Detroit city employees, making it the only state that prohibits cities from making those requirements. He said Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco all have residency requirements and have seen lower crime rates in recent years.

St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman did not attend the committee meeting but submitted a letter indicating support for repealing the requirements.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

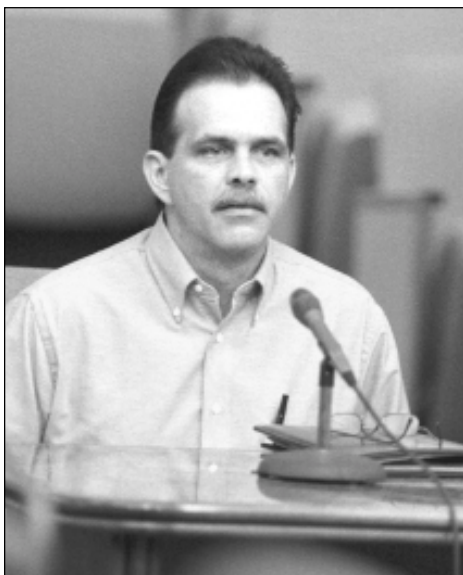
Big problem in tiny town

Rick McCaleb of Reads Landing, Minn., made a good case for a bill that would provide a special appropriation to extend sewer and water services from the city of Wabasha to his hometown.

"We've got ditches with raw sewage going right down to the Mississippi," McCaleb told members of the House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee Jan. 19.

McCaleb described the problems caused by failing and inadequate septic systems in his community of 71 homes.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), who is



Rick McCaleb of Reads Landing, Minn., testifies in support of a bill that would provide funding for a water and sewer extension to his tiny town. McCaleb appeared before the House Jobs & Economic Development Policy Committee Jan. 19.

sponsoring the bill (HF44), said that residents of the community cannot afford the increase in water and sewer rates that would come as a result of financing the project without the state's assistance.

Some members expressed concern that a request of this sort could open the gates to more requests later.

"I'm a little worried about the precedent of doing this for one community, and then all of a sudden there's a dozen needing to do the same thing," said Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul).

The bill was laid on the table for consideration at a later date.



TAXES

Selling a rebate plan

The House Taxes Committee was expected to debate HF1, a plan to rebate a portion of the state's budget surplus based on income taxes paid, but when the gavel fell Jan. 19, the agenda changed considerably.

Members instead discussed a proposal, supported by Gov. Jesse Ventura, to rebate the state's budget surplus based on a sales tax formula.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), who chairs the committee and is sponsoring the income-tax rebate bill, said the change was made as a courtesy to the governor. He said the income tax based plan would "rest awhile" while the committee takes a look at the sales tax proposal.

Under that plan, rebate amounts would be determined from a schedule based on each eligible filer's Minnesota taxable income and estimates of average household expenditures for consumer sales tax at that income level.

The minimum rebate would be \$202 for single filers and \$384 for married joint and single head of household filers. The maximum rebate would be \$1,000 for singles and \$2,000 for others.

Rebates would be payable in August, after the state's books for the current fiscal year are closed.

Matt Smith, commissioner of the Department of Revenue, presented further details to the committee, along with Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), chair of the House Ways and Means Committee.

Smith said a major plus for the plan is that the money returned wouldn't be subject to federal income tax.

But that notion was challenged by Abrams, who pressed Smith and John Haugen, a legal adviser for the Department of Revenue, to

admit there is no actual ruling on the issue and there is a "remote possibility" that the sales tax rebates may eventually be ruled taxable income.

Abrams said he doubts the state would succeed in a plan to "gin the federal government out of \$200 million." That's the estimated amount of federal income tax that would be paid under HF1.

Abrams also painted a scenario under which the plan could be challenged in a class-action suit on behalf of out-of-state residents, who paid sales tax in Minnesota but who, under the plan, would not receive any rebate money.

Smith said that in attempting to make the plan simple, there was no way to account for those consumers, including tourists and out-of-state shoppers at the Mall of America, among other retail sites.

Other challenges to the Ventura plan came from House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon), who said he was dismayed that the proposal so far contained no specific help for farmers and that businesses and corporations would not receive rebates.

Sviggum said 40 percent of sales tax revenue collected was from businesses and the Ventura plan "cuts them out."

Sviggum also chided revenue department officials for telling the Legislature in the last biennium that a sales tax-based rebate plan was "not a good way to go."

Smith said that at the time that was good advice, but since the rebate based on property tax has been implemented, the vehicle is in place to easily apply the sales tax formula in the Ventura plan.

Sviggum later noted that the plan as presented requires reversing a cash-for-bonding proposal approved last year, which would require 81 votes to pass.

Sviggum said the 81 votes would be "a problem" and, given the "redistributive nature" of the plan, even 68 votes could be "somewhat of a problem."

Several DFL members spoke during the hearing, generally in favor of the plan.

"We want taxpayers to receive the benefit of every dollar that we put into the rebate program," said Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope), lead DFLer on the taxes panel. "Washington didn't create our budget surplus. The hard-working Minnesota taxpayer did."

Bishop is expected to introduce a bill containing the governor's rebate plan. The committee took no action on the matter.

Skoe brings rural perspective to state policymaking

By Jon Fure

Rep. Rod Skoe (DFL-Clearbrook) attributes his success in the 1998 election to his diverse background, but it probably didn't hurt that



Rep. Rod Skoe

as a farmer he grows two of the main ingredients in any Minnesota hot dish — wild rice and potatoes.

Skoe said the sparse population in District 2B consists of people with many different interests. Family farms can be found throughout the district, and logging is the main industry on the district's eastern edge, which is near the northwestern corner of the state. The district contains two American Indian reservations, and it attracts tourists to the Itasca State Park area.

Before he started farming with his father and uncles in 1985, Skoe worked in the logging industry. He has served as a Clearwater County commissioner and as a member of his local commodities council and school board.

"My background in logging and then farming, and my work with the school board and other committees makes me uniquely prepared to represent this diverse district," he said.

Skoe's wife, Sarah Hoagberg, is a former teacher who now works with the local school district in early childhood education and has worked with HeadStart and other programs. They have two children in junior high school — Mary, who has a black belt in Tae Kwon Do, and Patrick, who is active in many team sports.

Serving as a representative means he has less

time to spend with his family, but Skoe said it's a worthwhile sacrifice. He said his parents were always active in the community when he was growing up, and he credits them for being good role models.

"The only reason to do this is to make a commitment to do something positive for the area you live in," he said.

Life in St. Paul is quite a bit different than in Skoe's hometown, which has a population of about 680. But while Skoe has spent most of his life in his district, having grown up in Kelliher, Minn., big city life isn't completely foreign to him. He earned undergraduate degrees in psychology and sociology from Augsburg College in Minneapolis. His education is a little unusual for a farmer, but Skoe said it has helped him in many ways.

"I tell people I study plant populations instead of people populations," he said. "Actually, farming is a lot more than understanding the numbers. It's a business, and you have to be able to deal with people. And it's helped on the boards I've been on. You have to affect the board so that it makes good decisions."

As a county commissioner, Skoe's perspective helped influence decisions surrounding the newly formed Clearbrook Economic Development Board, which aims to grow jobs for rural residents. The board includes representatives from all of the local cities and school districts, some townships, and quite a few businesses.

As a legislator, he hopes to advocate continued crop research at the University of Minnesota, which he believes will help boost the economy throughout the state. Some of the

farms in his district have some not-so-traditional livestock — such as ostrich, emu, and buffalo — that could benefit from continued research.

"Soybeans were an experimental crop in the 1950s, and now (they are) a major crop," he said. "You can see huge economic impacts if crops are developed properly and the market is there."

Skoe doesn't expect changes to occur overnight. His first goal is to get familiar with the process of effectively moving legislation along. He describes his approach to leadership as quiet and thoughtful, and he said he doesn't plan to speak much unless his comments can benefit the whole group.

He might not be quiet for too long, as he serves on House committees that will likely benefit from his experience: Agriculture Policy, Agriculture and Rural Development Finance, and Environment and Natural Resources Policy.

Skoe also indicated an interest in speaking up during the general session to remind lawmakers from larger cities about small-town concerns.

District 2B

1995 Population: 33,412

Largest city: Bagely

Counties: Becker, Beltrami, Clearwater, Mahnomon, and Polk

Location: northwestern Minnesota

Top concern: "To bring a rural perspective to the discussion; to make sure that the way laws and regulations affect rural areas is discussed as part of the process."

— Rep. Rod Skoe



Several members of the House Taxes Committee expressed concern in a hearing Jan. 18 that Gov. Jesse Ventura's sales tax rebate plan could be considered redistribution of wealth.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), chair of the House Ways and Means Committee and potential sponsor of the governor's proposal, said that if you look carefully, you could probably find other instances in which Minnesota law redistributes wealth.

"We are somewhat of a Marxist state," Bishop reminded the committee.

To which Rep. Ron Abrams

(R-Minnetonka) responded, "Would that be Harpo or Groucho?"

"If there's a page around, could they please throw Commissioner Weaver out of the well?" joked Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), chair of the House Crime Prevention Committee, at a Jan. 19 meeting.

Apparently former Rep. Charlie Weaver, newly appointed commissioner of public safety, isn't used to his new position — away from the committee table. He was greeting members behind the table, breaching informal separation of power etiquette.

Members of the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee were deep into discussion regarding the settlement between the state and large tobacco companies during a hearing Jan. 20.

Suddenly, a metal device used to cover an access spot in the ceiling above Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) let loose and fell with a clang inches in front of the committee chair.

Startled, he remarked, "I guess we'll take that as a comment on this matter from the tobacco companies."

Pawlenty aims to score on issues, put bickering on ice

By Grant Martin

With plenty of talk of bipartisan cooperation coming from both sides of the aisle, it's almost refreshing to hear new House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty talk about playing pick-up hockey with House Minority Leader Tom Pugh.

"We haven't yet been there together this year," said Pawlenty (R-Eagan). "But when he does show up, I've got my elbow pads ready for him."

The two floor adversaries — praised by members for their fairness and mild-mannered leadership — play hockey Sunday nights with a group called the Golden Sea Horses. Pawlenty calls it "clutch-and-grab hockey." Checking is not allowed.

However, Pawlenty said that Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) likes to dish it out on the ice.

"He's kind of a cheap little player," he said. "He's one of the shorter players out there, and he's not the youngest player anymore. He's not adverse to a few slashes and hacks and elbows and stuff like that."

Pugh shook off Pawlenty's criticism, claiming it stems from over-exuberance.

"We lived our glory days in high school," Pugh said. "He's still trying out for the varsity team."

Pawlenty, the youngest in a family of five, grew up in a working class neighborhood in South St. Paul. His father worked as a truck driver, and his mother was a homemaker.

He said his background inspired him to work hard in school.

"I was a pretty serious student," he said. "My mom passed away when I was a sophomore in high school, and my dad lost his job not long after that. So I realized that I wasn't going to get a lot of financial help because I wasn't from a wealthy family. I was going to have to do it on my own. So I buckled down pretty hard."

Pawlenty attended the University of Minnesota as both an undergraduate and a law student, working several different jobs to pay for school. He said those experiences helped shape his political philosophy.

"I was working my tail off working part-time jobs, actually almost approaching full-time jobs, while going to college full time," he said. "I started to understand that there are circumstances in life where people need some help. But they also need to be accountable and



House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty hopes to build success on the "bread and butter" issues on which he believes most people support the Republican positions.

responsible and exercise initiative on their own."

Pawlenty lives in Eagan with his wife and two children. When he's not serving in the Legislature or playing hockey, he practices law with a downtown Minneapolis firm, focusing on personnel and employment issues.

His political career began in college with an internship for former U. S. Senator Dave Durenberger. Later, he became active in local government, serving as chair of Eagan's planning commission and on the Eagan City Council. He was first elected to the House in 1992.

Pawlenty has been outspoken on the direction of the Republican Party. He said that polls show that while people agree with the party on issues such as taxes, education, crime, and government reform, the party has not been entirely successful courting voters.

"As Republicans we have the right product, the right approach, on these bread and butter issues," he said. "But we have a mediocre track record in terms of how people respond to us

and if they allow us to win elections in Minnesota."

Pawlenty said that Republicans must do a better job communicating their priorities to the voters, especially groups that don't traditionally vote Republican.

"We need to make sure that we have messengers and a tone and a sense of priorities that reflects where most people are at," he said.

Inspired by the need for new leadership, Pawlenty threw his hat into the ring for governor in 1998. He dropped out of the race when St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman entered. He said he was satisfied that Coleman offered the leadership he was looking for.

When the Republicans won control of the House in November of last year, Pawlenty's peers elected him majority leader.

Pawlenty said he'll use his leadership post to enact the Republican agenda on the "bread and butter" issues. It will pay off, he said.

"If we can at the end of session say, 'We cut your taxes substantially and permanently, we cut your class sizes, we adequately funded schools, we cracked down on crime, and we cleaned up government,' that's a winning message," he said. "It's one that people in Minnesota respond to. We will be back in power, and we will retain control in 2000."

Pawlenty said that he also hopes to use his role as majority leader to keep the floor debate focused on the issues.

"My hope is that — particularly with the new era of Jesse in Minnesota — we can dial down the bickering, the sniping, the partisanship, and demonstrate to the people in Minnesota that while we have our differences — and we do have differences and they're legitimate differences — we can debate those differences in a constructive manner," he said.

However, that attitude doesn't carry over to the ice.

When asked if he's ever seen anyone take Pugh to task while playing hockey, Pawlenty said he hasn't yet.

"But I might," he said laughing.

Pugh sent the puck right back.

"If you see him after Sunday with bandages, that means I caught up with him," he said.



Lawmakers urged to create Web-friendly government



By Sarah Hallonquist

Lawmakers should begin making the most of the Internet and other technological advances to improve government services in the 21st century, Dr. Diana Oblinger told about 80 legislators at the Minnesota History Center Jan. 20.

An authority on information technology and higher education, Oblinger spoke to Minnesota lawmakers as part of the Capitol Forum, an annual series of lectures sponsored by the McKnight Foundation and Minnesota Technology, Inc.

This year's theme is information technology, and Oblinger kicked off the first forum with the topics of e-commerce and e-business. The first is the practice of buying and selling goods and services over the Internet, and the latter refers to companies who convert many of their operations to be online compatible.

For example, Oblinger said that many companies, such as IBM and Chrysler Corp., use the Internet for internal business. Human resources services can be available online 24 hours a day at IBM, and the process of ordering auto parts online saved Chrysler \$1 billion in the 1997 model year. Taking out the middleman by using the Internet has allowed companies to save money, get their products to market faster, and improve efficiency.

"What you can do with the Internet is bypass many of those steps," she said.

Oblinger spoke accompanied by a laptop computer, which she used to show World Wide Web sites to her listeners. She displayed stock pages, children's learning activities, shopping, employment networks, and government services to demonstrate the range of opportunities available via the Web.

"The real technology that we're concerned about here is the network," she said.

Oblinger acknowledged common fears some people often have about using the Internet, such as privacy and security. But she was quick to point out that because the technology will not go away, people should learn to use it.

"There is a whole new set of rules out there," she said.

Although her speech was called, "Changing Business As We Know It," Oblinger stressed



Dr. Diana Oblinger urges lawmakers to embrace new technology, especially the Internet, as they head into a new century. Oblinger spoke at the first of the 1999 Capitol Forum series events at the Minnesota History Center Jan. 20.

that many of the tactics businesses use on the Internet can also be applied to government and education. She noted several schools, including the University of Minnesota, that employ the Internet for distance education. Students can attend a "virtual university" away from campus via their computers.

In addition, some state and city governments use the Internet to provide services to citizens. In the state of Washington, there are public kiosks that provide information about 25 government agencies in multiple languages. Some states allow citizens to register for driver's licenses over the Internet, too.

"Part of the reason for this to become a growing trend in government is that there is never enough money to do what you want," she said.

Oblinger called this type of use "customer care," and said the government can enjoy some of the same benefits businesses do.

In the case of a bank, Oblinger showed figures that compared customer service costs. For a customer to go to a teller's window, the cost is \$1.50; an ATM machine reduces that cost to 35 cents. The cost is even lower over the telephone at 17 cents, and banking over the Internet is a mere 5 cents for the institution.

With the right technological infrastructure and resources, Oblinger said governments would be able to reap benefits that could be spread across otherwise ignored areas.

A question-and-answer format followed the lecture. Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) inquired about online voting, and Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph) wondered if the House's office supply system could be simplified with Internet technology.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) said that Minnesota's laws are made up of multiple layers and asked how the government can adapt to technology.

Oblinger responded that it would be difficult, but possible.

"We have to sometimes go completely out of the box" because the fundamental base (paper) is evaporating, she said.

After the program, Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar) said he found the topic interesting, especially for its potential in rural areas. However, he noted that getting areas in Greater Minnesota wired into the Internet would be a lot like rural electrification earlier in the century. And he noted that lawmakers might not jump on the Internet bandwagon too quickly.

"There are a lot of representatives and senators who are still dinosaurs when it comes to technology," Juhnke said.

Oblinger is on leave from IBM and works as the special advisor to University of North Carolina President Molly Corbett. She is the author of "What Business Wants from Higher Education" and has edited two books. She has three degrees from Iowa State: a bachelor's in botany, a master's in plant breeding, and a doctorate in cytogenetics. 🐼

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

Committee Information

1999 Minnesota House of Representatives

Agriculture Policy

517 State Office Building ... (651) 296-9918

Meets: Wed., 12:30 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 22

Chair: Finseth-R

Vice Chair: Westrom-R

Lead Democrat: Wenzel-DFL

Cassell-R	Rostberg-R
Davids-R	Schumacher-DFL
Dorman-R	Skoe-DFL
Gunther-R	Storm-R
Harder-R	Swenson-R
Juhnke-DFL	Tunheim-DFL
Kubly-DFL	Wejcman-DFL
Ness-R	Westfall-R
Otremba-DFL	Winter-DFL
Peterson-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Brad Biers (651) 296-4172

Committee Legislative Assistant

Rebecca Lowden (651) 296-4230

Agriculture & Rural Development Finance

509 State Office Building ... (651) 296-4344

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 12:30 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 10

Chair: Ness-R

Vice Chair: Swenson-R

Lead Democrat: Peterson-DFL

Finseth-R	Skoe-DFL
Harder-R	Wenzel-DFL
Kubly-DFL	Westrom-R
Rostberg-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Andy Gildea (651) 296-1540

Committee Legislative Assistant

Tami Charles (651) 296-9676

Fiscal Analyst

Peter Skwira (651) 296-4281

Capital Investment

451 State Office Building ... (651) 296-6316

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 12:30 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 21

Chair: Knoblach-R

Vice Chair: Dempsey-R

Lead Democrat: Kalis-DFL

Anderson, I.-DFL

Bishop-R

Carruthers-DFL

Daggett-R

Fuller-R

Krinkie-R

Leppik-R

Lindner-R

Luther-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Sarah Anderson (651) 296-8187

Committee Legislative Assistant

David Yakes (651) 296-7191

Fiscal Analyst

John C. Walz (651) 296-8236

Civil Law

503 State Office Building ... (651) 296-9188

Meets: Mon., Wed., 10 a.m. in BHR*

Members: 16

Chair: Smith-R

Vice Chair: Seifert, J.-R

Lead Democrat: Carruthers-DFL

Bishop-R	Leighton-DFL
Boudreau-R	Mahoney-DFL
Broecker-R	Mullery-DFL
Dawkins-DFL	Olson-R
Holberg-R	Skoglund-DFL
Jaros-DFL	Stanek-R
Knoblach-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

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Committee Legislative Assistant

Scott Wiggins (651) 296-5356

Commerce

367 State Office Building ... (651) 296-9278

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 12:30 p.m. in Room 200*

Members: 26

Chair: Davids-R

Vice Chair: Paulsen-R

Lead Democrat: Jennings-DFL

Bakk-DFL	Hilty-DFL
Clark, K.-DFL	Holberg-R
Entenza-DFL	Holsten-R
Erhardt-R	Howes-R
Gerlach-R	Huntley-DFL
Gunther-R	Kahn-DFL
Haas-R	Lieder-DFL
Hasskamp-DFL	Osthoff-DFL

Ozment-R

Reuter-R

Seifert, J.-R

Tomassoni-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Brian S. Fahey (651) 296-9302

Committee Legislative Assistant

Cris Wohlford (651) 297-8139

Crime Prevention

543 State Office Building ... (651) 296-5502

Meets: Tues., Thurs., Fri., 10 a.m. in BHR*

Members: 17

Chair: Stanek-R

Vice Chair: Anderson, B.-R

Lead Democrat: Skoglund-DFL

Bishop-R	McGuire-DFL
Broecker-R	Mullery-DFL
Fuller-R	Murphy-DFL
Goodno-R	Paymar-DFL
Haake-R	Smith-R
Larsen-R	Wenzel-DFL
Mahoney-DFL	Westerberg-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Amy Roberts (651) 296-5533

Committee Legislative Assistant

Laurie Middleton (651) 296-4119

Education Policy

401 State Office Building ... (651) 296-5363

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 10 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 36

Chair: Mares-R

Vice Chair: Olson-R

Lead Democrat: Carlson-DFL

Abeler-R	Kielucki-R
Biernat-DFL	Leppik-R
Buesgens-R	Luther-DFL
Cassell-R	Mariani-DFL
Chaudhary-DFL	Ness-R
Dehler-R	Nornes-R
Dempsey-R	Opatz-DFL
Dorn-DFL	Otremba-DFL
Entenza-DFL	Pelowski-DFL
Erickson-R	Schumacher-DFL
Folliard-DFL	Seagren-R
Gray-DFL	Seifert, M.-R
Greiling-DFL	Stang-R
Johnson-DFL	Storm-R

Sykora-R
Tomassoni-DFL
Tuma-R

Tunheim-DFL
Wolf-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Rebecca J. Pryse (651) 296-9469

Committee Legislative Assistant

Betty L. McConnell (651) 296-5394

Environment &

Natural Resources Finance

381 State Office Building ... (651) 296-3018

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 10 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 13

Chair: Holsten-R

Vice Chair: Hackbarth-R

Lead Democrat: Osthoff-DFL

Bakk-DFL	Ozment-R
Finseth-R	Swenson-R
Howes-R	Tingelstad-R
McCollum-DFL	Wagenius-DFL
Munger-DFL	Westfall-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Ryan S. Bronson (651) 297-5723

Committee Legislative Assistant

Kathleen S. Anderson (651) 296-8871

Fiscal Analyst

Peter Skwira (651) 296-4281

Environment &

Natural Resources Policy

479 State Office Building ... (651) 296-4306

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 10 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 22

Chair: Ozment-R

Vice Chair: Westfall-R

Lead Democrat: Munger-DFL

Anderson, I.-DFL	Osskopp-R
Bakk-DFL	Osthoff-DFL
Finseth-R	Peterson-DFL
Haas-R	Rostberg-R
Hackbarth-R	Skoe-DFL
Hausman-DFL	Swenson-R
Holsten-R	Tingelstad-R
Howes-R	Wagenius-DFL
Kelliher-DFL	Workman-R
McCollum-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Marilyn Brick (651) 296-8893

Committee Legislative Assistant

Mary H. Lee (651) 296-5994

Ethics

487 State Office Building ... (651) 296-5373

Meets: Call of the Chair

Members: 6

Chair: Harder-R

Vice Chair: Milbert-DFL

Davids-R	Wagenius-DFL [†]
Murphy-DFL	[†] -alternate
Rhodes-R [†]	

Family & Early Childhood

Education Finance

403 State Office Building ... (651) 296-4315

Meets: Mon., Wed., 12:30 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 12

Chair: Sykora-R

Vice Chair: Nornes-R

Lead Democrat: McGuire-DFL

Abeler-R	Mahoney-DFL
Boudreau-R	Mariani-DFL
Bradley-R	Mulder-R
Chaudhary-DFL	Olson-R
Gray-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Jared Jordal (651) 296-5318

Committee Legislative Assistant

Scott Neske (651) 296-7167

Fiscal Analyst

Cynthia Coronado Templin (651) 296-5384

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

409 State Office Building ... (651) 296-9889

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8 a.m. in BHR*

Members: 22

Chair: Rhodes-R

Vice Chair: Rostberg-R

Lead Democrat: Kahn-DFL

Anderson, B.-R	Krinkie-R
Carlson-DFL	Lenczewski-DFL
Dehler-R	Mares-R
Erickson-R	Mullery-DFL
Folliard-DFL	Osskopp-R
Gerlach-R	Paymar-DFL
Gleason-DFL	Rest-DFL
Greiling-DFL	Reuter-R
Hilty-DFL	Seifert, M.-R
Kielkucki-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Judd L. Schetnan (651) 296-5336

Committee Legislative Assistant

Jeff Davidman (651) 296-9194

Health &

Human Services Finance

563 State Office Building ... (651) 296-5515

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 10

Chair: Goodno-R

Vice Chair: Mulder-R

Lead Democrat: Greenfield-DFL

Boudreau-R	Otremba-DFL
Bradley-R	Seifert, J.-R
Huntley-DFL	Wilkin-R
Koskinen-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Karen M. Russell (651) 296-5065

Committee Legislative Assistant

Holly Iverson (651) 296-4265

Fiscal Analyst

K. Joseph Flores (651) 296-5483

Health &

Human Services Policy

559 State Office Building ... (651) 296-9249

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 8 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 22

Chair: Bradley-R

Vice Chair: Boudreau-R

Lead Democrat: Huntley-DFL

Abeler-R	McCollum-DFL
Dorn-DFL	Mulder-R
Goodno-R	Nornes-R
Greenfield-DFL	Olson-R
Haas-R	Otremba-DFL
Howes-R	Seifert, J.-R
Jennings-DFL	Tingelstad-R
Koskinen-DFL	Wejcman-DFL
Luther-DFL	Wilkin-R
Mariani-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Christine Eilertson (651) 296-7185

Committee Legislative Assistant

Cheryl A. Burke (651) 296-4375

Higher Education Finance

485 State Office Building ... (651) 296-7026

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 10 a.m. in Room 300S*

Members: 12

Chair: Leppik-R

Vice Chair: Dehler-R

Lead Democrat: Pelowski-DFL

Carlson-DFL	Seifert, M.-R
Cassell-R	Stang-R
Dorn-DFL	Storm-R
Folliard-DFL	Tuma-R
Opatz-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Christie Ahern (651) 296-4091

Committee Legislative Assistant

Michele Schroeder (651) 296-7168

Fiscal Analyst

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Jobs & Economic

Development Finance

437 State Office Building ... (651) 296-4212

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 10

Chair: McElroy-R

Vice Chair: Gunther-R

Lead Democrat: Trimble-DFL

Clark, K.-DFL	Lindner-R
Davids-R	Sykora-R
Jaros-DFL	Westerberg-R
Kubly-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Denise Stephens (651) 296-5069

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Ann Hoffmann (651) 296-5999

Fiscal Analyst

Ronald R. Soderberg (651) 296-4162

Jobs & Economic

Development Policy

417 State Office Building ... (651) 296-7806

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 8 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 22

Chair: Lindner-R

Vice Chair: Storm-R

Lead Democrat: Jaros-DFL

Anderson, I.-DFL	Kubly-DFL
Cassell-R	Leighton-DFL
Chaudhary-DFL	McElroy-R
Clark, K.-DFL	Rukavina-DFL
Daggett-R	Stang-R
Dawkins-DFL	Sykora-R
Dorman-R	Trimble-DFL
Gray-DFL	Westerberg-R
Gunther-R	Westfall-R
Hackbarth-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Carrie Felber (651) 296-4283

Committee Legislative Assistant

Doris J. Ocel (651) 296-5355

Judiciary Finance

533 State Office Building ... (651) 296-7153

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 8 a.m. in Room 300S*

Members: 10

Chair: Broecker-R

Vice Chair: Holberg-R

Lead Democrat: Murphy-DFL

Fuller-R	Skoglund-DFL
Larsen-R	Smith-R
McGuire-DFL	Stanek-R
Paymar-DFL	

Staff

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Committee Legislative Assistant

Denise Berger (651) 296-8857

Fiscal Analyst

Gary G. Karger (651) 296-4181

K-12 Education Finance

477 State Office Building .. (651) 296-7803

Fax: (651) 296-8803

Meets: Mon., Wed., 10 a.m. in Room 5*;
Fri., 10 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 17

Chair: Seagren-R

Vice Chair: Ness-R

Lead Democrat: Johnson-DFL

Abeler-R	Kielkucki-R
Biernat-DFL	Mares-R
Buesgens-R	Nornes-R
Dempsey-R	Schumacher-DFL
Entenza-DFL	Tomassoni-DFL
Erickson-R	Tunheim-DFL
Greiling-DFL	Wolf-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Gregory L. Marcus (651) 296-9468

Committee Legislative Assistant

Kathryn L. Musty (651) 296-3316

Fiscal Analyst

Greg O. Crowe (651) 296-7165

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

551 State Office Building ... (651) 296-4244

Meets: Mon., Wed., 12:30 p.m. in Room 200*

Members: 22

Chair: Larsen-R

Vice Chair: Tuma-R

Lead Democrat: Hasskamp-DFL

Abrams-R	Holberg-R
Clark, J.-R	Jennings-DFL
Gleason-DFL	Koskinen-DFL
Haake-R	Larson-DFL

Lenczewski-DFL

Marko-DFL

Molnau-R

Orfield-DFL

Pelowski-DFL

Reuter-R

Rifenberg-R

Rukavina-DFL

Seagren-R

Stang-R

Vandever-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Blair Tremere (651) 296-5376

Committee Legislative Assistant

Clayton J. Helmer (651) 296-5998

Rules & Legislative Administration

459 State Office Building ... (651) 296-4128

Meets: Call of the Chair

Members: 18

Chair: Pawlenty-R

Abrams-R	Pugh-DFL
Bradley-R	Seifert, M.-R
Carruthers-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Knoblach-R	Sviggum-R
Leighton-DFL	Sykora-R
McCullum-DFL	Tuma-R
Milbert-DFL	Wejcman-DFL
Ozment-R	Winter-DFL
Paulsen-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Georgie Hilker (651) 296-4276

Committee Legislative Assistant

Lesley Hinz (651) 296-9183

State Government Finance

365 State Office Building ... (651) 296-2907

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 8 a.m. in BHR*

Members: 10

Chair: Krinkie-R

Vice Chair: Osskopp-R

Lead Democrat: Hilty-DFL

Anderson, B.-R	Mullery-DFL
Gerlach-R	Reuter-R
Gleason-DFL	Rhodes-R
Kahn-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Craig Stone (651) 296-5367

Committee Legislative Assistant

Kathy Heimel (651) 296-3367

Fiscal Analyst

Helen G. Roberts (651) 296-4117

Taxes

585 State Office Building ... (651) 296-9934

Meets: Tues., Thurs., Fri., 10 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 25

Chair: Abrams-R

Vice Chair: Daggett-R

Lead Democrat: Rest-DFL

Carruthers-DFL	Lenczewski-DFL
Clark, J.-R	McElroy-R
Dawkins-DFL	Milbert-DFL
Dorman-R	Orfield-DFL
Erhardt-R	Paulsen-R
Harder-R	Rifenberg-R
Hasskamp-DFL	Rukavina-DFL
Jennings-DFL	Sviggum-R
Knoblauch-R	Van Dellen-R
Kuisle-R	Wilkin-R
Leighton-DFL	Winter-DFL

Staff

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Jason Rohloff (651) 296-8880

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Kathleen M. Kieffer (651) 296-5991

Fiscal Analyst

Matt Massman (651) 296-7171

Paul Wilson (651) 297-8405

Property Tax Division

591 State Office Building ... (651) 296-4363

Meets: Mon., Wed., 10 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 17

Chair: Erhardt-R

Vice Chair: Kuisle-R

Lead Democrat: Milbert-DFL

Abrams-R	Lenczewski-DFL
Clark, J.-R	McElroy-R
Daggett-R	Orfield-DFL
Dorman-R	Paulsen-R
Harder-R	Rest-DFL
Hasskamp-DFL	Van Dellen-R
Jennings-DFL	Winter-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Margaret Amundson (651) 296-7427

Committee Legislative Assistant

Erin Buie (651) 296-4999

Transportation Finance

443 State Office Building ... (651) 296-8872

Meets: Mon., Wed., 8 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 10

Chair: Molnau-R

Vice Chair: Vandever-R

Lead Democrat: Lieder-DFL

Haake-R	Larson-DFL
Hausman-DFL	Westrom-R
Juhnke-DFL	Workman-R
Kuisle-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Erik Rudeen (651) 296-5528

Committee Legislative Assistant

Margaret Dannenberg (651) 296-5336

Fiscal Analyst

John C. Walz (651) 296-8236

Transportation Policy

537 State Office Building ... (651) 296-5066

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 8 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 22

Chair: Workman-R

Vice Chair: Clark, J.-R

Lead Democrat: Hausman-DFL

Biernat-DFL	Lieder-DFL
Buesgens-R	Marko-DFL
Davids-R	Molnau-R
Haake-R	Opatz-DFL
Johnson-DFL	Rifenberg-R
Juhnke-DFL	Swenson-R
Kalis-DFL	Van Dellen-R
Kelliher-DFL	Vandever-R
Kuisle-R	Westrom-R
Larson-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Mary K. Cummins (651) 296-3244

Committee Legislative Assistant

Lois J. Spadgenske (651) 297-5603

Ways & Means

453 State Office Building ... (651) 296-0573

Meets: Call of the Chair

Members: 27

Chair: Bishop-R

Vice Chair: Haas-R

Lead Democrat: Solberg-DFL

Abrams-R	Holsten-R
Carlson-DFL	Johnson-DFL
Entenza-DFL	Kalis-DFL
Finseth-R	Kelliher-DFL
Fuller-R	Knoblauch-R
Greenfield-DFL	Krinkie-R

Molnau-R
Mulder-R
Munger-DFL
Osthoff-DFL
Pugh-DFL
Rest-DFL

Seagren-R
Stang-R
Sviggum-R
Sykora-R
Van Dellen-R
Wenzel-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Chas Anderson (651) 296-8875

Committee Legislative Assistant

Joyce G. Rogers (651) 296-9710

Fiscal Analyst

William F. Marx (651) 296-7176

This list is subject to change.

Committee Deadlines

Each year the House and Senate set deadlines by which most bills must be heard in a committee and forwarded through the process. The deadlines serve to weed out some of the thousands of bills introduced each year.

This year, committee deadlines will officially be determined by a joint House-Senate resolution. While that resolution still must be formally approved, it is set to contain the following deadlines and language further defining each deadline.

The first committee deadline will be **Friday, March 19**. That means any bill must pass out of all necessary policy committees in its house of origin.

The second committee deadline will be **Wednesday, March 31**. By that date, all bills other than those containing appropriations will have to be passed out of all policy committees in the both the House and the Senate. To meet the second deadline, bills will have to be acted upon before 4 p.m. March 31.

The third deadline will be **Friday, April 16**. All appropriations bills will have to pass out of a finance or tax committee by that date.

Of course, there are exceptions to the deadlines. The taxes committees and rules committees in both bodies are exempt. And a bill can be heard after the deadlines if the rules committee in

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.

Bill Introductions

HF150-HF244

Tuesday, Jan. 19

HF150—Greiling (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Absentee ballot voting provisions modified.

HF151—Harder (R)
Agriculture Policy
Farm crisis; President and Congress memorialized to form a federal effort to alleviate the farm crisis.

HF152—Rostberg (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Cambridge Regional Human Services Center extended treatment options; program employees provided correctional employee retirement plan coverage.

HF153—Seifert, M. (R)
Commerce
Marshall authorized to issue additional on-sale liquor licenses.

HF154—Paulsen (R)
Crime Prevention
Motor vehicle owner allowing vehicle operation by driver with revoked license provided criminal penalties, and vehicle forfeiture authorized.

HF155—Seifert, M. (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
Passing on the Farm center appropriated money.

HF156—Pawlenty (R)
Civil Law
Paternity proceedings stay of adjudication provided in certain cases during proposed adoptions.

HF157—Kuisle (R)
Transportation Policy
Laura Ingalls Wilder historic highway route modified.

HF158—Stanek (R)
Crime Prevention
Credit for time served intent clarified, presumption in favor of consecutive sentences created, specific findings required for concurrent sentences, and sentencing guidelines conforming changes required.

HF159—Sviggum (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Unicameral legislature provided, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF160—Bishop (R)
Civil Law
Public service corporations private property easements definite and specific descriptions provided, and requirement retroactively applied.

HF161—Ozment (R)
Taxes
Sales and use tax and motor vehicle sales tax rates reduced, and political subdivisions and lottery tickets sales tax exemption provided.

HF162—Molnau (R)
Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle emissions inspection program repealed.

HF163—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Individual income tax rates reduced.

HF164—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF165—Stang (R)
Transportation Policy
Disability license plate issuance allowed for motor vehicles modified for use by disabled persons.

HF166—Wenzel (DFL)
Taxes
Sales and use tax rate reduced.

HF167—Wenzel (DFL)
Taxes
State-paid agricultural property taxes provided, and money appropriated.

HF168—Mulder (R)
Taxes
Smoking cessation devices sales tax exemption provided.

HF169—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
MinnesotaCare provider tax exemption provided for free of charge services.

HF170—Nornes (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Nursing facility technology room grant program established in the Department of Health, and money appropriated.

HF171—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Infection control continuing education requirement for health-related board licensees repealed.

HF172—Skoglund (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Substantial bodily harm definition expanded.

HF173—Entenza (DFL)
Civil Law
Equality of rights for men and women provided, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF174—Stang (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Richmond annexed to the Paynesville area hospital district.

HF175—Murphy (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nursing facility residents allowed to request the use of restraints.

HF176—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Local government correctional service retirement plan created, and actuarial cost provisions modified.

HF177—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Partial-birth abortions prohibited, and criminal and civil penalties provided.

HF178—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Abortion informed consent required and civil remedies provided.

HF179—Kielkucki (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Constitutional standard established relating to abortion, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF180—Wolf (R)
Commerce
Safety regulated for persons on amusement rides.

HF181—McCollum (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Legislator per diem payments eliminated and salary recommendations required.

HF182—Buesgens (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Special elections permitted in cases of certain vacancies in city offices.

HF183—Buesgens (R)
Civil Law
Civil commitment; minor chemical dependency treatment parental consent provisions modified.

HF184—Krinkie (R)
State Government Finance
United Nations trade point development previous appropriation canceled.

Thursday, Jan. 21

HF185—Opatz (DFL)
Education Policy
Elementary and middle school teachers allowed to remain with their students for multiple, consecutive school years pilot program created, and money appropriated.

HF186—Mares (R)
Commerce
Cochlear implant health plan coverage required.

HF187—Mares (R)
Transportation Policy
Century College directional signs required on both sides of I-694 before its intersection with Trunk Highway No. 120.

HF188—Kuisle (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Nursing homes' immediate jeopardy fines imposed by the Department of Health waived.

HF189—Dempsey (R)
Transportation Finance
Port development assistance program funded and money appropriated.

HF190—Harder (R)
Taxes
S corporations federal tax treatment conformity provided.

HF191—Rifenberg (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Houston County surplus state land sale authorized.

HF192—Greiling (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Volunteer firefighter relief associations monthly benefit service pensions 30-year cap eliminated.

HF193—Paymar (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Emergency telephone call interference provided criminal penalties.

HF194—Juhnke (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 347, Willmar, magnet school authorized, and money appropriated.

HF195—Howes (R)**Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**

Hubbard County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public waters.

HF196—Anderson, B. (R)**Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**

Drainage systems transfer of access easements to storm sewer improvement districts authorized.

HF197—Pawlenty (R)**Crime Prevention**

Criminal trail final argument prosecution rebuttal provided.

HF198—Carruthers (DFL)**Taxes**

Seasonal recreational property included in the 1997 and 1998 property tax rebates.

HF199—Bishop (R)**Taxes**

Sales tax rebate provided, automatic tax rebate established, tobacco settlement proceeds deposited, capital project financing converted to general obligation bonding, capital improvements provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF200—Milbert (DFL)**Taxes**

Market value increases limited for property tax purposes.

HF201—Mulder (R)**Taxes**

Income tax rebate provided, and money appropriated.

HF202—Boudreau (R)**Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs**

Faribault tax increment financing district activities ratified.

HF203—Greenfield (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Medical education and research endowment fund, children's endowment fund, and tobacco prevention endowment fund created; and money appropriated.

HF204—Entenza (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

DWI; maximum allowable blood alcohol level lowered for operation of motor vehicles, recreational vehicles, watercraft, and while hunting or handling explosives.

HF205—Workman (R)**Commerce**

Professional engineering governing provisions modified.

HF206—Entenza (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

American sign language/English interpreters and transliterators required to be certified and registered, criminal and civil penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF207—Winter (DFL)**Commerce**

Electric energy installed capacity generated by wind energy conversion systems requirement clarified.

HF208—Haas (R)**Commerce**

Minnesota comprehensive health association funding continued, certain insurance-related assessment reductions allowed, medical assistance and MCHA relationship specifications sunset repealed, and money appropriated.

HF209—Bishop (R)**Capital Investment**

Capital project financing converted to general obligation bonding, capital improvements authorized, previous tax reform and reduction account funds restored to the general fund, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF210—Tuma (R)**Higher Education Finance**

Assigned student responsibility reduced for the purposes of determining grant stipends, and private college tuition cap indexed to inflation rate.

HF211—Abrams (R)**Taxes**

Noncommercial seasonal residential recreational second-tier property tax class rate reduced.

HF212—Anderson, I. (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Northome; Big Bear Country Education Center constructed, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF213—Greiling (DFL)**Education Policy**

Oral deaf education teachers exempted from American sign language licensure requirements.

HF214—Goodno (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Volunteer ambulance attendant definition provided, and reimbursement provisions modified.

HF215—Howes (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Comprehensive advanced life support rural medical personnel training program established, and money appropriated.

HF216—Stanek (R)**Crime Prevention**

Pretrial status prisoner transfers between jail and workhouse authorization clarified.

HF217—Rhodes (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Chana Malka Oppen provision for least invasive procedure; mandated autopsy religious exemption created.

HF218—Tingelstad (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Youth housing programs funded and money appropriated.

HF219—Wagenius (DFL)**Education Policy**

Staff development grants established to ensure reading ability by the end of second grade, and money appropriated.

HF220—Solberg (DFL)**Taxes**

Property tax penalties and interest distribution modified.

HF221—Solberg (DFL)**Taxes**

Regional high school league tournament admission tickets sales tax exemption provided.

HF222—Olson (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 882, Monticello, fund transfer authorized.

HF223—Leppik (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Tobacco prevention board and endowment fund created, and money appropriated.

HF224—Ozment (R)**Taxes**

Charitable contributions excluded from alternative minimum taxable income.

HF225—Krinkie (R)**Taxes**

Income tax rates and brackets modified, and property tax reform account repealed.

HF226—Anderson, I. (DFL)**Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**

Veto override legislative sessions provided, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF227—Osskopp (R)**Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**

State fire marshal special Minnesota state retirement system benefits provided.

HF228—Bishop (R)**Crime Prevention**

Sex offender registration and community notification laws expanded to include certain persons committed as mentally ill and dangerous.

HF229—Jaros (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Duluth Technology Village development grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF230—Munger (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Duluth; Lake Superior Mississippi Railroad scenic railway improved and money appropriated.

HF231—Schumacher (DFL)**Taxes**

Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF232—Bishop (R)**Civil Law**

Petit juries provided in certain civil and criminal cases.

HF233—Rukavina (DFL)**Commerce**

Fireworks; limited personal use of fireworks authorized, safety guidelines affidavit required, and penalties imposed.

HF234—Lindner (R)**Taxes**

Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF235—Hackbarth (R)**Taxes**

Agricultural property tax classification extended to include property used for insect sales production.

HF236—Dawkins (DFL)**Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**

Public Employees Retirement Association service credit purchase authorized for a certain person.

HF237—Skoglund (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Automobile insurance identification card standards adopted by the commissioner of public safety.

HF238—Stanek (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Peace officer posttraumatic stress syndrome considered an occupational disease for the purpose of workers' compensation.

HF239—Rukavina (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Legal drinking age lowered to 18.

HF240—Smith (R)**Crime Prevention**

DWI; sheriffs authorized contingent fund expenditures for DWI-related violation investigations.

*Bill introductions continued
on page 23*

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

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MONDAY, Jan. 25

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: Campaign Finance and Public
Disclosure Board overview, Jeanne Olson,
executive director; Minnesota State Lottery
overview, George Anderson, executive director.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: juvenile out-of-home placement
discussion.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Commerce and
Department of Labor and Industry 1998
performance report reviews.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Department of Transportation
overview: Ed Cohoon, deputy commissioner;
Julie Skallman, division director, State Aid for
Local Transportation; Deb Levina, director,
Regulatory and Policy Analysis; Al Schenkelberg,
director, Office of Investment Management.

9:30 a.m.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

Harvest Prep School / Seed Academy
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: tour 1300 Olson Memorial Highway,
Minneapolis, MN; hearing and testimony on
challenges faced by charter schools, Tim Strom,
House Research; Bill Allen, Department of
Children, Families and Learning; and Bob
DeBoar, New Visions Charter School.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: administrative law judge overview:
Judge Duane Harves, Dakota County; Ken
Nickolai, State of Minnesota Chief
Administrative Law Judge; Laura Kadwell, Child
Support Enforcement Division director,
Department of Human Services.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources
fisheries stocking program overview.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: presentation by Frank Cerra, Academic
Health Center.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: family service collaboratives testimony:
Joyce Krupey, supervisor, Community & Systems
Collaboration, Department of Children, Families
and Learning (DCFL); Barbara Yates, assistant
commissioner, DCFL; John Puglesa, Beltrami
County Collaborative; Chris Oldakowski,
PACT 4 Families; Richard Cronk, South
Hennepin Familink; Jeannie Peterson, Pope
County Family Services Collaborative.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: overview presentations by Metropolitan
Council and Association of Metropolitan
Municipalities.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: member and staff introductions;
committee rules and procedures; matters
concerning telecommunications, energy, public
utilities, and deregulation issues presentations,
House Research, and Public Utilities
Commission.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

3:30 p.m.

WAYS AND MEANS

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: bill(s) referred from Capital Investment.

TUESDAY, Jan. 26

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: testimony by the Department of Health
on nursing home restraints continued.
HF40 (Bradley) Nursing facility residents allowed
to request the use of restraints.
HF60 (Haas) Supplemental private duty nursing
services reimbursement allowed for spouses and
others meeting financial hardship criteria.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: Workforce Investment Act presentation
continued, Department of Economic Security.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Auto Theft Prevention Board's 1998
annual report; Department of Human Rights
1998 performance report; Department of
Corrections contract income and expenditures
from housing inmates 1998 annual reports.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: Department of Transportation
presentation continued.
HF77 (Stang) Surviving spouses authorized to
continue to purchase special license plates issued
to veterans.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Department of Administration
performance report presentation.

10 a.m.

**Joint CRIME PREVENTION/
JUDICIARY FINANCE**

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Rich Stanek,
Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Minnesota Heals and Minneapolis
CODEFOR overviews.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF15 (Kielkucki) Graduation standards
advisory panel recommendations implemented,
Profile of Learning requirements modified, state
performance packages eliminated, and advisory
group established.

Public testimony.

Note: public testimony continued at 5 p.m.
meeting.

**ENVIRONMENT &
NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: to be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: to be announced.

12:30 p.m.

**AGRICULTURE &
RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: testimony by spokespersons for dairy
producers, soybean growers, potato farmers,
farmer cooperatives, ethanol plants, and grain
elevators.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: HF26 (Solberg) Mississippi Education
Center previous grantee changed to the city of
Grand Rapids, and condition imposed.

Department of Administration overview;
presentations on the building process, CAPRA,
and Americans with Disabilities Act.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: industry overviews of issues before the
committee; presentations by the National
Federation of Independent Business-MN,
Independent Community Bankers of Minnesota,
Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, Hospitality
Minnesota, and Minnesota Parks and Trails
Council.

5 p.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF15 (Kielkucki) Graduation standards
advisory panel recommendations implemented,
Profile of Learning requirements modified, state
performance packages eliminated, and advisory
group established.

Public testimony continued.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 27

8 a.m.

**GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS &
VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY**

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: rulemaking overview, Dave Orren,
Department of Health; Jocelyn Olson, attorney
general's office; Norma Coleman, Pollution
Control Agency.

HF15 (Kielkucki) Graduation standards advisory
panel recommendations implemented, Profile
of Learning requirements modified, state
performance packages eliminated, and advisory
group established. (Discussion of Sec. 5-
Department of Children, Families and Learning
directed to convene an advisory group.)

HF118 (Erickson) State agency and department
heads to be confirmed by the Senate within one
year of appointment.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Provider Tax and Health Care Access
Fund discussion.

**JOBS &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Minnesota Housing Finance Agency
1998 performance report review.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Department of Public Safety budget
presentation.

9:30 a.m.

The House meets in session.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: child support collection overview, Susan
Gaertner, Ramsey County attorney; Dakota
County Attorney's Office; Laura Kadwell,
Department of Health and Human Services.

**ENVIRONMENT &
NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Citizens' Advisory Committee to
Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Heritage
presentation; overview by Department of Natural
Resources Wildlife Section.

**Joint HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE/
K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE**

5 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Peggy Leppik,
Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: presentation on teacher preparation
and continuing education for new teachers, Joe
Nathan, director, Center for School Change,

University of Minnesota (U of M); Jim Walker,
superintendent, North Branch; U of M School of
Education staff; national board certification and
INTASC, Mike Tillman and Judy Wain,
Department of Children, Families and Learning
(DCFL); review of teacher licensure
requirements, past and present, Lisa Larson,
House Research; improvement contracting and
aligning goals, Zona Sharp-Burke, DCFL;
mentorship, district personnel.

**Property Tax Division/
TAXES**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: to be announced.

11 a.m.

Working Group

JOBS &

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Gunther

Agenda: discussion and development of results-
based criteria for state funded job training
programs.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

Minneapolis Grain Exchange
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: tour 400 South 4th Street, Minneapolis.

FAMILY &

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: types of child care overview; basic sliding
fee, licensing, and emerging priorities; testimony
to be announced.

**Working Group on the Taxation of
Telecommunications Services/**

Legislative Communications Commission

125 State Capitol

Chrs. Rep. Alice Johnson,
Sen. Steve Kelley

Agenda: to be announced.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT &
METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: overview presentations by Judy Dutcher,
state auditor, and Jim Nobels, legislative auditor.

7 p.m.

FAMILY &

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

Anoka County Government Center

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: 2100 3rd Ave., Anoka, MN; child care;
testimony to be announced.

THURSDAY, Jan. 28

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: discussion of health care costs.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: Department of Labor and Industry overview.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: review of Department of Corrections (DOC) 1998 reports on inmate health care and school based pilot project; review of DOC use of Camp Ripley facilities.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman
Agenda: HF7 (Haake) Motor vehicle emissions inspection program repealed.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkle
Agenda: Department of Revenue performance report review.

10 a.m.

Joint CRIME PREVENTION/ JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Rich Stanek,
Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: Department of Corrections overview.

Joint EDUCATION POLICY/ HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Harry Mares,
Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: enrollment reports presentations, Kerry Fine, House Research, and Dr. Robert Boch, Higher Education Services Office.
HF14 (Fuller) Persons convicted of criminal sexual conduct considered ineligible to be a licensed teacher.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: to be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: to be announced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness
Agenda: Animal Health Board and Minnesota Horticultural Society.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach
Agenda: to be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids
Agenda: industry overviews of issues before the committee; presentations by Minnesota Association of Realtors and Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

4 p.m.

Legislative Audit Commission

316 State Capitol
Chr. Sen. Deanna Wiener
Agenda: release and discuss program evaluation report on animal feedlot regulation.

FRIDAY, Jan. 29

7:45 a.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

Minnesota History Center
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: tour 345 Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul.

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Department of Revenue
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: tour (address to be announced).

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: to be announced.

10 a.m.

Joint CRIME PREVENTION/ JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Rich Stanek,
Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: Department of Corrections and sentencing guidelines overviews.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: Minnesota State Colleges and Universities overview.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: member bills.

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Bill introductions continued from page 20

HF241—Dawkins (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance

Integration revenue following students to charter schools authorized.

HF242—Dawkins (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance

School district compensatory revenue modified to reflect enrollment changes.

HF243—Dawkins (DFL)

Civil Law

Public building code violations data classification provided.

HF244—Erhardt (R)

Capital Investment

Tax reform and reduction account previous additional revenue allocations modified.



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

Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota Tourism

1996 total travelers to and through Minnesota, in millions	25.9
U.S. pleasure travelers	20.5
U.S. business travelers	4.4
International travelers	1.0
Visitors to Twin Cities area, as percent of total 1996 visitors	48.5
To southern Minnesota	19
To north-central or western Minnesota	17
To northeast Minnesota	15.5
Percent of 1996 tourists who went hunting, fishing, or hiking	20.4
Those who shopped	24.2
Those who gambled	5.7
Total 1997 visitors to Mall of America (state's top attraction), in millions	42.5
To Mystic Lake Casino, in millions	5.2
To Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, in millions	2.8
To Brainerd International Raceway	251,000
International flights per week into Minnesota in 1998	252
Those from Canada	189
Those from Europe	26
Those from Japan and Hong Kong	14
International visitors to Minnesota in 1996	989,000
Those from Canada	569,000
Statewide economic impact of tourism in 1996, in billions	\$9.1
Per day, in millions	\$25
Percent of Minnesota tourist dollars spent on lodging, 1996	30
On food	24
1996 tourism-related jobs in Minnesota	170,300
Total wages, in billions	\$3.7
Total Minnesota tax receipts from tourism wages and tourist spending in 1996, in billions	\$1.1

Source: 1998 Minnesota Travel and Tourism Passport, Minnesota Office of Tourism.

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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ January 29, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 4



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SESSION WEEKLY

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Reflections

A century ago, the 31st Legislature convened on Jan. 3, 1899, with 119 members serving in the House and 63 in the Senate.

Unlike today's 81st Legislature, Republicans were in the majority in both the House and the Senate in 1899.

But the governor's political affiliation at the end of the 19th century was similar to that of Gov. Jesse Ventura as we head out of the 20th century. The 1899 governor, John Lind, was the first successful candidate of a fusion of political parties to hold this office. Lind was nominated in a joint convention in 1898 by the Democratic Silver Republicans and the Populists.

Before his election as governor, Lind, from New Ulm, Minn., served three terms as a Republican U.S. congressman. After one two-year term as governor, he ran for re-election in 1900 and lost. Again, in 1902, he won election to Congress — this time as a Democrat — and later served as an advisor to President Woodrow Wilson.

Some of Lind's proposals and some 1899 legislative decisions suggest similar actions as today's deliberations concerning issues of tax rebates, new methods for educating young people, ethical practices, and rights of individuals.

Lind suggested shifting more of "the burdens of taxation from the possessions of the poor to the various forms of wealth," including imposing franchise taxes on foreign and domestic corporations. As an ethics principle, Lind strongly recommended abolishing free railroad passes, and that lobbying "be legislated out of existence."

Members of that 31st Legislature, including the state's first African-American legislator, John Francis Wheaton of Edina, voted in a new civil rights law that more clearly defined the civil and legal rights of all persons. They also prohibited the docking and mutilation of horses, and established state boards of forestry and electricity and a library commission.

The Legislature also increased certain taxes; provided that students who enlisted in the Spanish-American War be entitled to free tuition at the University of Minnesota; and increased the age of consent from age 14 to 16 years. The 1899 Legislature, with the governor's signature, enacted 380 bills into law, plus four congressional resolutions and memorials to Congress.

Given the amount it costs to run a state government in 1999, Minnesota residents will never again pay the same for the far-reaching policies created by its elected officials in 1899. Gov. Lind's salary was \$5,000, while others in the executive branch earned an average of \$2,000. The 182 legislators received mileage at a rate of 15 cents a mile round-trip to and from the capitol, and \$5 a day for the legislative session that took the state into the 20th century.

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Cass Gilbert's cantilevered marble staircase graces the northeast corner of the Capitol.

—Photo by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

Senior care controversy . . .

Safety of bed rails questioned, patient needs debated



Since the Minnesota Department of Health began levying fines on nursing homes for using certain bed restraints, many facilities have removed all bed rails, prompting concern by some residents' families for the safety of their relatives.

By Paul Wahl

Are bed rails helpful devices that keep Minnesota's frail nursing home residents safely in their beds or silent killers that promote inactivity and a lower quality of life?

It depends on who you ask.

But the question has become one of the top concerns in the realm of health care policy this session.

The controversy began last spring when the Minnesota Department of Health began levying large fines on nursing homes they believed were putting residents in "immediate jeopardy" by improperly using restraints, usually bed rails.

The fines sent a ripple through the nursing home industry. In many cases, bed rails were swiftly removed in hopes of avoiding fines, an act which Linda Sutherland, head of the health department's Division of Facility and Provider Compliance, said was "overreaction."

The sudden disappearance of the bed rails left some residents, their families, and doctors perplexed. Many blamed the health department for being heavy-handed in its enforcement efforts. The department said initially it was only following guidelines handed down by the federal government.

However, Sutherland told the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Jan. 26 that the enforcement effort was based on a misunderstanding of the federal rules.

After more than \$750,000 in fines had been levied, Sutherland said federal officials offered clarification.

"We were under the understanding that in cases of immediate jeopardy, we had to fine," Sutherland said. "Later we learned that the fines weren't mandatory."

The department has since gone back and asked that most of the fines be rescinded, an idea federal officials have spurned.

By late summer, despite several educational efforts initiated by the health department, a firestorm of protests had begun reaching the ears of legislators. Constituents complained loudly that the capricious actions of the department had put their loved ones in harm's way, and people wondered about their rights as consumers.

Sheldon Tollin's story was similar to those heard repeatedly by the committee. Tollin's wife has been a nursing home resident for the past nine years. For most of those years she's had full bed rails.

He told the committee that she's 72 years

old, blind, confused, and has a convulsive disorder, yet her bed rails were ordered modified to half the length of her bed to serve as "mobility expeditors."

"She's not ambulatory," Tollin told the committee. "These people from the health department have all their degrees, but they don't have a degree in common sense."

Peg Neumann of Prior Lake told the committee her elderly mother's bed rails were removed July 24, 1998. A week later, she fell out of bed. Two days later, she fell out of bed twice in one day.

The next day the nursing home placed a mattress on the floor alongside her bed to cushion any future falls, rather than replace the bed rails as the family requested.

Neumann said she was concerned the mattress may have presented yet another danger—suffocation. She testified that she placed her head face-down on the vinyl-covered mattress and found breathing difficult.

Sutherland and others from the department say the use of restraints—including bed rails—is what's most dangerous, and much of the impetus for removing them has come from the federal government.

In 1987, the U.S. Congress passed a law that

called for reducing the use of restraints. The federal government said it believed nursing homes too often were using restraints for their convenience, to keep residents in check rather than as therapeutic devices.

In 1992, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a safety alert to the potential hazards of restraints after finding that reduced use of restraints coincided with decreases in injury. Federal regulators said the risks from immobilization — including infections, pressure ulcers, chronic constipation, and mental confusion — were far greater than the risk of falling out of bed.

They also cited instances in which patients had been strangled while struggling with restraint devices or had suffered more severe falls attempting to climb over bed rails.

“There is no study finding that restraints, on balance, benefit nursing home residents,” Dr. Steven Miles of the University of Minnesota Department of Geriatric Medicine told the committee in a written statement. “Restraints harm the mental and physical health of residents. Restraints are ineffective at preventing falls and may increase injurious falls in the person most likely to fall.”

The emotional nature and complexity of the issue has proven to be a formidable challenge in crafting legislation that will clarify when bed rails can be used.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) is sponsoring a bill (**HF40**) that he says will affirm the rights of patients and their families when dealing with nursing homes, doctors, and the health department.

Hearings on the bill began Jan. 26.

“Whether it’s fact or perception, many families feel powerless today,” Bradley said. “Right now, there’s a lot of confusion, frustration, and fear.”

The bill would give nursing facility residents, family members of residents who are not competent, and legal representatives the right to request and consent to the use of physical restraints.

It also would assert that use of bed rails must be prescribed by a physician and that the prescription must be based on medical symptoms, including concern for the physical safety of a resident.

Sutherland said that some homes were fined, despite the fact that bed rails were being used under doctor’s orders, because there was no compelling medical reason. To complicate matters further, bed rails are not always considered a restraint under federal definition. They may instead be considered assistive or positioning devices.

Bradley admits that if his bill becomes law,

Bed rails continued on page 14

Many original furnishings in use, many gone



Most office buildings don’t have furniture designed along with their architectural blueprints. But plans for the Minnesota State Capitol tell a different story.

Cass Gilbert, the architect who crafted the vision for the Capitol, specially designed many of the 1,600 pieces of original furniture placed there in 1905.

Today, slightly more than half of those pieces are known to still be around the Capitol complex. Those that are left — including benches, chairs, signs, and the oval table in the governor’s reception room — are purposely kept in the Capitol’s public spaces and offices.

The House speaker’s chair, for example, was kept in the House retiring room, just behind the chamber, for many years. At one time, the House sold the original desk chairs to members. But because too many people were interested in buying the speaker’s chair, with its swivel base and ornate carving, the House decided to keep it.

During the 1989 restoration of the House chamber, the chair was repaired and put back in its original place. Its match sits in the Senate chamber for use by the president of the Senate.

But the fate of other original Capitol furnishings has not always been so easy to trace.

In 1989, a report called “Attention To Detail: 1905 Furniture of the Minnesota State Capitol” was published by the Capitol Historic Site Program, part of the Minnesota Historical Society. The document is a catalog of efforts in the mid-1980s to preserve the original furniture. It includes design sketches of each piece, along with manufacturers, and then-and-now quantity lists for the hundreds of chairs, desks, wardrobes, and tables that grace the Capitol’s public spaces and offices.

Working from the original inventory list, historians and researchers went about looking for the 1905 pieces. And it was no easy task.

“You just had to do a lot of walking

through,” said Carolyn Kompelien, manager of the historic site.

There are two categories of the 1905 furniture: pieces designed by Gilbert and specially commissioned and standard pieces ordered from furniture companies in Cleveland and New York City.

Many pieces were found in Capitol offices or the House and Senate chambers. But in the end, Capitol furniture turned up in 15 different buildings, including the Hastings Veterans Home. One easy chair was even located on a loading dock waiting to be discarded.

Sometimes people were hesitant to give up pieces found in their offices. In fact, the House speaker once had to write a letter requesting that a certain piece of furniture be returned to the Capitol.

“I think the biggest question was, ‘Are you going to take this away from me?’” Kompelien said.

But most people have been cooperative in helping to restore the furniture for use in public parts of the Capitol. With the furniture project and other restoration efforts, the grandeur of the building has been able to be maintained for nearly a century.

“Try to imagine the House and Senate (chambers) without their desks,” Kompelien said.

The future of furniture searches and restoration remains uncertain. Kompelien said the issue is always included in her program’s capital budget requests, but its fate depends on the people in elected office. Last year, the Legislature appropriated

money to finish the renovations of the Capitol cafeteria, a project scheduled for completion in January 2000.

Former Gov. Rudy Perpich and his wife, Lola, took an interest in historical preservation

efforts during his administration, which allowed for the furniture project in the mid-1980s. But there hasn’t been much funding dedicated to it since then.

“It’s not something you can do without that support,” Kompelien said.

It’s a Fact continued on page 14



Phylliss Miller, right, of Prior Lake, Minn., and Ed Gold of Rochester, Minn., both students in wood refinishing at Dakota County Technical College, put their skills to work on an original Capitol bench.

Highlights



CRIME

Taking a byte out of crime

Serious crime in the city of Minneapolis is down 16 percent from 1997 — the largest drop in about two decades. Officials say that a strategy called CODEFOR is the one of the main reasons.

City officials reported their findings to a joint meeting of the House Crime Prevention and Judiciary Finance committees Jan. 26.

"I've been in policing 32 years, and I've been in charge of four police departments," said Minneapolis Police Chief Robert Olson. "I have never seen such a remarkable result stemming from a management strategy."

Officials reported that compared with 1997 numbers, robbery is down 28 percent, auto theft is down 22 percent, burglary is down 21 percent, and rape is down 13 percent. They said that the homicide rate stayed relatively the same with 61 murders in 1998 compared to 58 in 1997.

CODEFOR, which stands for Computer Optimized Deployment — Focus on Results, was implemented by the department in February 1998. The plan uses computer analysis to deploy police resources based on daily reports of crime. Officers also meet weekly to refine the overall strategy.

The management plan also seeks to actively involve the community in policing, holds precincts and divisions accountable for results, and focuses on crime reduction as the overall police mission.

Officials said that the plan's focus on effective results has meant more collaborations between precincts and community groups, and has meant a more active response to misdemeanor and quality of life crimes by police.

Lucy Gerold of the Minneapolis Police Department said that CODEFOR was modeled on a program in New York City. She said they took the best parts of the plan and changed what they felt wouldn't work.

For example, New York City saw a 60 percent increase in complaints against officers as a result of their program, but Minneapolis actually saw a 40 percent decrease in complaints, she said.

Police officials told the committee that prior to CODEFOR, they relied on random patrols and 911 responses as their main anti-crime strategy.

Improving data on criminals

A consortium made up of corporate, community, and law enforcement groups is calling on legislators to address what they call the "non-system" of criminal justice information.

Representatives of Minnesota HEALS — which stands for Minnesota for Hope, Education, and Law and Safety — told members of the House Crime Prevention and Judiciary Finance committees Jan. 26 that they will be seeking funds for a criminal justice information pilot project in Hennepin County.

The project would strengthen law enforcement efforts, connecting police, courts, and social service agencies. For example, a new information system would standardize all arrest information into one system. The same information on a suspect would be available in the squad car, the county attorney's office, and the courtroom.

If successful, the county project could then become the model for a statewide criminal justice information system.

Minnesota HEALS was started by corporate leaders in 1997 in response to a rise in violent crime. The organization is working in several at-risk Twin City neighborhoods to address crime, housing, employment, and health issues.

Curt Johnson, former chair of the Metropolitan Council and Minnesota HEALS spokesperson, said the current information system varies from large databases to files in shoe boxes. He said a more comprehensive system is necessary to restore confidence in the system.

"It will restore credibility to the citizen, the real customer of the system," he said.

Johnson said the proposal would call for a long-term commitment from the Legislature to fund statewide systems, and may require a serious look at the state's data privacy laws.

Johnson said he will be back before lawmakers this session with specifics of the plan.



EDUCATION

Profile program in jeopardy

The jury is still out on the Profile of Learning.

The House Education Policy Committee continued testimony Jan. 26 on a bill that would amend the controversial Profile of

Learning portion of the state's Graduation Standards initiative.

The bill (HF15), sponsored by Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie), aims to trim Profile of Learning requirements for satisfying the state's graduation requirements. The bill would reduce the required learning areas, eliminate performance packages, and allow standardized testing in 11th grade.

The committee heard public testimony from more than 50 parents, teachers, school administrators, and students.

In a packed hearing room, witnesses voiced both support and opposition for the Profile of Learning, which is still in its beginning phases of implementation throughout the state.

"You're being asked to undo 10 years of work . . . because in the first five months there has been some alarm," said Joe Wemette, a curriculum director for the North St. Paul-Maplewood School District. "I'm alarmed at House File 15."

Others cited cost and time-management concerns with the Profile of Learning, which directs teachers to document each student's progress as they complete 21 required and three elective content standards.

Instead of improving education, La Crescent teacher Cheryl Moen said, the Profile of Learning "has all the earmarks for lowering educational standards."

Moen urged the committee to eliminate the initiative altogether.

"Educators have no ownership in this program," she said.

Many witnesses expressed support for some part of the Profile of Learning, but asked for more implementation time and more precise record-keeping procedures. However, there was little common ground to be found amid the bulk of testimony, demonstrating that the debate is far from a clear-cut solution.

After hearing the many perspectives from witnesses, Kielkucki said it was hard to say where his bill was headed. But he did say there will be some changes to the current bill.

"What we want to have come out (of committee) is something that's going to work," Kielkucki said.

He said he was especially moved by testimony from Brendon Roediger, a former student of the St. Paul Learning Center, a school for children with chemical dependency problems.

Roediger and teacher Paul Grehl both

stressed the importance of the school's impact on at-risk children and said the Profile of Learning would not work with those students, who often do not follow mainstream lesson plans.

"If I am forced to implement those standards, I've got to close my doors," Grehl said.

Kielkucki said he had not considered what kind of impact the plan would have on non-traditional schools like St. Paul Learning Center or special education programs.

"You don't realize that your legislation can have a negative impact," he said.

Because of the packed schedule of witnesses, the committee did not discuss the testimony, and more testimony is expected from teacher organizations before the committee takes action on the bill.

The House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee also considered a portion of the bill Jan. 27. That portion calls for an advisory committee to deal with the problem of students failing to meet Profile of Learning requirements.

That committee added an amendment to the bill that would increase the advisory group's membership to include more students, parents, and teachers, as well as representatives from state boards and colleges.

HF15 awaits action in the Education Policy Committee.

Teacher license changes mulled

Minnesotans aspiring to be educators may soon be faced with new rules for obtaining a teacher's license.

Possible licensing changes were discussed at a joint meeting of the House Higher Education Finance and K-12 Education Finance committees Jan. 27.

The proposed changes stem from 1993, when the Legislature directed the state Board of Teaching to adopt new rules for teacher licensure. The board's proposal is a set of 48 rules (reduced from the current 128) that focus on outcomes related to the state's graduation rule.

Those rules are currently being reviewed by an administrative law process, and could be adopted by the board as early as March. If adopted, they would affect teachers obtaining licenses on or after Sept. 1, 2001.

Committee members heard from several groups who currently train or want to train students in the educational field.

Jim Walker, superintendent of the North Branch School District, presented an informal plan for creating a teacher training academy in his district. The plan would allow for on-the-job training while students attend a post-secondary institution.

Officials from the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota also detailed their post-baccalaureate program for teacher licensing. U of M students must have a bachelor's degree before enrolling in the 12- to 18-month program for teacher training.

Joe Nathan, of the Center for School Change at the U of M, shared results from a survey of administrators' views of teacher preparation. Nathan said that while respondents reported that new teachers are well prepared in subject areas, they are not as well prepared to teach the state's graduation requirements. To help new teachers, Nathan suggested longer student teaching time and a master's program offered on-site at K-12 schools that are performing well.



EMPLOYMENT

Federal jobs program examined

Last year, the U.S. Congress passed legislation seeking to streamline job training nationwide, but some Minnesota groups worry that the changes may not address the state's employment issues.

Officials from the Minnesota Department of Economic Security reviewed the new Workforce Investment Act with members of the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee Jan. 22.

The new law, signed by President Clinton in August 1998, does not change funding levels, but seeks to make current resources more effective.

Borrowing from Minnesota's Workforce Centers, the Workforce Investment Act stresses the "one-stop" approach, where job services are housed in one neighborhood office.

The new law also establishes workforce investment boards made up of representatives of business, labor, and community organizations to establish state and local job training strategies. And the law provides criteria to assess the individual program's success based on employee and employer expectations.

However, Lyle Wray of the Citizens League said he isn't sure the changes will necessarily lead to substantial improvements.

"Is the (Workforce Investment Act) just rearranging the deck chairs or is it an opportunity for serious change?" he said.

Wray said that while the new law does a good job at tailoring job training for the individual, the criteria for performance is still based on unemployment reduction. He said that performance should be based on providing better skills for higher wage jobs, especially

considering Minnesota's current labor shortage.

Kristine Jacobs, of the Jobs Now Coalition, told the committee that the new federal program still uses labor market indicators that do not give an accurate picture of the economy.

Jacobs referred to a study done by her organization that examined the federal government's poverty guidelines compared to minimum family budgets in Minnesota. According to the study, the cost of meeting the basic needs for a single-parent family with one child in Minnesota is two times the poverty guideline.



FAMILY

Child support cases in question

A state Supreme Court ruling will force the Legislature to change the way most child support hearings are conducted in Minnesota.

In a ruling released Jan. 28, the court stated that the administrative hearing process for child support cases violates the separation of powers outlined in the state constitution.

Under current law, child support cases involving public authorities are heard through an administrative law process. Because counties often enforce child support payments, these cases account for most child support cases.

The Legislature created a pilot project in 1987 and moved these cases from the state's district courts in 1995. Supporters argued that such cases should be moved to provide a more expedient process and a more informal setting in which to decide them.

The Office of Administrative Hearings had about 12,000 child support hearings last year. Officials said that 93 percent of all child support orders were issued within 30 days of the hearing.

But last year, the state Court of Appeals ruled that the administrative hearing process violates the separation of powers clause in the Minnesota Constitution. The court concluded that such decisions belong in the judicial branch and not in the executive branch. The appeals court suspended the effect of their ruling until the case could be heard by the Supreme Court. Those arguments were heard on Dec. 7, 1998.

The Supreme Court affirmed the lower court's ruling.

"While evidence of the administrative child support process's efficacy is hotly disputed by the parties, there is no controversy about the importance of streamlining child support mechanisms," the Supreme Court ruling states. "Nonetheless, the importance of this shared

goal cannot ignore separation of powers constraints.”

The Supreme Court stayed the effect of the ruling until July 1 to give the Legislature time to modify the system.

Officials of the Office of Administrative Hearings told members of the House Civil Law Committee Jan. 25 that lawmakers might have to redraft rules governing the process through which certain cases are heard.

Ken Nickolai, chief administrative law judge, told the committee that the Legislature might have to change the way these cases are handled by the administrative process or may have to consider how to place these cases back to the district courts.

Duane Harves, chief judge of the 1st Judicial District, said that he favors keeping the process as it is. He said that expedient child support hearings are an important factor in keeping people off of welfare.

“As we know, if we get these people child support, and get it to them early, we can keep these people off public benefits,” he said.

Harves said that with an already increasing caseload, judges in his district didn’t want the added responsibility of hearing the cases.

But Gary Meyer, chief judge of the 10th Judicial District, said child support cases belong in the courts and that the transition could be made back to an efficient judicial process.

“I believe that child support cases belong back in the judicial branch,” he said. “You give it back to us, and we would handle it — as long as you give us the resources to do it.”

No pay, no play

If you don’t pay your child support, you may lose your right to hunt and fish in Minnesota.

Officials from the Minnesota Department of Human Services gave a presentation on the state’s child support collection efforts before the House Civil Law Committee Jan. 28.

Laura Kadwell, director of the department’s Child Support Enforcement Division, said she will be bringing forward legislation that would give the state the power to revoke recreational licenses for individuals who don’t pay.

She said the 1996 federal welfare law requires all states to enact such penalties and that the state could lose up to \$13 million in federal funding if it doesn’t pass the law. Minnesota is one of two states that has yet to comply.

Ramsey County Attorney Susan Gaertner also testified about her agency’s efforts to collect support payments. She said that her office views itself as a collection agency, not a social service organization.

“The end result of treating this like a business is that the children in my community are being cared for,” she said.

Gaertner said she supports the proposal to make recreational licenses revocable. She said that it would give her agency another tool to make sure payments are made.

“If someone cannot provide for their responsibilities in their community, do we really want to protect their right to hunt and fish?” she asked.



GAMBLING

Slots for horse track

Don’t think of a proposal to allow casino gaming at Canterbury Park as an expansion of gaming in Minnesota. Think of it as a way to help yet another ailing sector of the state’s agricultural economy.

That was the apparent message from Richard Woodruff, past vice president of the Minnesota Thoroughbred Association, to the House Agriculture and Rural Development

Finance Committee Jan. 21.

Woodruff said plans to use proceeds from gaming to enhance thoroughbred racing purses could spur a resurgence in Minnesota breeding farms, whose numbers have dropped from 400 to under 50 in the past 15 years.

Woodruff said Canterbury shortened the number of racing days to increase purse size, but it’s still not enough.

Burt Dahlberg of Lakeville, who operates a thoroughbred farm, said not only have farms disappeared but many of the remaining ones have moved portions of their operations to other states. That means money that would normally be spent in Minnesota is spent elsewhere.

“Purse drives the business,” Dahl explained to the committee. “Bigger purses mean better mares and better stallions and more farms, and that snowballs into more commerce. We think it can be a good industry once again.”

Both Woodruff and Dahlberg testified that a similar plan to link gaming and horseracing in Iowa has worked well.

They produced a chart that showed substantially higher purses in Iowa as a result of gaming revenue being added.

Their testimony was part of a plan by committee chair Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) to hear from as many areas of agriculture interests in the state as possible. Also testifying Jan. 21 were representatives of the Minnesota Barley Growers Association, Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers, Minnesota Turkey Producers, Minnesota Sugar Beet Growers, and Minnesota Cattlemen’s Association.

Non-smoking guns



Dan Johnson, front, executive director of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, and William R. Gold, the insurance company’s chief medical officer, testify about current smoking cessation, prevention, and research efforts. The two appeared before the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Jan. 22.



GOVERNMENT

From lawmaker to lobbyist

Former legislators would be prevented from lobbying at the Capitol for one year after leaving office, under a bill approved by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee Jan. 22.

House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon), the bill’s sponsor, said his goal is to avoid any appearance of impropriety.

“This is not meant to be a cure-all for everything, but I think it is a step in the right direction to solve, if not a problem, a perception of a problem that there is a revolving door where legislators are cashing in on their friendships by immediately taking a job as a lobbyist for a special interest group,” he said.

Sviggum said lobbyists play an important role in the legislative process and that his bill is not meant as a critical statement on the lobbying profession.

But, he added, legislators have a special bond, and they develop friendships while working together. Those friendships with former colleagues could give former legislators an unfair advantage over other lobbyists.

But Rep. Bill Hilty (DFL-Finlayson) said in his experience, former legislators have not taken advantage of friendships when they've become lobbyists. He said a better approach would be to try to educate the public to correct this misconception.

"This seems to be a solution in search of a problem. If we do this it suggests to the public that something is wrong, and that isn't true," he said.

Dave Schultz, president of the government watchdog group Common Cause, testified in favor of the bill. He said the measure would be similar to a business owner or employee signing a covenant not to compete. And he said the bill would also take away the incentive for exchanging favors, such as a legislator agreeing to support a cause in exchange for a job after leaving office.

Lobbyist Wy Spano testified against the bill, saying Minnesota already has better regulations on lobbying than any other state.

Similar legislation has been introduced and voted down in recent years, but Sviggum said that was partly because so many amendments were added to earlier bills. He encouraged committee members to pass the bill without amendments and said that separate legislation could address the other concerns.

Several committee members asked whether the bill should apply to legislative staff, judges, or commissioners of state departments or agencies, but Sviggum said his goal is to keep it specific to former legislators.

The bill (**HF9**) goes to the House floor.

Time limit on confirmations

A bill that would give the Senate a deadline for confirming the appointments of state agency commissioners was approved Jan. 27 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Under the bill, sponsored by Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), the Senate would have to confirm the appointment of a commissioner within one year of the governor making the appointment.

A new commissioner would have to be appointed if the Senate fails to confirm the appointment within the given time.

The bill also states that no person would be allowed to serve as temporary or acting commissioner for more than one year in a consecutive term.

The bill (**HF118**) goes to the House floor.

Going with the grain



Members of the House Agriculture Policy Committee take a look at a lively trading pit during a Jan. 27 tour of the Minneapolis Grain Exchange.



HIGHER EDUCATION

Back pains and health gains

"Sit and be fit" was the lesson legislators learned during a meeting of the House Higher Education Finance Committee Jan. 25.

Rachel Bakken, a second-year student in physical therapy at the University of Minnesota, taught committee members how to stay relaxed while sitting in committee meetings and floor sessions all day long.

"I'm here because you guys sit all day long," said Bakken, who was on hand as part of an overview of the university's Academic Health Center.

Bakken demonstrated neck rolls, stretches, and muscle toning exercises designed to relieve the stress that long hours of sitting can put on body muscles and posture.

Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph) was impressed enough to ask that the exercises be included in every meeting. Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), committee chair, declared that exercises would be allowed halfway through meetings, at 11 a.m.

Dr. Frank Cerra, senior vice president for health sciences at the University of Minnesota, introduced lawmakers to the Academic Health Center's programs and faculty.

The center houses the university's medical school and six other departments including public health, nursing, and veterinary medicine. Operating on a \$544 million budget, the center receives about 16 percent of its funding from the state. Nearly two-thirds of the state's

health professionals are educated through the U of M system.

Of the U of M's expected \$1.28 billion biennial budget request this year, \$37 million would go toward health professional education.

About 5,000 students and residents and 1,300 faculty members make up the Academic Health Center. Sixty-two degree programs are offered in 32 medical disciplines. Medical school students and faculty work in Fairview University Medical Center, a hospital that is the product of a merger two years ago of the old university hospital and Fairview Health Systems.

In addition to the cadre of deans and administrators Cerra brought with him, a bald eagle and a falcon came along to advertise the school's Raptor Center.

The university will return to the Legislature to make its formal budget request following Gov. Jesse Ventura's budget recommendations.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Residency rules face repeal

Minneapolis and St. Paul would not be able to continue to require city employees to live within their cities, under a bill passed by the House Jan. 25.

The bill (**HF133**) would repeal existing laws that allows those cities to make residency a condition for employment.

Proponents of the bill, sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), argued that

residency requirements make it more difficult for those cities to hire and retain qualified employees.

Stanek, who works as a Minneapolis police officer, said residency requirements also violate people's basic right to choose where they live.

The Legislature passed measures allowing residency requirements for Minneapolis in 1993 and for St. Paul in 1994. People hired since the requirements took effect have been required to live in the city (after a grace period to allow time to find housing).

The requirements do not apply to people already working for the cities when the residency requirements were approved.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) called Stanek's bill a "deal breaker" and urged members to vote against it.

"The deal was, if you get hired for this job — and these are good jobs — all you have to do is live there," Skoglund said. "It's not something anybody sprung on them."

Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) also spoke against the bill, saying his constituents strongly support residency requirements, especially for police officers. Some areas in larger cities have more poverty and crime than do suburbs, he said, and police officers who live outside Minneapolis are less sympathetic to victims of crimes than officers who live in the city.

Rep. Linda Wejcman (DFL-Mpls) asked Stanek, who is exempt from the residency requirements because of the grandfather clause, if he would lead efforts to ensure the police will have empathy for city residents should the requirements be lifted. Stanek said he has worked hard to do that and will continue to do so.

St. Paul has had fewer complaints about its employment policies, said Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul), who proposed an amendment that would have preserved St. Paul's right to set residency requirements. The amendment failed.

The bill, which passed on a 94-37 vote, moves to the Senate.



MILITARY

Special plates for spouses

Surviving spouses of war veterans would be able to purchase special license plates, under a bill approved by the House Transportation Policy Committee Jan. 26.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring), would extend the privilege of purchasing veterans' plates to surviving spouses of all veterans from both world wars and the wars in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf. Spouses of Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, Pearl Harbor survivors, and combat-wounded veterans would benefit from the bill, too.

Under current law, only spouses of ex-prisoners of war can continue to purchase the special plates after their spouses die. Stang said a few of his constituents contacted him requesting the bill. They want to continue recognizing their spouses' veteran status.

"There was an inconsistency," Stang said. "We just took up the provisions that were not included and added them."

There is an additional \$10 fee for veterans' plates, but ex-POWs and Congressional Medal of Honor recipients do not pay the fee. The veterans' plates have to be renewed each year and replaced every seven years like regular state-issued plates.

An amendment allowing those waiting for the special plates in the mail to display a 21-

day permit in their rear car windows was added to the proposal during the committee hearing. Currently, people who apply for veteran plates must affix regular plates to their cars, then remove them again when the veterans' plates arrive.

Jack Wildes, of the public safety department's Driver and Vehicle Services Division, said the amendment was merely a housekeeping issue. Wildes said the measure would save the state \$2.50 for each set of plates and would save consumers the time of switching license plates several times.

The bill (HF77) moves to the House floor.



TAXES

Setback for bonding plan

A portion of Gov. Jesse Ventura's sales tax rebate plan — flying solo — was rejected by the House Jan. 28 on a 66-67 vote.

The bill (HF209) would repeal a provision in the 1998 tax law requiring that \$400 million of the projected budget surplus be used to pay for projects in last year's capital projects law.

The cash-to-bonding proposal is an essential element in the governor's \$1.1 billion rebate plan, which would provide a rebate based on projected sales tax payments. Also, under his plan, the governor would use the first \$400 million payment of the tobacco settlement to create a medical research fund.

Bill sponsor Rep. Dave Bishop

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.

Home-school hunt



Karen Stiehl and her two daughters, fourth-grader Samantha, left, and third-grader Lauren, all of Cannon Falls, Minn., prepare to go on a hunt to learn more about the art and architecture of the Capitol. Stiehl, who home-schools her daughters, brought them to a Capitol rally celebrating home schooling Jan. 26.

(R-Rochester), who is also sponsoring the governor's full tax rebate plan (**HF199**), said that approving the first part of the governor's proposal would represent a step toward cooperation.

"This is the first important piece of genuine collaboration in the three-party government," Bishop said.

But the bill didn't come close to getting the 81 votes required by the constitution to approve a bonding bill.

Some DFLers said that while they supported the governor's sales tax proposal and the cash-to-bonding provision, they couldn't support the cash-to-bonding plan by itself.

Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) said that his caucus could not support the plan without knowing where the funds would go.

"We don't know how it is to be dispersed," Pugh said.

Last year's \$999 million capital projects law authorized the state to issue bonds and pay cash for a myriad of capital improvements statewide. Under the law, the state was to bond for approximately half of the projects and pay cash for the other half.

A provision in last year's tax law directed the Department of Finance to replace \$400 million of the bonded sum with a \$400 million cash payment if a sufficient budget surplus was projected for the remainder of the 1998-1999 biennium. That makes the bonding package 90 percent cash.

In November 1998, the Department of Finance announced a \$1.56 billion projected surplus. Of that amount, \$400 million is scheduled to pay for the capital projects.

Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls) said he would offer a motion to reconsider the cash-to-bonding proposal when a tax rebate bill is debated.

Millions in unclaimed rebates

While legislators are focused on the state budget surplus and proposals for rebates, the House Governmental Operation and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee discussed the status of rebates that were payable in 1998.

Of the property owners and renters who were eligible for those rebates, only 70 percent have filed, said Bev Driscoll, assistant commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Revenue.

Some of the people who did not file for rebates may have been confused about the difference between a tax rebate and a tax refund, Driscoll said.

The rebate was new last year, so some people may not have understood that it was in addition to the refund. Others may have chosen not to file if the rebate was too small, she said.

A revenue department report states that the average rebate in 1998 was \$265 and the rebates were given to 1.2 million homeowners and 415,000 renters.

One of the department's highest priorities is to completely re-engineer its computer system. The computer system consists of about 300 different applications in many different programming languages, Driscoll said.

The department has requested \$8 million for that purpose. Some parts of the system have been used for 30 years and are long outdated, she said.

The department processes returns for 3 million taxpayers and collects and distributes millions of dollars in taxes, so a system failure would be disastrous, she said.

Driscoll said the department made adjustments in 72,000 returns in processing last year's tax returns. Those adjustments led to \$10 million that was returned immediately, because people made errors and paid too much. The department also took in \$20 million in additional taxes collected due to errors that caused taxpayers to pay too little. The adjustments netted \$10 million in additional revenue.



When Bev Driscoll, assistant commissioner of the Department of Revenue, presented her agency's annual report to the House Taxes Committee Jan. 28, she mentioned her department's move to a new building as a major accomplishment of the past year.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the committee, asked why there is no identifying sign in front of the new building. "They could be making widgets or playing basketball in there," Abrams said of the new Capitol complex building.

Driscoll said she would welcome his efforts to determine why there is no sign on the building, and Abrams wondered whether a letter or a bill would be most appropriate.

"Money for a sign for the Department of Revenue . . . try getting that out of Krinkie," joked Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), referring to Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview), chair of the House State Government Finance Committee, who has a reputation for frugality.

Eagle eyed



Luke, a bald eagle rescued by the University of Minnesota Raptor Center, focuses all his attention on the center's educational staffer Nell Henry during a meeting of the House Higher Education Finance Committee. The pair appeared Jan. 25 with other representatives of the U of M's Academic Health Center to give an overview of the school's programs.

Minnesota House of Representatives

1999-2000 Standing Committee Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8-9:45 a.m.	Health & Human Services Finance Jobs & Economic Development Finance Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Transportation Finance	Health & Human Services Policy Jobs & Economic Development Policy State Government Finance Transportation Policy Judiciary Finance	Health & Human Services Finance Jobs & Economic Development Finance Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Transportation Finance	Health & Human Services Policy Jobs & Economic Development Policy State Government Finance Transportation Policy Judiciary Finance	Health & Human Services Finance Jobs & Economic Development Finance Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
10-11:45 a.m.	K-12 Education Finance Higher Education Finance Property Tax Division Civil Law Environment & Natural Resources Finance	Education Policy Taxes Crime Prevention Environment & Natural Resources Policy	K-12 Education Finance Higher Education Finance Property Tax Division Civil Law Environment & Natural Resources Finance	Education Policy Taxes Crime Prevention Environment & Natural Resources Policy	K-12 Education Finance Higher Education Finance Taxes Crime Prevention Environment & Natural Resources Finance
12:30-2:15 p.m.	Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs	Capital Investment Commerce Agriculture & Rural Development Finance	Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Agriculture Policy	Capital Investment Commerce Agriculture & Rural Development Finance	
2:30-4:15 p.m.	HOUSE IN SESSION			HOUSE IN SESSION	

Ways & Means, Rules & Legislative Administration, and Ethics meet at the call of the chair.

B=Basement Hearing Room

Full committees are in bold.

All rooms in State Office Building.

Jan. 28, 1999

Board monitors the interaction of lawmakers, lobbyists

By Paul Wahl

There are about 1,400 lobbyists roaming the halls of the Capitol. And each year, millions of dollars are spent in an effort to sway lawmakers.

The task of monitoring those activities falls to the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.

Jeanne Olson has headed the agency — formerly the Ethical Practices Board — since 1995. And the board itself has been around since 1975, when there were just 750 registered lobbyists in the state, and their combined spending was just one-tenth of what it is today.

The word “lobbyist” was coined in 1863, shortly after the committee system began developing in the U.S. Congress. The term referred to those who waited in the lobby to buttonhole elected officials to convince them to favor one side or another.

In some respects Minnesota makes the life of a lobbyist an easy one, but state law also complicates their efforts.

The Minnesota Ethics Commission was created in 1974, an outgrowth of a public perception for the need for government watchdogs in the wake of Watergate, Olson said.

“The idea here has always been to make it as simple as possible for lobbyists to fulfill state requirements,” she said. “Registration is free. It’s permanent until they terminate. The whole statute is based on simply disclose. Just disclose. If you put a charge in there, it’s a disincentive to register and disclose.”

By statute, lobbyists who spend more than \$250 per year on their efforts must register. Lobbyists here must be particularly careful how they conduct business.

In 1994, the Legislature adopted one of the strictest gift bans in the country.

“It’s simple, too, and it says lobbyists can’t give gifts to public officials — a zero tolerance, no cup of coffee rule,” Olson said.

The ban extends to state employees and can be difficult to deal with at times, she added.

“We all have friends in the lobbying community and we may go out with them after work,” Olson said. “You have to be careful not only that you’re paying your own way, but that perception of what’s going on isn’t a problem.”

She said many people who see a lobbyist with a Legislator don’t stop to think the Legislator is paying his own way.

Olson said officials in other states often ask about the strict gift ban. They don’t under-



The more than 1,400 registered lobbyists who work the halls of state government are governed by the state’s Campaign Finance & Public Disclosure Board.

stand the bill got passed without referendum or initiative in place.

“I tell them (lawmakers) did it to themselves,” Olson said.

Minnesota’s Ethics in Government Act, under which the board, Olson, and her eight full-time employees operate, is hailed as one of the best in the country. It contains a strong public subsidy program, which is put to use by 99 percent of those who are eligible. Under the subsidy, legislative candidates and those running for constitutional offices may receive and spend money from the state’s check-off program. \$2.4 million was handed out in December 1998 for the most recent election cycle.

“We’ve made it very user-friendly and, frankly, added some disincentives not to sign

the public subsidy agreement,” Olson said.

The Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board itself consists of six members who meet monthly. They serve at the pleasure of the governor.

The board’s charge goes far beyond tracking lobbying activities. Officially, its mission is “to promote public confidence in state government decision-making through the development and administration of disclosure, public financing, and enforcement programs that will ensure public access to information filed by the board.”

Besides tracking lobbyists and handing out public subsidy money to candidates, the board administers campaign finance disclosure policies, conflict of interest disclosure statutes, and a variety of related programs.

A large function of the office is clarifying the Ethics in Government Act and providing advisory opinions to those who ask.

One recent query was whether a lobbyist could allow a state official to use his firm’s licensed box seating at an athletic event if the official pays for the ticket.

The answer: No.

The board’s attorneys ruled that the box seat would be considered a gift “unless the equivalent right is

Crowding the Capitol
Lobbying in Minnesota 1975 to 1997

Year	No. of registered lobbyists	No. of registered lobbying associations	Money spent on lobbying
1975	750	300	\$285,575
1980	689	700	\$512,343
1985	1,074	868	\$2,500,134
1990	1,237	1,102	\$2,149,877
1995	1,324	1,262	\$5,475,787
1997	1,380	1,361	\$6,342,426

Source: Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board

Note: Prior to 1987, data presented by calendar year. Figures from later years presented by fiscal year.

Board continued on page 16

Abrams, Boudreau ready to stand in for the speaker

By Jon Fure

Maintaining order during House sessions is the job of House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) and — when he needs to be absent from the chamber — two speakers *pro tempore*.

And while they may make the job look easy, following and applying the detailed ins and outs of parliamentary procedure ensure that there's rarely a dull moment for the person behind the speaker's desk.

Debate on the House floor can sometimes look like chaos, so the gavel-holder needs to make sure the rules of procedure are followed.

The basic principle of debate on the House floor is that the majority rules, and the minority gets a fair opportunity to express their views, said Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka). He and Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) are the two speakers pro tem for the 1999 session.

The two have somewhat different backgrounds. Abrams is an attorney and is in his sixth term, and Boudreau is a public health aide in her third term. But they both agree that they hope their colleagues on both sides of the aisle will feel they are treated fairly during House floor debates.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) describes Abrams, who chairs the House Taxes Committee, as one of the most experienced and brightest members of the Republican caucus and a "true parliamentarian."

Boudreau is vice chair of the House Health & Human Services Policy Committee, and



Reps. Lynda Boudreau and Ron Abrams, who will serve as speakers pro tem this session, must be ready to take the gavel when the speaker needs a break.

parliamentary procedures that many describe as a cure for insomnia. She said she was "very honored and a little surprised" when Sviggum chose her as one of the speakers pro tem.

"Our leadership is very good at encouraging people to expand their skills and try new things," she said. "You learn something new every year and every day. There's so much to learn it's amazing."

Abrams said part of learning the intricacies of parliamentary procedure comes from experience — hearing the procedures and arguments repeated year after year.

"Sometimes we can get bogged down with parliamentary minutia, rather than the public policy that is being discussed. One of the strengths I will bring is to cut through some of those maneuvers and get back to the policy issue."

Abrams said Boudreau has had fewer years of experience than most speakers pro tem in recent years but that she has already demonstrated her ability to resolve procedural questions during House floor debates.

Even at this early point in the session, Boudreau has found herself in the middle of a couple sticky parliamentary issues on the House floor.

"I think she handled those situations with intelligence and grace," Abrams said.

What Boudreau did, and what Abrams said both speakers pro tem will need to do consistently, is to consider the advice of Chief Clerk Ed Burdick, the House's longtime source of nonpartisan information on procedural matters.

"Ed is an absolute rock who gives advice that you ignore at your own peril," Abrams said. "He always says you ought to slow down, and that way you have fewer errors."

"Our leadership is very good at encouraging people to expand their skills and try new things. You learn something new every year and every day. There's so much to learn it's amazing."

—Rep. Linda Boudreau

Pawlenty said she is a "rising star in the caucus who has demonstrated a great grasp of parliamentary procedures."

Studying the rules of procedure has been a new challenge, said Boudreau. She has spent many hours preparing for her role as speaker pro tem by studying the Minnesota Constitution and Mason's Manual, an exhaustive list of

"The rules of the House take precedence over Mason's Manual, so you're plowing over well-plowed fields," he said. "You know the arguments you're going to make, and you know the arguments the other side is going to make. The question is how do you apply those arguments to a given situation, and that's the art of being a presiding officer."



Hackbarth returns to familiar environment, issues

By Sarah Hallonquist

Before running for office a fourth time, Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) made a few deals with his wife, Mary.



Rep. Tom Hackbarth

"My wife and I had some real heart-to-heart discussions," he said.

Worried that campaigning would take time away from his family (as it had in the past), Hackbarth dedicated certain days of the week for his family of five to spend together. In between door-knocking during the day and selling auto parts four nights a week, Hackbarth was able to squeeze in some hours of normalcy with his wife and children.

"Campaigning is the hardest part of being an elected official," he said.

But it seems to have paid off for Hackbarth, who won back the District 50A seat he had lost in 1996 to DFLer Kathleen Sekhon. It was the third switch for the two legislators — Sekhon held the seat in 1993-94 before Hackbarth won his first term in 1994, only to relinquish the post to Sekhon in a tight 1996 election.

"My district is becoming more and more conservative all the time," Hackbarth said, pointing out that young families with children are rapidly moving into the area. And he maintains that his attention to outdoors issues hits home with his constituents.

During his previous term, Hackbarth's most notable legislation was the "turkey stamp"

law. Prompted by calls from concerned hunters who saw the state's turkey population declining, the law set up a tax on turkey hunting licenses. Hunters now pay an extra \$5 for hunting wild turkeys. Ninety percent of that revenue goes to researching and preserving the habitat of wild turkeys.

Because he is also a hunter, Hackbarth said he was hesitant at first to tack on an additional fee for the turkey stamp. But other hunters' support for the plan reassured him it was the right thing to do.

He also sponsored legislation that secured prizes for fishing contest winners. The 1995 law requires contest promoters to prove they can provide the financial prize packages they promise.

This session, Hackbarth plans to focus again on outdoor sports issues. The ban on snowmobile studs passed in 1998, upset a lot of voters in his district, he said. So he introduced a bill (**HF6**) that calls for a repeal of some of those restrictions. That bill passed on the House floor Jan. 21.

He said he also strongly favors abolishing automobile emissions test requirements this session. The issue has come up in past sessions, including Hackbarth's first term, and he supported repealing the requirements then, too.

"We just don't have this problem like we did before," he said. "It's an unnecessary regulation that we don't need."

His other goals this session include staying in touch with his constituents. He plans to hold a series of town meetings in his district

called "Eggs and Issues." During his last term, he hosted the meetings, which took place at a local restaurant in the morning.

"Oh, we packed the place," he said. "They loved it."

Hackbarth was born in Minneapolis and grew up in Brooklyn Park. He graduated from Anoka High School and attended North Hennepin Community College while working in the auto parts business. He originally intended to be a teacher, but then took some business classes as his interests changed.

After three years of school, Hackbarth went to work full time in the auto parts business. Since 1972, he has been selling auto parts at Brookdale Ford in Brooklyn Center. He has also owned and operated a grain salvage company and Modular Homes Midwest, a manufactured-home business.

He now lives in Cedar, which is north of Anoka, on property that was once part of his grandfather's farm. In between work, law-making, hunting, and fishing, Hackbarth still has enough time to be a volunteer firefighter, a pursuit that brings a smile to his face at its mention.

District 50A

1995 population: 37,063

Largest City: Ham Lake

County: Anoka

Location: northern metro

Top concern: "I think (emissions testing) is the big issue, and I think everyone in my district is behind eliminating that program."

— Rep. Tom Hackbarth

Bed rails continued from page 4

Minnesota could lose about \$2.5 million in federal funding through Medicare and Medicaid payments, but he said that is "highly unlikely."

And some lawmakers said they'd prefer to see the bill address bed rails specifically, instead of restraints in general.

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls) said he would ask the committee to amend the bill to address bed rails only, noting that they were the focus of the protest from those who testified in committee.

Bradley said he used the broader language because of the ambiguity surrounding the definition of bed rails.

The committee has taken no action yet on Bradley's bill. 🐼

It's a Fact continued from page 4

About 200 pieces sit in storage because they have been rendered unusable. Repair and reupholstering would be necessary in order for those pieces to be returned to use in the Capitol.

On Jan. 26, students in a woodworking class at Dakota County Technical College began refurbishing some of the benches around the Capitol and furniture in the Supreme Court chamber. As part of the Minnesota Historical Society's effort to conserve the state's historical sites, about 12 students buffed and polished out scratches on the well-worn pieces.

And employees of the Capitol Historic Site still keep tabs on the furniture already in use.

"We continue to work with the people who use the furniture," Kompelien said. "It does need maintenance; it's really a special collection." 🐼

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides: committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* news magazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

One-time staffer returns to Capitol in new role

By Paul Wahl

For Rep. Dan Larson (DFL-Bloomington), the first few days of the legislative session brought back a flood of memories. Earlier in his career, he spent four years as a legislative assistant to former state Sen. Phil Riveness.



Rep. Dan Larson

Larson knew the lay of the land, but one important piece of the terrain had changed. During his tenure with Riveness, both the House and Senate were under DFL control. This session, Larson will be part of a DFL minority in the House.

"The approach is different," said the former Richfield High School star football player and life-long political activist. "The other party sets the agenda, and you have a different role — more of a reactive role."

Larson said the challenge for him and other DFLers is to present their own agenda and have as much impact as possible on the major issues before the House.

Larson, 33, is quickly adjusting to the difference between being a staff member and being an elected official.

"It's a huge responsibility making decisions for such a large number of people rather than just observing the process," he said. "Now there comes a time to make decisions."

Larson sees some advantages to having experience at the Capitol prior to serving in office.

"If you're involved in community, you're prepared on many of the issues," he said.

Larson's first political involvement came as a high school student, and he continued to be active as a student both at Normandale Community College and at the University of Minnesota, where he earned a bachelor's degree in history.

He has spent the past four years working in government affairs with a Minneapolis law firm.

He also sat on the Bloomington Traffic and Transportation Advisory Committee, an experience that will serve him well as a member of the House Transportation Finance and House Transportation Policy committees. This session he'll also serve on the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee.

Much of Larson's district is within earshot of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, and he said he'll be working to assure the state is involved in mitigating the cost of redevelopment in areas impacted by airport expansion.

He's also concerned about noise at the facility, although he acknowledges that since flight paths are determined by the Federal Aviation Administration, the Legislature has limited authority in noise control.

He said a long-term solution to the issues surrounding the airport might require a regional approach — expanding airports in St. Cloud and Rochester, for instance — to help lessen the load of daily commercial flights into the Twin Cities.

Larson also said he plans to work for a fair tax reduction.

"We also need to reform the property tax system but we need to do it in a way that people feel we're really creating reform,"

Larson said. "Unfortunately, in the past either they haven't seen it or it doesn't realize long-term reform."

He supports Gov. Jesse Ventura's rebate proposal based on sales tax.

Larson chose to run when former Rep. Mark Mahon decided not to seek a fourth term in the House. Larson defeated his Republican challenger by 357 votes.

Helping guide his campaign as co-chair was Richfield resident Margaret Severe, who was Larson's third-grade teacher and lives five blocks from where he grew up. Larson said having your third-grade teacher running your campaign helps "keep your feet on the ground."

Larson's parents also live in the district he now represents. His father was elected commissioner of Minnesota Babe Ruth Baseball shortly after Larson was elected to the House in November 1998.

Larson and his wife, Sheila, have two children, 4-year-old Joe and 2-year-old Jennifer.

The family enjoys golf and bowling. Larson's parents have owned a bowling alley in Richfield for many years. This winter, Larson and his wife have been teaching their children how to ice skate.

District 40A

1995 Population: 32,303

Largest city: Bloomington

County: Hennepin

Location: southern metro suburbs

Top concern: "Providing maximum educational opportunities for our youth must be our highest priority, and that will also help define our economy in the 21st century."

— Rep. Dan Larson

Message from the House: No senators allowed

As long as the Senate doesn't invite House members into its retiring room, the House won't be asking the Senate over anytime soon.

When the House adopted its permanent rules for the session Jan. 11, it changed a long-standing tradition. In the past, senators were allowed in the House retiring room — the room behind the chamber — to visit with representatives during floor sessions.

The retiring room is used by House

members as a meeting room or place to rest during floor sessions. Because food is not allowed on the House floor, members often take food and drink breaks in the retiring room.

However, House members have historically not been allowed in the Senate's retiring room, according to the Senate rules.

During the debate on House rules, Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul) and Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) offered an

amendment to bar senators from the House retiring room. Trimble said he sponsored the amendment because of fairness.

"I think it is stupid of (the Senate) to have the rule," Trimble said. "We've asked them to change it before, and they haven't. Maybe this will bring about some change."

The amendment was adopted on a 95-37 vote.

Class sizes, school funding key for Woodbury lawmaker

By Grant Martin

In one of the closest races last year, new Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) campaigned right up through election day.



Rep. Jim Seifert

"I door-knocked almost every day — from the middle of May until 4 o'clock on November 3," he said.

Seifert, who won by only 296 votes out of almost 19,000 total, said that while he enjoyed discussing issues with the people in his district, the campaign was grueling.

"It was an awful lot of hard work," he said. "It was easily one of the hardest things I've ever done."

When asked why he put himself through the election, Seifert said he was motivated mainly by the issue of education.

"I saw my own children sitting in crowded classrooms," he said. "I saw my children's teachers at Bailey Elementary in Woodbury overworked and inaccessible at times to children due to the many burdens in dealing with oversized classrooms. And yet, the representative from our district at that time was taking credit for lowering class sizes."

Seifert said that his frustration forced him to take action.

"I was so tired of the disconnect between the truth of what was going on on a day-to-day level in people's lives and the words that were spoken at the Capitol," he said. "So I decided I was going to do something about it."

Seifert made a speech at his local Republican caucus stating his intentions. After five ballots at the district caucus, he was nominated to run against incumbent Rep. Nora Slawik in a district that has traditionally been held by the DFL.

Seifert said that his parents are his model for public service. His father was mayor of New Ulm, Minn., while running a busy dental practice. His mother has also been active with volunteer causes in the area.

"My mom and dad are real contributors to the quality of life in New Ulm and the surrounding area with no expectation of being repaid," said Seifert. "I thought it was a great attribute they modeled. By their example, they communicated how important it is to do public service. That was a huge motivating factor."

Seifert lives in Woodbury with his wife and two children. He currently works as an attorney for the Toro Company.

As he said during his campaign, Seifert is here to focus on education and taxes.

"One of the mistakes that legislators make is that they try to do too much," he said. "They've got all these problems in front of them and they try to work on every one, which means they work on none of them. I'm going to have a very focused agenda. I'm going to work on education and tax issues."

Emphasizing the overcrowding issue in his district, Seifert said that during the campaign he was approached by a high school chemistry teacher with 38 students and only 26 lab spots.

"We've got to have a desk and a lab spot for each student," Seifert said. "We have to have a clean and intact textbook for each student. We have to have an environment where teachers don't feel threatened by any sort of violence from the students. And it has to be an education that prepares kids to compete globally."

The overcrowding issue must come first, he said.

"The first step is to lower the class sizes," said Seifert. "And then we can do these other things."

Seifert said that the tax issue also ties into education. He favors adjusting both the income and property tax rates.

"The public schools need more space and lower class sizes, and that means that there will be several operating and bonding referendums that will have to be passed to keep pace with the needs of the public schools," he said. "This will add another burden on the taxpayer."

Seifert has written and lectured on alternative dispute resolution, a method of solving legal disputes without dragging them through civil litigation. He feels that his expertise will help him in the Legislature.

"Alternative dispute resolution is a method for resolving a very broad spectrum of disputes," said Seifert. "The essence of it is fact-based negotiations, and I think the guts of the legislative process is a negotiation process. I think the more it's weighted toward fact-based — as opposed to ideology-based — the more it works for the citizens of the state."

Seifert said that the message from the election last year is that partisan bickering will not be tolerated.

"Partisanship is okay when it's fact-based," he said. "When it's purely ideology-based and you have the two parties hollering at each other, it's a cancer on the electoral process. It dramatically affects the ability of state government to do the right thing."

District 57A

1995 population: 43,221 (District increased by 10,782 since 1990, largest increase in one district.)

Largest city: Woodbury

Counties: Ramsey, Washington

Location: eastern metro suburbs

Top Concern: "Public education in Minnesota will continue to be something that has to be adjusted from year to year, in terms of emphasis and in terms of funding. But, clearly, it's the highest priority for the voters in my district, and it will be my highest priority."

— Rep. Jim Seifert

Board continued from page 12

available for purchase by members of the public on the same terms."

The board also provided a ruling for the Ventura campaign regarding whether a purchaser of the Ventura action figure or other officially licensed products would actually constitute a political donation.

The answer: Yes, if the amount of value is over \$20.

Olson said that in its earlier years, the board was more reactive than it is today.

"The Legislature has given us more staff and money, which enables us to be more proactive," Olson said. "We do more teaching and training. We've developed software to help people meet the requirements of the law."

Olson said it's much more enjoyable if everyone does the right thing than if you have to "go out there and try to get them out of a problem," although she admitted the board does both.

In 1997, the Ethical Practices Board was renamed to reflect more closely the actual work performed.

"We never really dealt with anybody's ethics," Olson explained. "We got all sorts of calls about doctors' ethics and lawyers' ethics. The name now is more descriptive. It's not as sexy, I suppose, but it clears up some confusion."

If you will be visiting the Capitol in the near future, call the Capitol Historic Site Program at (651) 296-2881 to schedule a tour.

Bill Introductions

HF245-HF385

Monday, Jan. 25

HF245—Murphy (DFL) Crime Prevention

Furnishing alcohol to a person under age 21 provided increased penalties if, as a result of intoxication, the person causes or suffers death or great bodily harm.

HF246—Kahn (DFL) Crime Prevention

Criminal sexual conduct involving consenting adults repealed.

HF247—Entenza (DFL) K-12 Education Finance

Collaborative urban educator program grants provided and money appropriated.

HF248—Hasskamp (DFL) Commerce

Crooked Lake detached banking facility authorized.

**HF249—Sviggum (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**
Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board member appointment provisions modified.

**HF250—Abrams (R)
Taxes**
MinnesotaCare provider tax repealed.

**HF251—Rifenberg (R)
Taxes**
Agricultural loan mortgage registry tax exemption provided.

**HF252—Westfall (R)
Taxes**
Sales, use, and motor vehicle sales tax rates reduced for one year.

**HF253—Westfall (R)
Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**
Natural resources board created, and powers and duties transferred.

**HF254—Hasskamp (DFL)
Taxes**
Sales, use, motor vehicle sales, and income tax rates reduced; and political subdivision sales tax exemption provided.

**HF255—Erickson (R)
Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**
Fish and dark house removal from ice date modified.

**HF256—Kahn (DFL)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**
Minneapolis firefighters relief association provisions modified.

**HF257—Howes (R)
Environment &
Natural Resources Finance**
Mississippi Headwaters Board grant provided and money appropriated.

**HF258—Munger (DFL)
Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**
Western Lake Superior Sanitary District board member compensation modified.

**HF259—Munger (DFL)
Environment &
Natural Resources Finance**
Duluth; environmental assessment study of the former USX cement plant site provided and money appropriated.

**HF260—Kielkucki (R)
K-12 Education Finance**
Independent School District No. 2687, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted, reorganization operating debt levy calculation date clarified.

**HF261—Entenza (DFL)
Crime Prevention**
Furnishing alcohol to person under age 21 provided increased penalties if, as a result of intoxication, the person causes or suffers death or great bodily harm.

**HF262—Entenza (DFL)
Crime Prevention**
DWI; vehicle forfeiture proceedings held at the same time as implied consent hearings requirement eliminated.

**HF263—Gerlach (R)
Crime Prevention**
Counterfeited intellectual property manufacturing, distribution, selling, or possession criminal penalties imposed; and forfeiture provided.

**HF264—Stanek (R)
Transportation Policy**
I-94 expanded between Hemlock Lane in Maple Grove and Highway No. 81 in Brooklyn Park.

**HF265—Daggett (R)
Taxes**
Wagering loss deduction allowed for the purpose of computing alternative minimum taxable income.

**HF266—Kahn (DFL)
Commerce**
Liquor on-sale and off-sale hours regulated.

**HF267—Westerberg (R)
Taxes**
Income tax brackets and alternative minimum tax exemption amount modified to reduce marriage penalties.

**HF268—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance**
Summer school funding provided and money appropriated.

**HF269—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance**
General education revenue equity aid created and money appropriated.

**HF270—Osskopp (R)
Commerce**
Minnesota Comprehensive Health Insurance policies providing number one or two plan benefits prohibited from imposing a maximum lifetime benefit limit.

**HF271—Abrams (R)
Taxes**
1999 income tax rebate provided and money appropriated.

**HF272—Abrams (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**
State partisan primary name changed to state party nominating election; date changed; party support of candidate required prior to ballot listing; and procedures, deadlines, and terms modified.

**HF273—Munger (DFL)
Taxes**
Biosolids processing equipment sales and use tax exemption clarified.

**HF274—Hasskamp (DFL)
Education Policy**
Education grant program applicants authorized to appeal commissioner of Children, Families and Learning's findings.

**HF275—Stang (R)
Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**
Stearns County tax-forfeited land bordering public water sale authorized.

**HF276—Leighton (DFL)
Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**
Mower County tax-forfeited land bordering public water sale authorized.

**HF277—Jaros (DFL)
Taxes**
Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

**HF278—Entenza (DFL)
Crime Prevention**
DWI; repeat DWI offenders provided felony penalties, incarceration in local correctional facilities required, minimum mandatory penalties provided, and enhanced gross misdemeanor references repealed.

**HF279—Westfall (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**
Veterans preference act modified.

**HF280—Schumacher (DFL)
Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**
Sherburne County tax-forfeited land bordering public water conveyance authorized.

**HF281—Leppik (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**
Bicameral administrative rule review group appointed by the legislative coordinating commission and duties specified.

**HF282—Greiling (DFL)
Education Policy**
Gifted and talented education grants authorized and money appropriated.

**HF283—Anderson, B. (R)
K-12 Education Finance**
Independent School District No. 728, Elk River, debt service levy rate provided.

**HF284—Winter (DFL)
Agriculture Policy**
Farm and small business loan guarantee program created and money appropriated.

HF285—Haake (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Ramsey County tax-forfeited land conveyance authorized.

HF286—Cassell (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Douglas County tax-forfeited land bordering public water sale authorized.

HF287—Sviggum (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Unicameral legislature provided with 99 members, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF288—Rostberg (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Pollution Control Agency Mississippi River emergency spill response equipment and training provided, and money appropriated.

HF289—Rest (DFL)
Taxes
Sales tax rebate provided, automatic rebate process established, tobacco settlement proceeds deposited, capital project financing converted to general obligation bonding, capital improvements provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF290—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Education Policy
Elementary and secondary school district operating funds provided through state aids.

HF291—Folliard (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Independent School District No. 276, Minnetonka, teachers retirement association prior service credit purchase authorized.

HF292—Wenzel (DFL)
Taxes
Vacant platted property assessment provided.

HF293—Daggett (R)
Civil Law
Notary commission recording fees reduced.

HF294—Broecker (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Extraordinary local disaster expense aid provided and money appropriated.

HF295—Winter (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Firefighter training and education board created, training reimbursement program established, and money appropriated.

Wednesday, Jan. 27

HF296—Opatz (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Disability parking privilege expanded to include certain pregnant women.

HF297—Carlson (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Expired U.S. passport allowed as secondary identification for driver's license, permit, or identification card applicants.

HF298—Seifert, M. (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
New disposal capacity for mixed municipal solid waste outside the metropolitan area certificate of need requirement repealed.

HF299—Knoblach (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School district referendum equalization levy replaced by state aid after the first year of referendum approval.

HF300—Knoblach (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Partial-birth abortions prohibited and criminal penalties provided.

HF301—Knoblach (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Legislature size fixed after the 2000 census.

HF302—Davids (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Ambulance services authorized to participate in shared service purchasing under the uniform municipal contracting law.

HF303—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Local government unit levy limits extended through taxes payable in 2001.

HF304—Tunheim (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Shipment and possession of wild animals taken on the Red Lake Indian Reservation north of the 49th parallel authorized, and no state license required.

HF305—Tunheim (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Mar-Kit Landfill Joint Powers Board grant provided for waste management and recycling, and money appropriated.

HF306—Workman (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Hennepin County tax-forfeited land bordering public water or wetlands conveyance authorized.

HF307—Solberg (DFL)
Education Policy
High school league administrative regions authorized to contract with private auditors.

HF308—Seifert, M. (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Candidates accepting public campaign subsidies prohibited from accepting contributions from lobbyists, political funds, or political committees other than party units.

HF309—Haas (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Proposed health insurance coverage mandates assessed by the health technology advisory committee.

HF310—Knoblach (R)
Civil Law
Job reference information disclosure protection provided.

HF311—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Health Care Access Fund abolished, health maintenance organizations and nonprofit health service plan corporations insurance premiums tax repealed, and health care taxes phased out.

HF312—Hasskamp (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Constitutional standard established relating to abortion and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF313—McElroy (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Nonvoting members allowed to serve on the Metropolitan Council, Transportation Advisory Committee membership expanded, metropolitan agencies and council merger studied, local government grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF314—Entenza (DFL)
Commerce
St. Paul authorized to issue temporary liquor licenses to Macalester College.

HF315—Tomassoni (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School district declining pupil unit aid created, definition modified, and money appropriated.

HF316—Rostberg (R)
Transportation Finance
National Weather Service transmitter purchases funded and money appropriated.

HF317—Osskopp (R)
Education Policy
Profile of Learning abolished.

HF318—Peterson (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Taking of wild animals with a firearm within 500 feet of an occupied building on public land without permission prohibited.

HF319—Wagenius (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Integrated criminal justice information system task force established in Hennepin County and statewide, aid awarded by the Supreme Court, and money appropriated.

HF320—Opatz (DFL)
Education Policy
State expectations for schools defined related to student achievement.

HF321—Lindner (R)
Education Policy
All school-age children authorized to participate in resident school district sponsored extracurricular activities.

HF322—Mulder (R)
Commerce
Wind energy conversion system generated electric energy installed capacity requirement clarified.

HF323—McElroy (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Senate and House of Representatives size provided.

HF324—Jennings (DFL)
Taxes
Ski area machinery and equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF325—Paulsen (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Candidates prohibited from accepting political fund contributions.

HF326—Winter (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 330, Heron Lake-Okabena, Southwest Star concept school grant clarified, and money appropriated.

HF327—Winter (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 330, Heron Lake-Okabena, grant authorized, and money appropriated.

HF328—Juhnke (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Trunk highway contract documents required to express measurements in the English system only.

HF329—Folliard (DFL)
Commerce
Misleading business name or telephone number advertisement prohibited.

HF330—Dempsey (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Mississippi River Parkway Commission funding provided and money appropriated.

HF331—Greiling (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Employee leave extended for birth or adoption and school-related activities.

HF332—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Rural health clinics and federally qualified health center services cost-based reimbursement continued.

HF333—Buesgens (R)
Education Policy
Board of educational administration established and money appropriated.

HF334—Winter (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Tracy sewer separation project grant and loan provided, and money appropriated.

HF335—Dempsey (R)
Crime Prevention
DWI; repeat offender felony penalties imposed and one criminal history point required.

HF336—Leppik (R)
Education Policy
State high school league and governing board provisions modified.

HF337—Kahn (DFL)
Rules & Legislative Administration
Impeachment; United States Senate memorialized to take prompt action in the impeachment case of President Clinton.

HF338—Larsen, P. (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Emergency management grant program created and rulemaking authorized.

HF339—Hasskamp (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Partial-birth abortions prohibited, and criminal and civil penalties provided.

HF340—Dempsey (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 200, Hastings, year-round school/extended week or day grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF341—Hasskamp (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Abortion informed consent required and civil cause of action provided.

HF342—Rostberg (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Board of licensed professional mental health counseling established, counselor licensing required, penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF343—Hilty (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Department of Trade and Economic Development technology corridor planning and feasibility review required, and Pine technical college technology center federal funding accepted.

HF344—Rhodes (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
St. Louis Park Meadowbrook collaborative housing project youth outreach services funded and money appropriated.

Thursday, Jan. 28

HF345—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Home and community-based waived services for persons with mental retardation waiting list eliminated, unspent resources reallocated, county partnerships required, reserve account authorized, and money appropriated.

HF346—Smith (R)
Civil Law
Freelance court reporter contract arrangements and practices limited, and services regulated.

HF347—Sviggum (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 2125, Triton, health and safety revenue authorized.

HF348—Mullery (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Cases involving felony-level charges required to be assigned in each judicial district within three days of defendant's initial court appearance.

HF349—Pelowski (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 861, Winona, Jefferson elementary school full-day kindergarten program grant authorized, and money appropriated.

HF350—Tuma (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Cannon River valley watershed district protection provided, trail and joint powers planning funded, and money appropriated.

HF351—Bishop (R)
Civil Law
Court taxation of parties in a civil action for juror hardship expenses authorized.

HF352—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Family or group family day care wading pools exempt from public health requirements.

HF353—Mulder (R)
Taxes
Military pension subtraction from individual income taxes created.

HF354—Solberg (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Itasca County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public waters.

HF355—Cassell (R)
Taxes
June accelerated sales, liquor, cigarette, and tobacco tax payments abolished.

HF356—Dempsey (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Human services consumer support program financial eligibility criteria modified and maximum federal fund usage required.

HF357—Skoglund (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Camp Ripley work program scope expanded to include chemically dependent or convicted domestic abuse offenders.

HF358—Wolf (R)
Commerce
Coin-operated and public pay telephones deregulated, and telecommunications provider anticompetitive activity administrative penalties assessed.

HF359—Wolf (R)
Commerce
Public Utilities Commission subcommittees established and commissioners designated, petitions deemed approved unless set aside for affirmative action, investigation and contingency revolving fund created, and money appropriated.

HF360—Skoe (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Teachers retirement association annuity suspension, membership resumption, and recomputed benefits authorized.

HF361—Molnau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Carver County nursing home reimbursement operating per diem limit exemption provided.

HF362—Davids (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Department of Children, Families and Learning provided an alternative facilities design grant, and money appropriated.

HF363—Juhnke (DFL)
Transportation Finance
State Patrol vehicle video camera installation, maintenance, and operation provided; and money appropriated.

HF364—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Health plan enrollee out-of-network provider services choice required and reimbursement provided.

HF365—Kelliher (DFL)
Taxes
Books and over-the-counter magazine sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF366—Kelliher (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Teachers retirement association interest charge repayment required on certain member contribution shortage payments.

HF367—Reuter (R)
Transportation Policy
I-35W and I-394 lane restrictions modified.

HF368—Reuter (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Steele County land conveyances authorized in connection with a state land transfer.

HF369—Pelowski (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Minnesota land records study provided and money appropriated.

HF370—Harder (R)
Agriculture Policy
Nonregistered pesticide distribution permitted for certain uses outside the state.

HF371—Stang (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Local government historical work contribution limit removed; and public or private, nonprofit senior citizen center contributions authorized.

HF372—Bakk (DFL)
Education Policy
Driver education classroom component home-school instruction authorized.

HF373—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Goodhue County private sales of county land authorized.

HF374—Larsen, P. (R)
Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle emissions inspection program repealed.

HF375—Wenzel (DFL)
Taxes
National guard and active duty military pay subtraction from individual income taxes provided.

HF376—Haas (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Medical practice act; administration and prescription of anesthetics specified as the practice of medicine, and restriction exemptions defined.

HF377—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Abortion notification data reporting required and civil penalties imposed.

HF378—Daggett (R)
Taxes
Individual income tax long-term care insurance credit increased.

HF379—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Mortgage registry and deed taxes technical corrections provided.

HF380—Daggett (R)
Taxes
Tax provisions technical corrections bill.

HF381—Stanek (R)
Crime Prevention
New police pursuits model policy adopted by the POST board, municipal and state law enforcement compliance and officer training required, tire deflator and driving simulator distribution programs provided, and money appropriated.

HF382—Seifert, J. (R)
Civil Law
Common interest ownership act, certificates of title, and real property provisions modified.

HF383—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Nursing home employee compensation enhancement provided and money appropriated.

HF384—Anderson, B. (R)
Agriculture Policy
State and county fair food handler license provisions modified.

HF385—Holsten (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Environment and natural resources appropriations bill.

At the door . . .

Haukoos returns to House with new responsibilities

Many returning House members welcomed back an old friend at the start of the 1999 session. Former Rep. Bob Haukoos of Albert Lea is working at the Capitol as the official doorman for the House chamber.

Haukoos served in the House from 1979 to 1994, and he said he just couldn't stay away. And although his title is House doorman, many people also consider him the official greeter.

"The first day was like a receiving line," he said. "I was shaking hands with everyone who went in. I've seen so many old friends, wonderful people on both sides of the aisle."

Part of his job is answering visitors' questions, and he said his 16 years as a lawmaker taught him all he needs to know about how the legislative process works. He said things haven't changed much since he left office, which made the job interview pretty easy.

"When I heard Charlie [Ward] wasn't going to come back, I applied, and they



Former Rep. Bob Haukoos has come back to the Capitol to serve as doorman for the House.

called and said I have the job," he recalled. "I still don't know how much it pays. I didn't do it for the pay anyway."

Ward retired last year after 15 years with the House and 11 years as the doorman.

Haukoos said he has met quite a few out-of-town visitors who are sightseeing at the Capitol. Those conversations often give him a chance to brag about his workplace.

"They're always amazed at how beautiful the building is, and I have to agree. I've

been to a lot of other state capitols, and I think this is the best one. I even think it shines compared to the one in Washington, D.C.," he said.

As a lawmaker, Haukoos was known for being responsive to his constituents and refusing to accept campaign contributions from special interest groups. He routinely won landslide victories before he decided not to seek re-election at the age of 62 in 1994. He chaired the appropriations committee that funded higher education during the two years his party was

in the majority during the 1980s. He is a current VFW member and a retired U.S. Navy man and firefighter.

Even though Haukoos gained a lot of knowledge during his years as a representative, he said he doesn't give advice now that he's back at the Capitol.

"I enjoy listening to the debates without having to push any buttons," he said.

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.
For information updates, call
House Calls at (651) 296-9283.
All meetings are open to the public.
Sign language interpreter services:
(651) 224-6548 v/tty
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In the body of the message type:
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MONDAY, Feb. 1

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: rulemaking overview, Dave Orren, Department of Health; Jocelyn Olson, attorney general's office; and Norma Coleman, Pollution Control Agency; Minnesota Racing Commission overview, Dick Krueger, executive director.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: programs for the elderly presentation, Department of Human Services.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: Council of Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, Council on Black Minnesotans, Indian Affairs Council and Chicano-Latino Affairs Council overviews.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: committee procedures; Minnesota Safety Council presentation, Carol Bufton, council president; HF189 (Dempsey) Port development assistance program funded and money appropriated. Testimony by Dick Lambert, director, Ports and Waterways, Department of Transportation; Kevin Walli, Ports Association; Myron White, Port of Red Wing; Laurie Lauder, St. Paul Port Authority.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: HF56 (Van Dellen) Health care provider civil action limitation provisions modified.

HF42 (Folliard) Medical malpractice action statute of limitations modified.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: to be announced.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: overview by Mayo Medical School.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: examination of school finance in Minnesota, John Augenblick and John Myers; financial condition of school districts, Gary Farland, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt
Agenda: HF1 (Abrams) One-time individual income tax rebate provided, and money appropriated.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: one time funding initiatives, Beth Achter, Early Childhood Family Education and learning readiness coordinator; adolescent parenting; food and housing assistance.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen
Agenda: presentation by Minnesota League of Cities.
HF73 (Hilty) Year 2000; local government units mutual aid authority clarified, health department required to collect and disseminate information regarding possible problems and solutions, immunity provided, and money appropriated.

Outdoor Recreation Task Force

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Hackbarth
Agenda: compromise bill on use of snowmobile studs.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf
Agenda: presentations by Residential Utilities Division of the Office of the Attorney General and Department of Public Service concerning telecommunications, energy, public utilities, and deregulation issues.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

Immediately following session

RULES & LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Pawlenty
Agenda: HF151 (Harder) Farm crisis; President and Congress memorialized to form a federal effort to alleviate the farm crisis.
HF105 (Tunheim) Farm relief; Congress memorialized to designate and implement financial relief for livestock and grain farmers.

TUESDAY, Feb. 2

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: HF40 (Bradley) Nursing facility residents allowed to request the use of restraints. HF60 (Haas) Supplemental private duty nursing services reimbursement allowed for spouses and others meeting financial hardship criteria. HF217 (Rhodes) Chana Malka Oppen provision for least invasive procedure; mandated autopsy religious exemption created. HF214 (Goodno) Volunteer ambulance attendant definition provided, and reimbursement provisions modified.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: Department of Trade and Economic Development and Department of Commerce overviews (issues include unclaimed property and the Petro Fund).

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: Crime Victims Service Center overview and review of annual report; Information Technology Division, State Court Administration overview and review of annual report.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman
Agenda: HF7 (Haake) Motor vehicle emissions inspection program repealed.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: budget presentation, Department of Employee Relations.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF228 (Bishop) Sex offender registration and community notification laws expanded to include certain persons committed as mentally ill and dangerous.
HF216 (Stanek) Pretrial status prisoner transfers between jail and workhouse authorization clarified.
HF240 (Smith) DWI; sheriffs authorized contingent fund expenditures for DWI-related violation investigations.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF14 (Fuller) Persons convicted of criminal sexual conduct considered ineligible to be a licensed teacher.
HF58 (Erickson) Independent School District No. 912, Milaca, retroactively authorized to begin its school year prior to Labor Day.
HF213 (Greiling) Oral deaf education teachers exempted from American Sign Language licensure requirements.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: to be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: Department of Revenue bills.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: testimony on a bill regarding vaccination funding; presentations on state ethanol plants.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: Department of Finance cancellation report presentation, Peter Sausen.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF248 (Hasskamp) Permitting location of a branch bank in the town of Crooked Lake under certain conditions.
HF180 (Wolf) Safety regulated for persons on amusement rides.

1:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

3 p.m.

Outdoor Recreation Task Force

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

Agenda: compromise bill on use of snowmobile studs.

WAYS & MEANS

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: bills referred from the House Taxes committee.

4 p.m.

Anoka County Legislative Delegation

500N State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Kathy Tingelstad,
Rep. Satveer Chaudhary

Agenda: to be announced.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 3

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: to be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: programs for the disabled presentation, Department of Human Services.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Dislocated Workers Program overview.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: State Patrol budget presentation, Col. Anne Beers.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF160 (Bishop) Public service corporations private property easements definite and specific descriptions provided, and requirement retroactively applied.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Minnesota Forest Resources Council; Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Minnesota Community Faculty Association overview, Larry Obeson; Inter-Faculty Organization overview, David Able.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: teacher salary settlements, Rep. Ken Wolf; Wisconsin's qualified economic offer,

Nancy Donovan, Wisconsin school board member.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: to be announced.

12 p.m.

The House meets in session.

Immediately following session

AGRICULTURE POLICY

Department of Agriculture
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: tour 90 West Plato Blvd., St. Paul.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: community action programs; Minnesota Economic Opportunity grants; energy and weatherization.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: Association of Minnesota Counties overview;
HF45 (Folliard) City councils authorized to establish procedures for imposing ordinance violation civil penalties.

2 p.m.

Legislative Audit Commission

316 State Capitol

Chr. Sen. Deanna Wiener

Agenda: release and discuss program evaluation report on occupational licensing.

3 p.m.

Outdoor Recreation Task Force

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

Agenda: compromise bill on use of snowmobile studs.

4 p.m.

Hennepin County Delegation

118 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Ron Abrams,
Rep. Linda Wejcman,
Sen. Linda Higgins,
Sen. Martha Robertson

Agenda: to be announced.

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<http://www.leg.state.mn.us>

THURSDAY, Feb. 4

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: discussion of Minnesota Family Investment Program-Statewide work programs.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: affordable housing issues.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Department of Finance budget briefing.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman,

Agenda: continuation of Feb. 2 agenda (if necessary).

HF157 (Kuisle) Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Highway route modified.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Office of Strategic & Long Range Planning budget presentation.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF135 (Bishop) Repeat assault offenders with prior delinquency adjudications provided enhanced penalties.

HF263 (Gerlach) Imposing criminal penalties for manufacturing, distributing, selling, or possessing counterfeited intellectual property.

HF295 (Winter) Establishing the board of firefighter training and education; establishing a firefighter training reimbursement program and money appropriated.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: overview of proposed teacher licensing rule and relation to graduation rule, Minnesota Board of Teaching; implementation of graduation rule, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: to be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: Department of Revenue bills.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: presentations by representatives of wild rice producers and farm organizations.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: to be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF208 (Haas) Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association funding continued, certain insurance-related assessment reductions allowed, Medical Assistance and MCHA relationship specifications sunset repealed, and money appropriated.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

FRIDAY, Feb. 5

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: to be announced.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: overview of affordable housing and homeless prevention programs.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: to be announced.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: a primer in special education, Tim Strom, House Research; cross-subsidization of special education costs, Tom Melcher, Bob Fischer, and Mike Landers, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

Where to find information

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211 State Capitol (651) 296-6646

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Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Higher education in Minnesota

Percent of Minnesotans age 25 and up with a bachelor's degree or higher, 1997	28.3
Percent of all Americans	23.9
Percent of 1996 Minnesota high school graduates that immediately enrolled in higher education	55.1
Percent that enrolled in in-state schools	40.4
Percent in out-of-state schools	14.7
Minnesota's rank in nation that year	21
Percent of 1988 Minnesota high school graduates that immediately enrolled in higher education	60
Percent that enrolled in in-state schools	48.4
Percent in out-of-state schools	11.6
Minnesota's rank in nation that year	9
Percent of African-American Minnesota high school graduates that enrolled in higher education, 1996	21.8
in 1987	23.7
Percent of Asian-American Minnesota high school graduates that enrolled in higher education, 1996	35.6
in 1987	44.4
Percent of white Minnesota high school graduates that enrolled in higher education, 1996	33.7
in 1987	42.9
Percent of rural female high school graduates that enrolled in higher education, 1996	34.6
in 1987	52.5
Percent of rural male high school graduates that enrolled in higher education, 1996	33.5
in 1987	43.6
Percent of Minneapolis/St. Paul female high school graduates that enrolled in higher education, 1996	27.9
in 1987	31.2
Percent of Minneapolis/St. Paul male high school graduates that enrolled in higher education, 1996	26.7
in 1987	29.8
Percent of entering freshman at Minnesota state universities in 1996 with high school grade point average below 3.0	32
in 1989	49

Sources: *Balancing the Books: Affording College in Minnesota*, 1998, Minnesota Planning; *Higher Education Enrollments: Current Conditions and Recent Trends*, 1998, House Research Department; *Participation of New High School Graduates in Higher Education*, 1998, House Research Department.

For more information



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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ February 5, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 5



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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • February 5, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 5

Reflections

February is the time of year around the Capitol when most legislators begin to get used to cabin fever, as they spend some nine- to 12-hour days in meetings discussing and debating bills. Most forget that six months ago, back in their districts, they were outside under the hot sun shaking hands, kissing babies, smiling a lot, and sweating at festivals and parades all over the state.

During summer months, particularly in an election year, legislators attend hundreds of community celebrations throughout the state. It has been said that Minnesota has almost as many fairs and festivals as it does lakes. At least many legislators think so as they meet and greet large numbers of constituents at the events.

During a legislative interim out on "Main Street," legislators talk about farm issues, education, and tax rebates at a Turkey Days festival, a Cornfest, a Porkfest, a Strawberry Festival, the Aquatennial, WEfest, or at the 126th year of Lumber Jack Days in Stillwater. If there are no central themes for gatherings such as Sugar Beet Days, cities and towns like Afton still have a Fourth of July celebration. Other towns celebrate Woodbury Days, Delano Days, Rochesterfest, and Forest Lake holds an ice-fishing contest in winter.

One unique event takes place in the town of Whalan, located near the state's southeast corner. Its population of about 94 holds a Stand Still Parade, where bands, floats, convertibles holding town "royalty" and politicians like Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) don't move — the observers do. But some parade-goers still bring their lawn chairs, "because you are supposed to."

Also, legislators rarely miss special events like the Spam Town USA Festival in Austin, Grand Rapids' Judy Garland Festival, a lighted pontoon boat parade at Glenwood's Waterama festival, and a block-long parade on a section of Lincoln Avenue in St. Paul which lasts only 30 minutes.

St. Paul lawmakers like Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul) get another chance to be in public at the spectacular St. Paul Winter Carnival, celebrating 113 years in 1999, where the purveyor of winter, King Boreas, is annually deposed by his fire nemesis, Vulcanus Rex.

Capital city officials can participate in two carnival parades, join the search for the festival medallion — once found on the Capitol grounds — or watch the historic Bouncing Team blanket toss, a game borrowed from the Eskimos in 1886. They can also choose to sled down a 200-foot snow slide in Como Park, play broom ball on ice, or attend one of over 100 events during the two-week celebration.

It's never difficult for lawmakers to find a local annual festival at which they can view any number of Minnesota phenomena like the world's largest ice castle, the state's largest hog, or the fastest-running turkey.

— LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: A light fixture at St. Paul's World Trade Center reflects participants at the governor's budget unveiling Jan. 28.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

Returning Surplus Funds . . .

House goes for rebates according to income taxes paid

By Paul Wahl

The chant began from a few straggling voices when the Minnesota Legislature convened in 1997. "Give it back. Give it back," they said.

Within a few weeks, the cry reached a crescendo as legislators and the governor wrestled with what to do with unprecedented state budget surpluses.

Today, there's little in the way of public protest. It seems almost a given that taxpayers will receive a rebate just as they have in the previous two years. It's only what form the rebate will take that remains uncertain.

The House passed a bill (HF1) Feb. 4 that would provide more than \$1 billion in rebates based on income taxes paid in 1997. The bill is sponsored by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka). The vote was 93-35.

After approval of a DFL-backed amendment on the floor, the bill also includes a plan for additional property tax rebates. In all, the bill would rebate \$1.55 billion to Minnesota taxpayers.

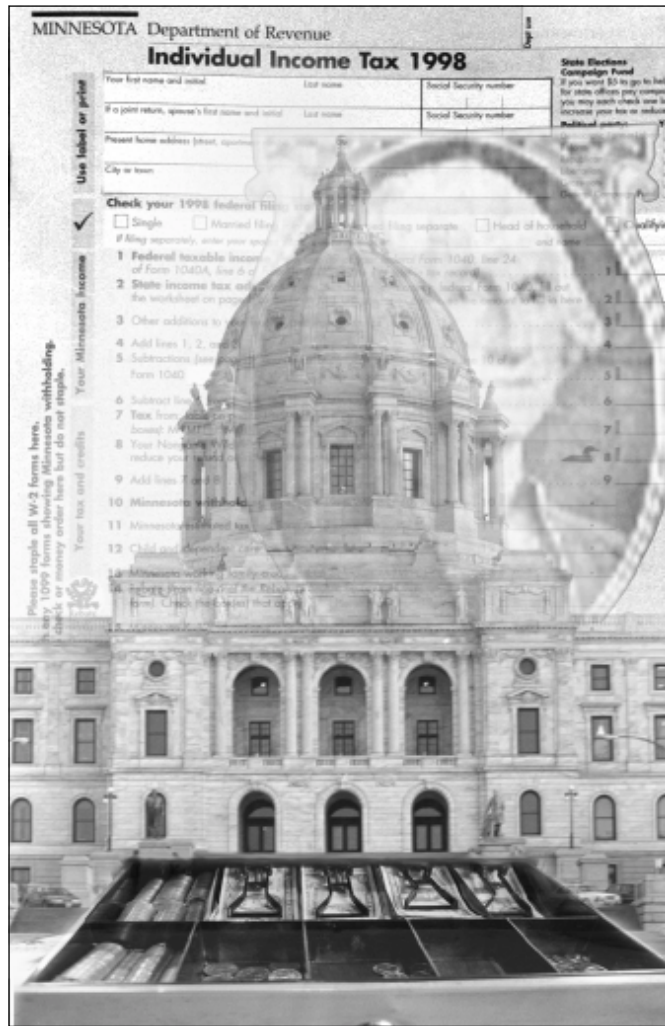
The House also reconsidered and again rejected a bill (HF209) that would have repealed a provision in the 1998 tax law requiring that \$400 million of the projected budget surplus be used to pay for projects in last year's capital projects law. House Republicans wanted to use that \$400 million to fund property tax rebate provisions included in HF1.

The bill failed 68-59. Because it dealt with bonding, the bill needed a three-fifths majority to pass.

Abrams and his Republican colleagues argued that the income tax rebate plan is preferable to other rebate proposals because it would return surplus funds proportionally to taxpayers.

"It is fair, it is more, and it is now," said Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan). "We have kept faith with our words to return all of the surplus."

Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) said there is broad agreement that Minnesotans deserve a rebate. The problem, he said, is figuring a way to give the money back fairly.



The House passed a bill Feb. 4 that would rebate about \$1.5 billion to Minnesota taxpayers.

"There are forgotten people in the Abrams proposal," Pugh said. "We believe the Ventura plan is a far better way of dealing with this."

The House plan will eventually have to be reconciled with a Senate rebate bill that is expected to more closely reflect a proposal from Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Under the governor's plan, rebate amounts would be determined according to estimates of average household expenditures for consumer sales tax.

While the debate between the competing plans goes on, the Minnesota economy continues to be strong.

The November 1998 budget forecast showed a projected surplus of \$1.5 billion.

Such a large surplus may hardly seem real

for legislators and other state officials who were around from 1989 to 1992. During that period, forecasters at one point said revenues would be down \$700 million and the scramble was on to find cuts that would help stem a projected budget shortfall.

The last forecast shortfall was issued in February 1992. But during 1996 and 1997, the state saw surpluses total more than \$2 billion.

In November 1996, a forecast of revenues almost \$800 million ahead of the previous projection was released.

It was with that figure clearly in mind that former Gov. Arne Carlson presented a plan to return surplus revenue directly to taxpayers. His \$20 billion budget for the current biennium initially called for a modest \$261 million to be returned as rebates, ranging from \$50 per person to \$250 per person.

By the end of the 1997 session, a rebate fashioned on property taxes paid had been adopted. Homeowners got back 20 percent of their 1997 property taxes paid, while renters received 18 percent of the portion of their rent that constituted property tax payments. Nearly \$500 million was allocated for the rebate.

Heading into the 1998 session, Carlson and the Legislature once again embarked upon a plan for rebates. With a \$1.9 billion projected surplus, the cry to return more money than the previous year was deafening. In the end, another \$500 million was provided for rebates.

The 1998 rebate was similar to the one adopted in 1997; however, a maximum rebate of \$1,500 was written in.

If passed into law, any of the versions of the rebate on the table this session would be the largest in the state's history — nearly \$1 billion — and among the largest tax rebates ever distributed in the country.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, rebates are being talked about in only two other states this year — Missouri and

Colorado. Oregon handed out a rebate in 1998 and has in five of the last seven biennia.

Missouri, Colorado, and Oregon are all constitutionally required to refund excess revenues.

The Colorado rebate is part of that state's 1992 Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, which limits state revenue growth to the sum of inflation and population growth. Money over that must be rebated to taxpayers.

The Colorado refund is based on sales tax and is paid according to incomes revealed on


income tax returns. Ventura has also called for rebates to be automatic when certain surplus levels are reached.

The federal government is expected to run a budget surplus of nearly a trillion dollars in the coming years, but as yet there is little call for returning it to taxpayers in the form of a rebate.

During debate on the House floor, an amendment was passed that would make rebates automatic at the end of each fiscal year if a sufficient surplus remains in the state's cof-

fers. The amendment was offered by Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope).

While the rebates are popular with taxpayers and voters, they come at a cost. Over the two years rebates have been approved, the Department of Revenue has spent about \$3 million for the special processing required.

When this year's rebate plan is hammered out, it's expected to require about \$1.5 million to cover costs. 

National study shows Minnesota government is making the grade



Report cards are out, and Minnesota's state government is doing better than average and, in some ways, better than its neighbors. But there is room for improvement.

The February issue of *Governing* magazine features a study that grades each of the states for government performance in five different areas. Minnesota gets an average grade of B from the magazine. Wisconsin and Iowa also get B grades, while the Dakotas both receive B- marks.

No state is given a perfect A for an average grade, but Missouri, Utah, Virginia, and Washington all scored A- marks. Alabama's D is the worst average grade of any state.

The grades are drawn from a research project conducted by *Governing* and Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. The project, which began in 1997, was funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

The study, which was constructed through surveys sent to all 50 states, focuses on government performance in five specific areas: financial management, capital management, human resources, information technology, and "managing for results," which is an umbrella term covering efforts in long-term planning and performance measurement.

Minnesota gets an A- for financial management, and the study concludes that the state "nearly always handles fiscal matters responsibly."

Wisconsin, considered by some to be a model of efficiency in state government, gets only a C+ for financial management, and the study concludes that, following commonly accepted accounting principles, the state has been "running a budget deficit for years."

Iowa, credited for correcting "misleading accounting practices" that caused trouble in the early 1990s, gets an A- for financial management. South Dakota gets a B+, and North Dakota gets a B.

Minnesota also scores high for capital management, receiving an A- grade and praise for its capital planning process. The study lauds Minnesota for requiring state agencies to assemble six-year capital plans and to prioritize their requests. Minnesota "balances the need to maintain and reuse existing assets with demand for new facilities," the study concludes.

Wisconsin matches Minnesota's A- for capital management, while Iowa's B- is the lowest in the region.

Minnesota's lowest grade is a C+ for its human resources system, which the study calls "rigid, centralized, and antiquated." The state is criticized for placing too much authority in the Department of Employee Relations, rather than allowing individual agencies more of a role in deciding whom they hire and how quickly vacancies are filled. However, the study credits the state for moving toward a "brand-new hiring system to replace one that's seriously out of date."

All bordering states score better for human resources except South Dakota, which matches Minnesota's mark.

Minnesota gets a B grade for information technology, for which the study credits the state for providing Web access to a wide variety of resources and for maintaining "reasonably up-to-date" information systems.

The state's information technology grade is matched by Wisconsin and South Dakota, but North Dakota and Iowa lag behind.

Minnesota also gets a B in managing for results. The study credits the state for taking "notable steps" in measuring per-

formance in education and environmental programs, but the study knocks the Legislature and former Gov. Arne Carlson for failing to strongly support Minnesota Milestones, an ongoing, goal-oriented planning initiative.

Managing for results seems an unfamiliar concept in the Dakotas, where governments in both states receive D grades for their efforts and South Dakota is ripped for having "no performance-based budgeting at all."

Wisconsin gets only C in managing for results, but Iowa gets a B+ and is praised for having a solid overall strategy into which agency and program planning efforts all feed.

Poor Alabama appears to be a model of government inefficiency and ineffectiveness. The state gets an F for its planning and performance-measurement systems, and it breaks out of the D range only in human resources, for which it scores a C-. Study results show that the state has no master plan for capital projects and fails to even maintain a statewide inventory of capital facilities. The Alabama Legislature passes an annual "financial emergency resolution," which allows lawmakers to sidestep legal obligations and leave the state's rainy day fund empty.

Missouri, on the other hand, has a government that looks like a poster child for Midwestern thriftiness and thoughtfulness. The study finds a state that "is careful not to make decisions that will get it into trouble in the future" and that is performing above average in every area.

Overall, the study shows state governments across the nation to be doing fairly well. When 50-state averages are calculated, the high mark is a B for financial management and C+ scores for information technology and managing for results are at the low end.

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Disease hitting hogs

A bill that would provide \$1.5 million to help combat a statewide outbreak of pseudorabies in Minnesota's swine population was approved Jan. 2 by the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee.

The money would pay for a vaccine needed to stop the spread of the viral disease, which can make pigs sick and, in severe cases, kill them but poses no threat to pork eaters or other members of the public.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), whose district includes a number of herds infected with the disease, is sponsoring the bill (**HF414**).

Dr. Tom Hagerty, head of the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, told committee members that prior to last fall, the state was on pace to complete a federal pseudorabies eradication program.

The program began in 1989 with a goal of total eradication by 2000. Less than 150 herds were left untreated.

Then in December 1998, the number of infected herds began to multiply exponentially.

Hagerty said the outbreak was partially due to larger herds and a swine flu epidemic — the worst in the state's history — that reduced the immunity of many hogs to the virus.

As the prices for hogs began to plummet, cash-strapped farmers scaled back their vaccination programs, and unusually mild fall weather created an ideal environment for the spread of the disease, which is also known as Aujeszky's disease.

Hagerty said he suspects farmers also didn't react as quickly as they normally would have because they've grown complacent over the years as the threat from pseudorabies declined.

If the disease isn't stopped, Hagerty added, foreign markets may begin refusing to purchase Minnesota-grown hogs. South Dakota has already implemented a ban on the state's hogs, fearing additional outbreaks there.

Hagerty said this is the first time the state has proposed purchasing vaccine, which would be handled by veterinarians in the infected areas at no cost and administered by individual producers.

The federal government has already appropriated \$80 million for the purchase and slaughter of infected hogs.

About \$300,000 of the state money would go for blood testing and the remainder for the vaccine, which is best administered in the spring. About three million doses will be needed.

The vaccine would be targeted toward hogs within a two-mile radius of infected herds, where the danger of spreading the disease is greatest.

The bill moves to the House Ways and Means Committee.



BANKING

A town without a bank

Residents of the tiny community of Outing, located in southern Cass County, may soon have their first local bank branch, under a bill approved Feb. 1 by the House Commerce Committee.

Current state law prohibits banks from setting up shop in townships without special approval.

The "home office protection law" allows banks to establish branch offices in cities with populations of less than 10,000 only with consent from all banks that have their home office in that city. Banks are also prohibited from getting around the law by opening in townships just outside city limits.

But **HF248**, sponsored by Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), would allow First National Bank of Crosby to establish a branch in Outing, an unincorporated community in Crooked Lake Township. The community is on the northern tip of Roosevelt Lake and its population includes many senior citizens.

Rep. Gregory Davids (R-Preston) said he would hesitate to support the bill if other banks had expressed interest in opening an office in Outing. But Hasskamp said other banks have not been interested, and residents have generally been supportive of the bank opening in their community.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

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CRIME

Loophole in sex crime law

Unless lawmakers act, Roger Lloyd Zimmerman will slip through the cracks of the state's sex offender registration law.

In July 1996, Zimmerman broke into a Wayzata home and raped a 13-year-old girl who was babysitting for her neighbor. Diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, he had stopped taking his medication and was living in a hole dug in the side of a hill.

Zimmerman told an investigator that he thought the sun was getting closer to the earth, and that the only way to cool things down was to have sex with a woman.

In 1998, Zimmerman was found to have committed the crime, but was found "not guilty by reason of mental illness." He is currently being held at the St. Peter state hospital.

Under the current registration law, Zimmerman is not required to register when released because he was found "not guilty" of first degree criminal sexual conduct, and wasn't committed as a "sexually dangerous person."

Zimmerman was committed for being "mentally ill and dangerous to the public," which does not fall under the notification law.

A bill (**HF228**) that would close that loophole in the state's sex offender registration law was approved Feb. 4 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

The bill would change the law to specifically state that offenders who are charged with crimes listed under the offender registration law but are found not guilty by reason of mental illness are to be registered.

"Offenders like Roger Lloyd Zimmerman are exactly the type of offenders that this law was meant to address in the first place," said Daryl Coppoletti of WATCH, an organization that monitors violent crime cases in the Hennepin County courts.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), the bill's sponsor, said the current law's loopholes were brought to his attention by Coppoletti and WATCH.

Will Alexander, director of community notification for the Minnesota Department of Corrections, said he supports the bill. He said that although the change in the law would affect only a few offenders, it is necessary.

"It's the right thing to do, whether it's two or 200 people," he said.

The sex offender registration law, passed in 1991, requires that offenders register their address with law enforcement officials for 10 to 15 years upon release from prison or commitment.

The bill now goes to the House floor.



EDUCATION

Sex offenders out of schools

Persons convicted of criminal sexual conduct would not be allowed to teach in Minnesota's classrooms, under a bill approved Feb. 2 by the House Education Policy Committee.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji), would require the Board of Teaching to revoke or refuse a teaching license to any person found convicted of criminal sexual conduct in the first to fifth degrees.

Criminal sexual conduct can range from rape (first degree) to exposing genitals in the presence of a minor (fifth degree), as defined by state law.

Under the bill (HF14), courts would have 10 days to notify the Board of Teaching once they know a convicted sex offender is a licensed teacher. The board would then revoke the teacher's license and notify the school board that employs the teacher.

The bill would also allow the state board to refuse to issue or renew licenses to applicants convicted of criminal sexual conduct.

A similar measure exists for school bus drivers.

"Our children are safe on the way to school," said Fuller, who added that his bill would keep children safe in the classroom. He said he is sponsoring the bill because of recent publicized incidents.

Kathy and Tim Schilla of Duluth testified that their daughter had been sexually molested by her third grade teacher in 1984. Kathy Schilla said the teacher, who had molested five other girls, pleaded guilty to two felony counts of criminal sexual conduct. However, she said, he never served his 26-month sentence.

In September 1997, the couple found out that the man was teaching at an elementary school and had taught in other schools since his conviction. He currently teaches at a technical college.

"This is a very important law that needs to be passed so this doesn't happen again," Kathy Schilla said.

Other issues brought up during the hearing included the frequency of criminal background checks of teachers, the types of crimes in-



Kathy and Tim Schilla tell members of the House Education Policy Committee Feb. 2 about their daughter, who was sexually assaulted 15 years ago by her third-grade teacher. The Schillas testified in favor of a bill that would make people convicted of criminal sexual conduct ineligible for a teacher's license.

volved in license revocation, and whether court officials should testify about the bill.

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) also asked if any research had been done about criminal rehabilitation and if offenders' teaching licenses would be revoked permanently despite rehabilitation.

Fuller said that was his intention.

"I am preferring to play on the safe side," he said.

While committee members overwhelmingly approved the bill, many requested that it also be reviewed by the House Crime Prevention Committee before going to the House floor.

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) said it would be best to clear up any questions about criminal law now in order to avoid problems later.

If not, "they'll be chasing down the chief author and asking why your bill doesn't work," Entenza advised Fuller.

The bill now moves to the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Profile of Learning defended

Representatives of the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning defended the Profile of Learning to lawmakers Feb. 4.

Commissioner Christine Jax told members of the House Education Policy Committee that problems with the profile don't necessarily require a legislative fix.

"I'm finding that a lot of the concerns and criticism that our department is getting are based on things that aren't true," Jax said.

Since districts began implementing the Profile of Learning in 1998, some teachers, parents, and legislators have criticized the plan for being too rigorous and time consuming.

Now, Rep. Tony Kielucki (R-Lester Prairie) is sponsoring HF15, a bill that would pare down the profile's requirements.

The Profile of Learning is one part of the state's Graduation Standards initiative, and requires students to complete various learning packages in at least nine areas. Standardized tests comprise the second part of the Graduation Standards.

One of the main problems associated with the Profile of Learning concerns performance packages that students must complete to demonstrate their knowledge of subject matters. The department published several packages to serve as example curriculum for teachers. However, many educators were given the impression that use of the packages is required and have voiced opposition to what they perceive as state-mandated teaching styles.

While Jax said the department never required teachers to use the packages, she did say there has been a lot of miscommunication about profile implementation between her agency and teachers.

"We've not communicated well," she said. "That's something we can change without legislation."

Jax gave an example of a simple chemistry assignment her ninth-grade daughter completed to demonstrate that the profile's requirements might not be as overwhelming as some people have indicated.

"My favorite performance package is one page," she said.

Several legislators expressed skepticism of the profile's record-keeping plans, which have been called burdensome by its critics.

And Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) called the profile an "indictment" of public education and said he's not convinced it is the right plan to help students excel.

"We as legislators are hearing from thousands of people who say this system is not workable," he said.

Department representatives said the Profile of Learning needs time to take effect because schools have not even used the plan for a full year. In addition, 100 percent of school districts chose full implementation of the plan over a phased-in alternative, which they said makes the adjustment period longer.

"I believe it's fixable," Jax said. "It's a new day; it's a new administration."

The Education Policy Committee is expected to take action on Kielkucki's bill soon.

District seeks retroactive OK

Students in Milaca saw their summer come to an early end when state officials authorized their school district to begin classes on Aug. 24, 1998.

The early start date, which violates state law dictating when districts can begin the school year, was requested because the district plans to begin hazardous construction in May, forcing an early end to the school year.

Although the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning granted permission last summer for the early start, the district is still technically in violation of state law because the Legislature did not approve the early date.

But a bill (HF58) approved Feb. 2 by the House Education Policy Committee would rectify that problem.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), would retroactively authorize the Milaca district to begin its school year any day before Labor Day.

Erickson said she was unable to introduce a proactive bill because the district passed its bond referendum for the construction project after the Legislature adjourned from its regular session last year.

But committee members took issue with the bill for two reasons. Some said passing it would set a precedent for retroactive legislation, and others said the Legislature should not even be taking up what they thought should be a local issue.

"I really resent that our state entity has to deal with piddly little matters that really should be under local control," said Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville).

During the 1998 session, Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville) sponsored legislation that would have repealed any state-mandated start dates. That measure failed partly because of heavy opposition from state tourism groups. Instead the Legislature repealed a law that allowed school districts to start only after Labor Day and moved the earliest start date up to Sept. 1 for the 2000-01 school year.

The bill now moves to the House floor.



ELECTIONS

Increasing election eligibility

Should an 18-year-old be eligible to hold an elected office?

That question would be posed to Minnesota voters on the 2000 ballot, under a bill (HF122) discussed Feb. 3 by the House Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Committee.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), sponsor of the bill, advocates amending the Minnesota Constitution, which requires people to be 21 to hold public office.

He said 18-year-olds can vote, serve in the military, get married, borrow money from a bank, and smoke cigarettes — and they should also be able to be a city councilor or a state legislator.

Several committee members expressed support for the bill. Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) said serving in the military is the "ultimate test of adulthood." Three of his friends were drafted at age 18, and all three were killed in the Vietnam War, he said. And he added that if people are old enough to die for their country at that age, they should also be old enough to help set public policy.

Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington) pointed out that even if Minnesota voters approved the constitutional amendment, they would still have other opportunities to vote on whether a person younger than age 21 is mature enough to hold public office.

"If they don't think the 18-year-old can do the job, they would vote for the other candidate," she said.

The bill was referred to an elections subcommittee.



ENVIRONMENT

Feedlot enforcement criticized

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) could do a better job of enforcing animal feedlot regulations, according to a report released Jan. 28 by the Office of the Legislative Auditor.

The agency needs to improve the feedlot regulation program to better serve the interests of both the environment and the livestock industry, the report states.

Among the findings, the auditor concluded that the MPCA needs to draft adequate rules for the program, to make more site visits to inspect proposed feedlots and lagoon construction projects, to provide oversight of manure application practices, and to offer its services in a more timely fashion.

In remarks to the Legislative Audit Commission, Legislative Auditor James Nobles said there are strengths and weaknesses in the agency's performance where feedlots are concerned.

He said one key goal should be getting MPCA staff members out of St. Paul and into the field where the feedlots are located. He also said the agency has to be more flexible and sensitive in dealing with farmers.

One of the major deficiencies in the feedlot regulation program is the lack of administrative rules, said John Yunker, the staff researcher for the auditor who coordinated the report.

Current rules were last updated in 1978 and do not adequately address many important regulatory issues, including land application of manure, manure stockpiling, standards for manure storage structures, the responsibilities of counties participating in the feedlot program, and the locating of feedlots in environmentally sensitive areas.

Yunker said that in an effort to protect the environment, the MPCA has dealt with some of these issues on a case-by-case basis and developed informal practices. Dealing with issues in this manner, however, has burdened the permitting and environmental review processes and caused considerable delays for farmers seeking permit approval.

Yunker also told of one case in which the agency had been inflexible in considering solutions to an odor problem. In that case, a feedlot in the northeastern part of the state used sunflower husks, instead of the legally required straw, to cover a manure holding area.

Although the sunflower husks — which formed a protective layer several inches thick — had the intended effect, the farmer was still fined because he didn't use straw as required.

In her response to the report, Lisa Thorvig, acting commissioner of the MPCA, acknowledged there is "room for improvement" in the agency's performance. She agreed the agency needs more presence in the field and suggested the primary role in feedlot siting and regulation may one day rest with counties.



More guards for "The Body"

Gov. Jesse Ventura would receive beefed-up security protection under his two-year funding proposal for the Minnesota State Patrol.

Col. Anne Beers, State Patrol chief, reviewed the portion of the governor's budget proposal that would finance her department before members of the House Transportation Finance Committee Feb. 3.

The proposal includes funding for four state troopers assigned to protect the governor, his family, and his personal residence in Maple Grove. An additional six Capitol Security guards would also be paid to protect the governor's mansion in St. Paul.

A one-time appropriation of \$200,000 in 1999, and appropriations of \$576,000 and \$546,000 in 2000 and 2001, respectively, would cover the proposed security officers.

But some lawmakers questioned the need for heightened security, recalling that former Gov. Arne Carlson installed an electronic security system in his personal residence while in office rather than having security personnel stationed at the location.

"It seems like we're doing a huge amount of expenditure on his personal residence," said Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska), who chairs the committee.

Beers said Ventura's residence differs significantly from past governors' homes. Ventura's 34-acre ranch in Maple Grove consists of multiple buildings and is surrounded by trees, which requires stepped-up security efforts.

Under the proposed budget, the State Patrol would also receive \$694,000 each year to fund new radio equipment. The equipment currently used by troopers is 14 years old, and the contract has run out on part replacement for those radios.

The money would provide for the implementation of a new equipment system over several years as the state moves to an 800-megahertz network.

In addition to new radio equipment, the State Patrol would receive \$1.6 million to replace a helicopter. The state has three helicopters that it uses to aid other law enforcement agencies in pursuits, traffic control, surveillance, searches, and rescue missions.

Beers also detailed a \$1.6 million request to fund hiring and recruitment initiatives, a budget component she described as "absolutely critical."

The State Patrol estimates that its staff is 30



Col. Anne Beers, chief of the Minnesota State Patrol, presents her department's budget request, which includes a proposal to increase security for Gov. Jesse Ventura, before the House Transportation Finance Committee Feb. 3.

to 35 troopers short of what it should be because of retirements and resignations. Fifty-one troopers are expected to retire this year, and it often takes up to 19 months to hire new troopers, Beers said.

Historically, the State Patrol budget has not designated funds for its training academy. It is funded by not filling positions immediately after troopers retire. By estimating the number of troopers retiring, the department can plan for the cost of training a new class of troopers. But there is a long stretch of time between retiring troopers and training new ones, and that means there is often a shortage of troopers in the state.

Report seeks privatization

Minnesota's minority councils could better serve their constituencies as nonprofit groups rather than as state agencies, representatives of the Center of the American Experiment told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee Jan. 28.

The councils — the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, the Council on Black Minnesotans, the Indian Affairs Council, and the Chicano-Latino Affairs Council — advise the Legislature and governor on issues facing their respective communities.

With the exception of the Indian Affairs Council, which is made up of tribal leaders, the members of the councils are appointed by the governor.

The report stems from a workforce and human rights task force organized by the center as a part of a larger study called Minnesota Policy Blueprint. The larger project puts state government programs to "conservative and free-market tests."

Annette Meeks, director of the Minnesota Policy Blueprint Task Force, said that the task force compared the councils to private foundations with similar missions. She said that the private foundations were successful at assisting their constituents through education and by emphasizing entrepreneurship.

"Indeed, we believe that privatizing these councils could push them a step further, making them more responsive to and valued by their constituents, so that they would seek actually to address the problems that have traditionally only been identified by the government entities," she said.

Juan Martinez of the Chicano-Latino Affairs Council said that the report is unjustified. He said that his agency is constantly seeking input from the community it serves.

"I am somewhat perplexed by the issue of responsiveness coming up as the main reason for privatization," he said.

Yusef Mgeni, president of the Urban Coalition, said that the minority councils have been effective precisely because they are state agencies.

"As a part of state government, the councils of color are able to request information from other state agencies," he said. "They are a tremendous resource, not just for people of color, but for state government."

The Center of the American Experiment is a conservative think tank based in Minnesota.

The committee took no action on the proposal.

Recourse for challenging rules

A joint House and Senate panel would be created to address concerns about administrative rules, under a bill (HF281) approved Feb. 3 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee.

Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), the proposal's sponsor, said the bicameral group would be a smaller version of the former Legislative Commission to Review Administrative Rules, which was abolished in 1996.

"I see it as a check for the public," she said. "It gives them a place to go if they have a problem with rules that have gone amok."

State agencies often promulgate rules that dictate how programs — ranging from environmental protection to health inspections — are administered.

Currently the Legislative Coordinating Commission has the power to address problems with those rules, but Leppik said it has not been involved in reviewing specific rules.

The Legislature has a responsibility to respond to those questions, she said, especially when the body is not in session. And unless a group is formed for that purpose, problems with rules will not be solved, she added.

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) said she supports the bill because the proposed group would not be as large as the old commission, which she said tried to do too much.

But Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) disagreed, saying that forming another panel of legislators isn't necessarily going to make a difference.

HF281 now moves to the House floor.



HEALTH

No faith in autopsies

The death of an infant is a wrenching tragedy, but the real trauma for one Twin Cities family began when they attempted to make funeral arrangements.

In tearful testimony before the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Feb. 2, Gedaliah Oppen told the story of how his daughter, Chana Malka Oppen, died unexpectedly at home in January 1998.

After bearing the initial wave of grief, the family began making plans for a funeral only

to discover to their horror that the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office had planned an autopsy.

Autopsies are forbidden in the Oppen's Jewish faith, which also teaches that a body should be buried within 24 hours of death. For the next three days, the family was caught in a swirl of court activity trying to prevent the autopsy, recover their infant's body, and get on with the funeral and ritual mourning period — *shivah* — to follow.

"Our life was in limbo," Oppen testified to a hushed committee room. "Those two-and-a-half days felt like 100 days. Our life was in ruins."

The Oppens' attorney, Arnie Frishman, told the committee the medical examiner was operating within the parameters of the law, but added that there was no standard to address religious concerns.

As a compromise, Hennepin County officials agreed to conduct MRI and CT scans of the body, both noninvasive procedures. No evidence of anything unusual was found and Frishman thought his clients' nightmare was over.

But it took one final court appearance during which Frishman argued that there was no compelling interest on the part of the state to delay release of the body.

"The Oppens were repeatedly forced to come to court when they should have been mourning," Frishman said. "They paid a real human price."

To prevent similar problems in the future,

Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park) is sponsoring a bill (**HF217**) that would prohibit dissection or autopsy from being performed on a deceased person if the procedure is against the deceased person's religious beliefs.

The bill would also establish standards for how dissections and autopsies are to be performed in such situations and create a procedure for coroners and medical examiners to seek court authorization to perform medical procedures that run against religious beliefs.

"We feel like we were stripped of our rights to act on what we believe," Oppen said. "This bill is too late for our daughter."

Garry Peterson, Hennepin County Medical Examiner, told the committee his office faces similar situations on a regular basis and added that he'll never forget this case.

He said his county has about 3,200 deaths per year and autopsies are performed in about 635 cases. He said the decision to do an autopsy is always a "balancing act," weighing the interests of families with the interests of the state.

If his department didn't do an autopsy and missed a potentially deadly disease that could spread, Peterson said no one would be properly served.

He said his fear regarding the bill is that families potentially could veto an inquiry. The medical examiner is the one best trained to make the determination, he argued.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), a physician and county medical examiner, said he understands the situation and believes something should be done about it, but he shares Peterson's concerns.

He said he will work to find a mechanism in law that would assure the rights of the family and protect the rights of the state.

The committee took no action, but it is expected consider the matter again this session.

Spouses caring for spouses

Lawmakers are considering a measure that would allow medical professionals to receive state payment — in very specific circumstances — to care for their own spouses.

Certain qualified spouses would be allowed to provide private-duty nursing care, under a bill discussed Feb. 2 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), the bill's sponsor, told committee members the story of a family in his district — a husband, wife, and three children.

Haas said the woman worked out of the home as a nurse and her husband played the "Mr. Mom" role. One day, the husband



Gedaliah Oppen, *left*, testifies about the legal mess he faced when he tried to bury his infant daughter according to the laws of his religion. He appeared before the House Health & Human Services Policy committee Feb. 2 in support of a bill that would provide religious exemptions for otherwise mandated autopsies. With him were, *from left*, attorney Arnie Frishman, Rabbi Moshe Turia Lief, and Rabbi Moshe Feller.

suffered an accident and became paralyzed, requiring nearly around-the-clock care from a registered nurse.

Because of a shortage of nurses, the firm that coordinates his care often calls his wife at the last minute and advises her that nobody is available for the upcoming shift.

Haas said the wife is forced to call in to her work at the last minute and then find drop-in day care service for the children, all under the age of four.

Because the woman cannot be paid by the care provider under state law, she loses a day of pay and incurs additional child care costs.

Haas said the couple's church has been helping out, but he said that something has to be done to make the situation more equitable.

Under provisions of the bill, the spouse would have to be a licensed nurse employed by a Medicare-certified home health agency to be paid by the state and could collect for only a limited number of hours. The spouse also would have to pass a criminal background check.

The bill was tabled to consider additional issues, including one raised by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe). Mulder said a similar instance arose in his district, but the care being provided was to a child and not a spouse.

Haas was not averse to making a change, but he said he wasn't sure of the ramifications of the change.

The bill (**HF60**) is expected to come up for further discussion.

Bed rail bill advances

A bill that would spell out when Minnesota nursing home patients could have bed rails was approved Feb. 2 by the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

The bill (**HF40**), sponsored by Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), aims to affirm the rights of patients and their families when dealing with nursing homes, doctors, and the state health department.

Bradley told committee members that the bill needed to be heard and acted upon quickly because people are suffering "very real injuries."

Many nursing homes limited bed rail use last year, after the state health department began fining facilities for what the department feared were improper uses of restraints. A federal law prohibits using bed restraints, including rails, in cases that put patients in "immediate jeopardy."

But some families and doctors became concerned that patients were actually being placed in more danger without the rails in place as safety devices.

Under Bradley's bill, nursing homes would be directed to follow a physician's prescription for physical restraints. The physical safety of a resident would be included as a medical symptom sufficient to warrant a prescription for bed rails.

Bradley said if the bill becomes law, there is a slight risk that the federal government may eliminate about \$2 million in payments made to the state through Medicare.

He added that he is planning to travel to Washington, D.C. soon to garner additional information on that issue.

The bill now moves to the Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Volunteer ambulance crews

If you live in rural Minnesota and need emergency medical services, the person who responds will most likely be a highly trained volunteer.

Volunteer ambulance personnel constitute about 70 percent of all ambulance crews in the state, yet a sufficient definition of exactly who is a volunteer doesn't exist in state law.

That would be remedied under a bill (**HF214**) approved Feb. 2 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), the bill's sponsor, told the committee that the need for a definition grew out of a legal debate over wage and hour laws.

A volunteer for a rural Minnesota ambulance service filed suit claiming he was an employee and not a volunteer, and thus entitled to at least minimum wage.

Under Goodno's bill, "volunteer ambulance attendant" would be a person who provides emergency medical services for a licensed ambulance service, does not expect pay, and does not depend on the provision of these services to earn a living.

However, a person could be considered a volunteer even if they receive an hourly stipend for actual services provided, as long as the amount of the stipend is not over \$3,000 annually.

O.J. Doyle, an emergency medical services consultant from Apple Valley, testified that although the bill seems technical in nature, it is very important.

"If indeed it is determined that those currently identified as volunteer ambulance attendants must be paid minimum wage and overtime, it may cause a serious financial crisis throughout rural Minnesota," he said.

He estimated that if the state's 230 volunteer services were forced to pay salaries, it would cost \$20 million annually. He said current practice is to compensate volunteers on a

per run basis, usually just enough to cover a meal or similar expense.

Volunteer emergency service workers are covered under worker's compensation programs and are also entitled to death benefits coverage.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) stressed the importance of retaining the volunteers, adding that in his area of the state, the ambulance service can go a week or more without a call.

"You can't afford to have full-time people sitting around and waiting for a call," Mulder stressed.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

Health department budget ills

A convergence that proved to be anything but harmonic hit the Minnesota Department of Health in 1998, leaving it with a projected budget shortfall of \$5 million.

Kelli Johnson, who was at the time acting commissioner for the department, told the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Jan. 29 that any of a number of occurrences during the year, taken separately, wouldn't have posed a problem.

"We were looking at the issues in isolation," said Johnson, who was acting commissioner prior to Jan. Malcolm assuming duties Feb. 1.

A large portion of the shortfall, which represents about two percent of the department's \$243 million budget, arose from increased overhead costs, particularly lease and relocation expenses.

Johnson explained that when a lease for existing office space in St. Paul's Midway area expired, the opportunity to lease coveted space in downtown St. Paul arose. Although it was more costly, it helped meet the department's location goals.

The increased lease expenses and moving expenses account for about \$4 million of the shortfall.

Responding to questioning by Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan), Johnson explained that department divisions formerly housed at a University of Minnesota site were also relocated downtown, which freed up space to accommodate renovation of the U of M building, which is owned by the state.

Another \$560,000 was winnowed from the department's budget to help pay for administering federal grants.

Johnson said fewer federal grants include a stipend for administration, necessitating that money to facilitate the grant must come from state revenue.

To help balance the budget, the department

eliminated 50 positions, although 21 of those were already vacant. A search for a new budget director for the department was launched and fiscal monitoring implemented.

Department official Ryan Church told the committee that none of the actions taken jeopardized any of the services or grants the department administers.

Lawmakers were particularly concerned that money appropriated for specific programs, such as breast and cervical cancer screening, was not used to plug the administrative budget.

Johnson said that was not the case.

The shortfall will probably require an appropriation of an additional \$2 million to the department's budget, and Johnson warned that the problem may not be solved.

The lack of administration money for federal grants and the challenges the state is facing in a competitive labor market will continue to be factors in the department's budget, she said.

The committee took no action on the matter.



HIGHER EDUCATION

State colleges seek hike

Morrie Anderson, chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU), threw the first pitch Jan. 29 in his organization's request for an 18-percent budget increase.

Anderson presented an overview of the 53-campus MnSCU system to the House Higher Education Finance Committee as part of its upcoming biennial budget request.

MnSCU includes all of the four-year state universities and the two-year technical and community colleges. The system is governed by a 15-member board of trustees, appointed by the governor.

The merger of the three school systems was directed by the Legislature in 1991 and went into effect in 1995. Thirty-six institutions offer 3,650 programs to about 230,000 students each year.

"We have a little bit of something for almost everybody," Anderson said.

For the 2000-01 biennium, MnSCU will ask the Legislature for a \$230.6 million increase over its adjusted base budget of \$1.01 billion. If granted, the request would be an 18-percent increase of the total MnSCU budget.

State funding accounts for about 46 percent of the system's budget. Student tuition provides almost 28 percent, and various grants and investments make up the rest.

In 1997, MnSCU received a two-year budget of more than \$1 billion from the Legisla-

ture, with funds dedicated toward technology improvements, the strengthening of teacher education, and the creation of targeted industry programs to address worker shortages in the state.

In his overview, Anderson told the committee that MnSCU's graduates constitute 19.5 percent of Minnesota's workforce. He detailed the system's three goals on which its 2000-01 budget request is focused: students, economic development, and competitiveness.

Attracting high schools graduates to the MnSCU system will be a top concern, Anderson said.

"We need to do a better job on that," he said.

In 1997, MnSCU institutions converted to a uniform semester system. There was a 4.3 percent decline in fall 1998 enrollment that officials partly attribute to the shift to semesters. MnSCU's budget request contains \$25.5 million to cover those losses.

MnSCU officials will return in mid-February to formally present their budget request.

Good sports



Members of the North Branch girls tennis team sign autographs for their fans. The team attended a rally along with hundreds of other Minnesota students, coaches, and teachers at the National Girls and Women in Sports Day at the Capitol Feb. 4.



HUMAN SERVICES

Demographics and new demands

The number of Minnesotans over age 65 will double between 2000 and 2030, and providing adequate services for those seniors will increasingly test the resourcefulness of state agencies.

That was the message to lawmakers from Maria Gomez, assistant commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Gomez, who coordinates the department's Aging Initiative, spoke to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Feb. 1.

By 2030, Gomez said, one out of every four Minnesotans will be older than 65, compared to one out of every eight today.

Those seniors will have fewer children to help provide them with support, and most of them won't have personal financial reserves because they're not saving sufficiently now.

All of that means the roughly \$1 billion spent on senior programs annually could soon be insufficient.

Gomez said the services provided are considered a "safety net." She told the committee that keeping as many people as possible from needing that help will be a key to maintaining it.

"We can't afford everyone dropping into our safety net," Gomez said. "There's not enough money in the world for that."

Of particular immediate concern is that the bulk of state funding today is spent on nursing homes. Those facilities receive about three-quarters of the state's total spending on senior programs.

Yet, Gomez said, only 58,000 of the state's estimated 600,000 seniors are served by those facilities. The state needs to spend more money trying to keep seniors in their homes or apartments and should find ways to encourage more people to purchase long-term care insurance, she said.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) said those reforms would be difficult because not enough wage-earners today have a "savings attitude."

"There's no way we can regulate that feature of a person's life," he added. "It's a huge problem."

Gomez said that the state's relatively high institutional occupancy rate is directly related to the lack of affordable housing options that provide support to older persons who can no longer live alone but who do not need medical care and 24-hour help.

"We need to think creatively about ways to combine the many funding streams available

to develop new housing options for older persons who need some supervision,” Gomez added.

The committee took no action on the matter.



LAW

Extending malpractice limits

Following emotional testimony on the effects of medical malpractice, members of the House Civil Law Committee approved Feb. 1 a compromise bill (**HF56**) that would extend the time allowed to file a medical malpractice case.

Current law requires that lawsuits dealing with medical malpractice must be initiated within two years of the occurrence of the malpractice. The bill would allow up to four years to take legal action.

Bill sponsor Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth) said that his bill wouldn't change the standard for malpractice, it would just allow cases to move forward.

“It would simply give the injured Minnesotans, and there are a lot of them, their day in court,” he said.

Mary Beth May, 21, told committee members that she started reporting headaches to her doctor as a middle school student eight years ago. Although May saw the doctor 12 times over the next three years, complaining of migraines, the doctor simply diagnosed them as tension headaches and prescribed anti-inflammatory medication.

After May moved to Colorado, doctors discovered and removed a lemon-sized brain tumor. She spent the next six months in rehabilitation, but doctors have told her that she may never fully recover. May currently has difficulty speaking and has to use a wheelchair.

Because the alleged malpractice occurred well beyond the boundaries of the two-year statute of limitation, May doesn't have a case against the Minnesota doctor who misdiagnosed her illness.

May didn't hide her anger at the physician. “Every day is a difficult day,” she said. “And so much of it could have been avoided if he had done his job. I gave him everything that he needed, and he should have realized something was wrong. Because of that I am stuck in a chair. Something should happen to him.”

Michael Miller of Minnetonka told the committee that if doctors had caught his wife's breast cancer in time she might still be alive.

His wife had a malignant lump removed in 1992. Doctors misread a lab report, and didn't

prescribe further radiation or chemotherapy treatment. When the cancer returned in 1996, Miller and his wife sought a second opinion about a prescribed bone marrow transplant, and discovered the error made in 1992. She passed away last year.

Miller said the lesson he learned was that you need to get several opinions if you want to guard against malpractice. He said without some way to recover for malpractice, everyone will realize that they have to guard themselves.

“If we stay the way we are, the costs are going to skyrocket when patients realize the price they have to pay to get an accurate report,” he said.

Initially, Van Dellen's bill would have set the deadline to file a case at two years from the discovery of the malpractice, not from the occurrence of the malpractice as with the current law. The bill would have placed a six-year limit from the occurrence of the malpractice.

But Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) offered and the committee accepted a compromise amendment that simply extends the current two-year law to four years.

Several medical organizations that initially opposed the bill said that they could live with the compromise.

Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) — who is also sponsoring a bill (**HF42**) to change the statute of limitation for medical malpractice — spoke in favor of Van Dellen's bill.

Last year, two bills extending the malpractice deadline were approved by the House Judiciary Committee, but both stalled before reaching the House floor. Both Van Dellen and Folliard were involved in last year's efforts.

Members of the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee approved the bill Feb. 4. The bill now goes to the House floor.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Government taxing government

Minnesota cities and counties collect property taxes, a portion of which is in turn used to help pay state sales taxes on some purchases made by the municipal governments.

Ending that practice was the topic of discussion Jan. 29 when the House Taxes Committee considered a bill sponsored by Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin).

Haas' proposal (**HF52**) would exempt sales to all local governments from sales tax. It would scrap a laundry list of items that are specifically exempted under current law and replace it with a blanket exemption.

Purchases by state agencies would still be

subject to sales tax.

Haas, who said he's been working on this legislation for five years, told the committee that the Legislature initially approached the cities and counties with the idea of making them subject to sales tax in 1991 when the state was desperately trying to balance its budget. Haas was mayor of Champlin at the time.

In exchange, the state would establish a local government trust fund with a portion of the revenue collected.

Haas said the sales tax was particularly onerous in disaster situations, such as those faced by several cities and counties last year after storms ravaged many communities.

Sales taxes paid annually range from thousands of dollars by small cities to hundreds of thousands of dollars by larger cities and counties.

If the bill passes, the state would lose about \$175 million in revenue over the next biennium.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) said he supports the idea but voiced concerns about how the cities would use the windfall. He said he believes the money should be rebated directly to residents and not “lost in the shuffle” of city and county finances.

Haas said that most likely the amounts saved would be absorbed directly by the local bodies, allowing them to hold the line or reduce property tax levies.

The bill received support from a host of entities that represent cities and counties, but not from committee chair Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka).

Abrams said local government bodies were given the choice of paying income tax or taking a steep cut in state aid and they chose the former.

He said a number of other groups were harmed when the state was short of revenue in the early 1990s and that nothing has been done to make them whole.

He hinted that he would support expanding the existing exemptions to include bonded projects, such as water towers and other essential services, but not projects that compete directly with the private sector.

Haas said he would also like to see certain equipment, such as snow plows, included in the exemptions, if his proposal fails.

The bill will be considered for inclusion in this year's omnibus tax bill.

If you will be visiting the Capitol in the near future, call the Capitol Historic Site Program at (651) 296-2881 to schedule a tour.



TECHNOLOGY

Tax computers need upgrade

Replacing the outdated computer system used at the Minnesota Department of Revenue would not only increase the department's efficiency, it would benefit taxpayers as well.

That's what Bev Driscoll, assistant commissioner of the department, told the House Taxes Committee Jan. 28.

In an age when information travels at light speed, the department is using programs developed nearly three decades ago for keeping track of income taxes and taxpayers.

Driscoll told the committee that can lead to annoying problems. For instance, when a taxpayer makes an error or an apparent error on his or her Minnesota income tax return, it can take up to three years to identify it and contact the taxpayer for more information.

And if the department determines that a taxpayer owes additional taxes, the individual must pay interest and penalties, as well.

Several lawmakers said they believe that is unfair and asked about waiving interest and penalties. Driscoll said it isn't within the power of the 1,230-employee department to do that, but that it would be within the power of the Legislature.

Once a tax return arrives, Driscoll said, it takes 70 days or more for it to be entered into the department's system. The actual work time involved is less than 10 minutes, however.

She also said that at any given time, the department has as many as a half-million invalid Social Security numbers in its system.

The age and low level of sophistication of the computer programs means the state may not be collecting all the money owed. Driscoll estimated there are "hundreds of millions of dollars" in unpaid income taxes, mostly due to unreported income. That estimate comes from federal figures and a study completed in 1994-95 by the University of Michigan.

Additionally, the department's income tax audit program netted only \$30 million in assessments in fiscal year 1997, a figure the department believes to be low.

Driscoll said the department would receive approximately \$8 million for technology upgrades under Gov. Jesse Ventura's proposed budget. Ventura has requested \$85 million in new funding for state agency information technology initiatives, including \$22 million to enhance state agencies' basic information infrastructure.

Ventura's budget also defines a goal of improving online connections between Minnesota's citizens and its government.

Driscoll said the department encourages

taxpayers who are eligible to use the telephone-based filing system, but she said that online filing will not be available for some time. Online or other alternative filing formats would spare the department from having to open the 5.7 million pieces of mail it receives each year now.

The committee took no action on the matter.



TOURISM

Little road on the prairie

A road named after one of Minnesota's most famous authors might be changing its ways.

The Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Highway near Rochester would be rerouted from a U.S. highway to a county highway, under a proposal approved Feb. 4 by the House Transportation Policy Committee. The bill (HF157) is sponsored by Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester).

Currently the specially designated route runs through a mostly commercial area on heavily traveled U.S. highways 14 and 52. If rerouted, it would use a county road and pass by the Olmsted County Historical Society, which is planning to develop exhibits about the famed pioneer author.

The historical center has a log cabin that resembles the one in which the Ingalls family lived. Plans for a prairie restoration project are underway, and the historical society would name the prairie in the author's honor.

The family did not live in the Rochester area, but Pa Ingalls once worked in Olmsted

County harvest fields. And Laura Ingalls Wilder is known to have traveled through the city many times on her trips to neighboring states.

"If you happen to come down to Rochester and drive the Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Highway, I hope you see what a wise decision you've made," David Pennington, president of the historical society's board of directors, told committee members.

The bill now moves to the House floor.



VETERANS

License plate plan passed

A bill that would allow surviving spouses of war veterans to continue purchasing special veterans license plates was passed by the House Feb. 2. The vote was 125-1.

The bill (HF77) had stirred enough debate on the House floor the previous day to be taken off of the Consent Calendar, a spot reserved for non-controversial bills.

At that time, Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul) had questioned whether the bill had the support of veterans' groups, as did a few other House members.

Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) also questioned whether spouses who remarry would still be eligible for the plates.

And when the House eventually passed the bill, it included an amendment, offered by sponsor Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring), that would take away the license plate privileges if a veteran's spouse remarries.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

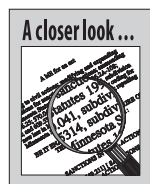
Displaced workers



David Olson, *left*, of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, tells the House Jobs & Economic Development Finance Committee Feb. 3 that he wants the elimination of the tax on businesses that funds the state's dislocated workers program. Teamsters official Don Gerdesmeir, *center*, and Bill Peterson, of the AFL-CIO, call for the program to remain intact. All three disagree with the governor's plan to transfer the program's funds to the state's general fund.

Plan would cut Minnesota taxes, spending, and class sizes

By Grant Martin



Like a line of wrestling fans standing outside the old St. Paul Civic Center, Minnesotans have been anxiously waiting to see the shape and moves of their new governor's administration.

And the first good look came Jan. 28 when Gov. Jesse Ventura delivered his much-anticipated budget proposal.

During a press conference at St. Paul's World Trade Center, Ventura called his plan a "taxpayer's budget."

"I come into today's budget (press conference) feeling no apprehension," he said. "We did a darn good job putting it together."

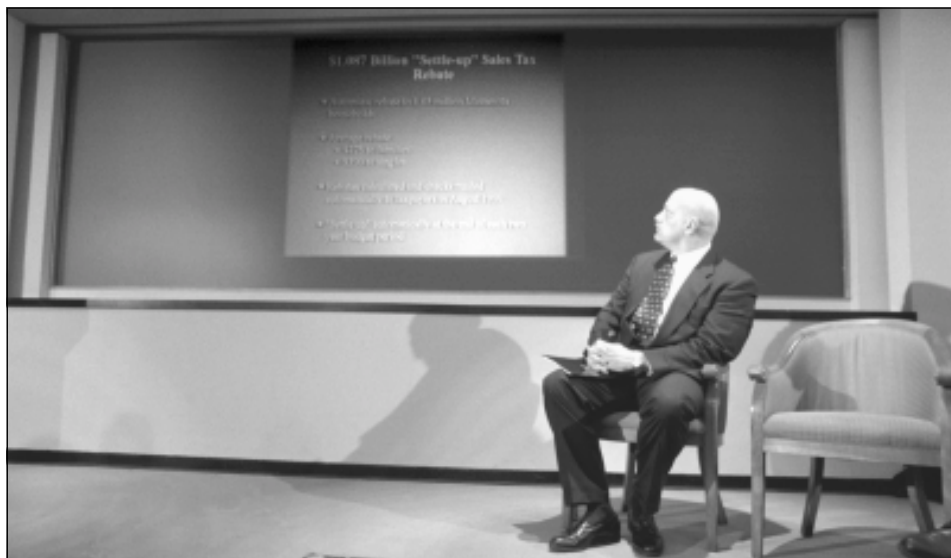
The governor's budget reflects his three priorities — reducing taxes, improving public education, and limiting increases in state spending.

Spending, the governor emphasized, must be tied to the citizens' ability to pay.

The proposed 2000-01 budget would hold increases in state spending to 3.6 percent in the first year and 3.9 percent in the second year. When these numbers are adjusted to account for a proposed vehicle registration tax reduction, increases in state spending would only amount to 2.8 percent the first year and 3.1 percent in the second year.

At the same time, the governor reports, personal spending is projected to increase 4.4 percent the first year and 4.6 percent the second.

While the governor proposes to hold the line on state spending, he also recommends reductions on the revenue side. The budget includes a one-time \$1.1 billion tax rebate plan for 1999, and would provide \$1.37 billion



Gov. Jesse Ventura listens as his commissioner of revenue, Matt Smith, explains a portion of the new administration's budget Jan. 28.

The mechanism for payment would be the 1997 homeowner or renter property tax rebate, which most people filed with their 1997 returns but is available until April 1, 1999, to those who haven't yet filed. The Department of Revenue would send the rebates to taxpayers in Aug. 1999 based on tax data already available — separate tax forms wouldn't be required.

The governor's permanent tax reduction plan would eliminate the so-called "marriage penalty" by altering the tax brackets for married filers.

The budget would also reduce the lowest income tax bracket from 6 percent to 5.8 percent the first year and to 5.75 percent the following year. And the budget would boost the top end of the lowest tax bracket. Overall,

the initial registration. Under the plan, 45 percent of Minnesota passenger vehicles would see a reduction in registration tax.

And as promised in Ventura's campaign, K-12 education would get a boost under the governor's budget. While his plan would increase overall spending by only 3.6 percent in the first year, K-12 spending would be increased by 5.3 percent.

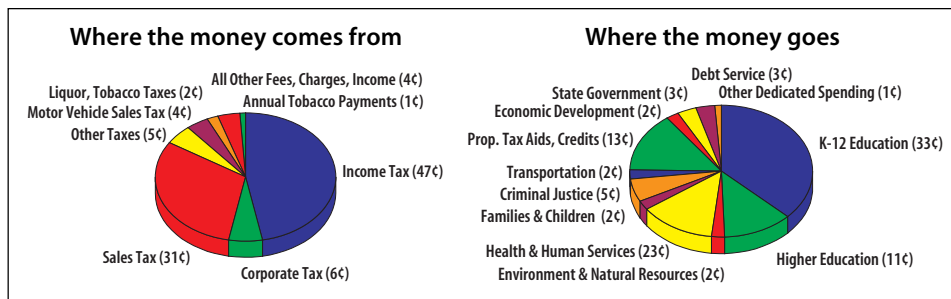
The total K-12 budget would be \$7.7 billion over the 2000-01 biennium, an increase in funding of \$560.6 million.

Of that amount, class-size reduction efforts would see an additional \$150 million on top of the \$87 million in annual spending already dedicated to reductions. The governor wants to see one teacher for every 17 students in kindergarten through third grades. School districts would be required to report their progress in this area.

The governor would also include \$6 million to fund a breakfast program for elementary students and \$4 million to provide for additional instruction time either during or outside of school.

The governor's plan would provide \$258 million to increase the general funding formula by 2.5 percent each year of the budget. The increase would mean an additional \$88 per student in 2000 and \$182 per student in 2001.

With the increases in K-12 funding, the governor's plan would boost the state's share of education funding, relieving pressure on local property taxes. Laws passed in 1998 will increase the state's share from 66 percent in



Source: Executive Budget summary, 2000-01, Office of the Governor.

in permanent and one-time tax cuts over the next two years.

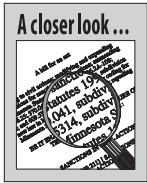
Ventura's sales tax rebate plan would return approximately 35 percent of consumer sales tax paid by households during 1998 and 1999. The average rebate would be \$390 for a single filer and \$775 for a joint filer.

the plan would lead to an average income tax reduction of 6 percent.

The governor's budget also calls for a motor-vehicle registration tax cut. The plan would place a \$75 cap on yearly renewals following

Plan to scrap emissions testing gathers momentum

By Sarah Hallonquist



Motorists in the metro area may soon have one less errand to run before renewing their license tabs next year.

Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View) is sponsoring a bill (HF7) that would end the motor-vehicle emissions inspection program, signed into law in 1988 by then-Gov. Rudy Perpich.

The law was created in response to a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finding that the seven-county metro area's carbon monoxide level exceeded federal and state standards. The program went into effect in mid-1991 for all vehicles built after 1976. Only vehicles used in the metro area are required to undergo inspections.

In 1995, then-Gov. Arne Carlson signed a bill that exempted new cars up to five years old from emissions testing. That measure cut by one-third the number of vehicles required to undergo inspection each year.

Haake's bill, which has the support of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) as well as much of the public, was approved Feb. 2 by the House Transportation Policy Committee. The bill would eliminate the program by July 1, 2000.

Paul Ryan of Burnsville told committee members about the emissions inspections for his 1988 Nissan Pathfinder.

"I really want to tell my story," he said. "I've been frustrated since 1992."

Ryan said that when his vehicle was four years old, it failed an inspection. But he soon discovered that revving his engine during testing could make his car pass.

From his experiences, Ryan concluded that emissions testing only measures vehicles at certain moments in time. Repairs required for passage only help car owners for a brief period of time, he said, adding that he thinks the inspection program is not reliable.

"Even if they say my vehicle is an exception, the system does not work," Ryan said.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) agreed with Ryan. She said her family owns a 1983 Chevrolet Citation and that before she brings it into the emissions testing site, she drives it at 55 mph for about five minutes. That strategy, Molnau said, helps ensure the car passes the emissions inspection.

Emissions inspections cost \$8 per vehicle and are assessed as part of vehicle registration.



Emissions tests, such as the one being performed here, would no longer be required by state law under a bill approved by the House Transportation Policy Committee Feb. 2.

There are nine testing sites in the metro area. In 1991, there were 11 sites, but two closed (White Bear Lake and Brooklyn Park) after the 1995 law reduced the number of vehicles needing testing.

According to the MPCA, nearly 400,000 tons of carbon monoxide have been kept from the air since the emissions inspection program began. And air quality measurements last fall showed that the metro area is not in violation of the federal carbon monoxide standards.

Because of last fall's lower carbon monoxide level, the state agency submitted a request to the EPA last year asking that Minnesota's air quality be brought back up to attainment status. Attainment means that federal carbon monoxide levels in the air have been met.

MPCA officials are hopeful the federal agency will grant their request later this year. But other groups disagree with the pollution control agency's findings.

Phoenix-based EnviroTest Systems is a private firm contracted to perform the emissions testing. Leo Carroll, the company's vice president, told committee members that he opposes terminating the program.

Carroll said he doesn't think air quality has been improved enough yet, and that the growing population and increasing congestion in the metro area will only worsen the carbon monoxide levels in the air, especially if the emissions testing program is repealed.

He also warned the committee that federal transportation funds could be jeopardized. The EPA has the authority to direct the U.S. Department of Transportation to withhold money from states that violate air quality standards. Carroll presented air quality data that conflicted with MPCA's data.

"If you get rid of this program, then you put your federal highway funds at risk," he said.

Pat Bursaw, of the Minnesota Department of Transportation, said the federal money could conceivably be withheld if the state did not reach attainment status with the EPA.

However, she said those funds would only be withheld from the area that was in violation of air quality standards. Since the metro area is subject to the emissions inspections, rural highways would not be affected, which eased some legislators' minds.

Bursaw said the timing of the bill would be an important factor in determining whether funds would be at risk. For fiscal 1999, Bursaw estimated those funds to be about \$117 million.

Gov. Jesse Ventura's biennial budget proposal also calls for the repeal of the emissions inspection program, contingent upon EPA approval. Under the governor's budget, the program would be repealed as of Aug. 1.

The bill now moves to the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee. 🐾

Three parties, three visions, and hopes to find consensus

By Grant Martin

If you were expecting “The Prairie Home Companion,” you might have been disappointed.

Although known worldwide as the spot where Garrison Keillor delivers the news from Lake Wobegon, St. Paul’s Fitzgerald Theater was ground zero of the state budget debate on the evening of Feb. 1.

In a forum sponsored by Minnesota Public Radio, the leaders of the state’s tri-partisan government — Gov. Jesse Ventura, Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine), and House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) — discussed the two-year budget.

In his opening statements, Ventura called his proposed budget “reform and centrist.” He said his goal is to limit the growth of government.

“We realize that there’s a place for government, but we realize that we shouldn’t be expanding its role in our lives,” he said.

Sviggum said that the governor’s budget has too little in the way of tax cuts and too much in the way of spending. But he said House Republicans are committed to finding common ground.

“We are willing to work with you,” Sviggum said.

As the topic moved to tax rebate plans, Ventura criticized the House Republican plan outlined in HF1. Under that plan, Minnesota taxpayers would get a rebate based on income tax paid in 1997.

“In an income tax rebate, you are going to hit 300,000 less families who would participate in the sales tax rebate,” Ventura said. He argued that under the House Republican plan, rebates would be taxed by the federal government. He also said that the Republican plan would provide a rebate to non-Minnesotans who receive an income in the state.

“I just think that the sales tax rebate is the smarter way to go,” he said.

and would be returned.

The governor’s \$1.1 billion plan, however, would not count these payments as surplus. Instead, his plan calls for the repeal of 1998 law that uses \$400 million of surplus funds for bonding projects. A cash-to-bonding plan (HF209) failed on the House floor Jan. 28. Without that piece of legislation, Sviggum said, the Ventura plan would fall considerably short.

Moe said he favors the Ventura sales tax rebate. He said that it would benefit middle-income earners, that it would affect a broader range of taxpayers, and that the rebate caps are reasonable. Moe also supports the governor’s proposal to use the tobacco payments to create endowments. Under the Ventura budget, \$1.3 billion from the tobacco settlement would be set aside in an endowment to fund health and community initiatives.

Ventura believes that these endowments would be a wise investment of a one-time windfall.

“The principal of that money will always be there,” he said. “We will only spend the interest.”

Sviggum disagreed. He said that the basis of the lawsuit was that the taxpayers were forced to shoulder the health care cost of smokers; therefore, taxpayers should be repaid.

“It just seems to me to make common sense that the dollars go back to the premise,” he said. “It goes back to the taxpayers who overpaid.”

Sviggum also said that the settlement includes \$202 million that must go to programs that assist smokers. He wants the state to see how it will handle those funds before committing even more.

Fitting to the venue, a member of the audience asked the panel about proposed funding cuts for public radio contained in the governor’s budget.

Under Ventura’s budget plan, subsidies for public radio and public television would be phased out over the next three years.

Moe and Sviggum agreed that the governor’s plan might be too sweeping. Both said it would leave some areas of the state without radio or television service.

Addressing the audience member, who said she is “addicted” to public radio, Ventura said that the burden of public radio should fall upon those who use it, not the entire state.

“If you love public radio, then contribute,” he said. That comment prompted an audible response from several in the audience.

“We do!” they replied.

“Well, then contribute a little more,” Ventura responded. 🐼



House Speaker Steve Sviggum, second from left, emphasizes a point on one aspect of Gov. Jesse Ventura’s proposed budget during a Minnesota Public Radio-sponsored forum at St. Paul’s Fitzgerald Theater Feb. 1. Ventura, right, and Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe also participated. Gary Eichten, left, of Minnesota Public Radio, moderated the event.

Ventura said that lobbyists and special interests were not included in budget considerations. He said that his proposal aims at creating a streamlined state government.

“We wanted to do what was necessary, not necessarily what was nice,” he said.

Moe said the governor and the Senate DFLers are “on the same page.” However, there are some points of disagreement, specifically the \$10 million in the governor’s proposal to assist farmers and Ventura’s plan to repeal last year’s law that spends surplus cash for bonding projects.

“Certainly, we don’t think there’s adequate resources for the farm crisis we are facing,” Moe said. “And we don’t think we should be spending the bonding money.”

Sviggum said that under the income tax rebate, 150,000 more people would collect a rebate than under Ventura’s plan. He also said that two-thirds of taxpayers receiving rebates under the Republican plan would not be taxed by the federal government because those people do not itemize their federal tax returns.

And Sviggum said that the income tax rebate plan is more fair because the rebates are more proportional to amounts paid.

“It does seem to be fair to get the dollars to the people who paid,” he said.

Sviggum challenged the total amount of the governor’s rebate. Under the Republican \$1.1 billion rebate plan, the first tobacco settlement payments would be counted as surplus,

Lawmakers hear Microsoft exec. describe the road ahead

By Jon Fure



Advances in computer technology will make businesses more efficient and more profitable in the near future, according to a Microsoft executive.

Jon DeVaan, vice president of Microsoft's desktop applications division and a former Minnesota legislative intern, said that same technology can

dramatically improve how governments operate.

DeVaen spoke to lawmakers and staff at the Minnesota History Center Feb. 3 as part of this year's Capitol Forum series, sponsored by the McKnight Foundation and Minnesota Technology, Inc.

DeVaen made several predictions related to the use of technology and its potential effects on government in the next five years.

His predictions focused on how increased performance of computer hardware and software will lead to reduced costs of doing business.

Among the benefits to businesses will be more opportunities to purchase products directly from producers, instead of through "middle people," he said. Small businesses will be able to expand, creating opportunities for growth and new jobs.

Internet infrastructure will improve, he said, with dramatically higher speed capacity. Telephone and cable television companies will soon be introducing technology that will accommodate more users on the Internet, and information will be accessible faster. He described wireless high-speed connectivity as a "dark horse" technology set to develop rapidly.

Business on the Internet will increase by 500 percent, DeVaen predicted, and the number of personal Internet users will double, bringing the number of households with Internet access to 80 million.

One reason some companies or people do not use the Internet is because of the paradox between easy access and privacy. While shopping or banking on the Internet is convenient, many fear it also creates opportunities for hackers to gain access to personal or corporate accounts. DeVaen predicts those issues will be resolved.

Also, computer prices will continue to drop, he said, which will enable more and more



Microsoft's Jon DeVaan apprises lawmakers and staff of potential benefits from anticipated advances within the computer industry. DeVaen spoke at the Minnesota History Center Feb. 3 as part of the 1999 Capitol Forum series.

people to afford the new technology. High performance personal computers are now available for less than \$500, he said, and he expects those prices to continue to drop. DeVaen said personal computers will soon be able to do all tasks necessary for business, including those that are now done by larger computers.

Software capability will also continue to grow, DeVaen said. He said he could not describe all the advances we will see in the next five years, comparing it to looking at the first "horseless carriage" in the early 1900s and trying to imagine freeways.

One example he showed was an "e-book," which is about the size of one hardcover book but contains five books using only a fraction of its capacity. DeVaen took several thick books from behind the podium, slammed them on a table.

"You can choose to have your information

here or," he said, holding up the e-book, "here."

The effects of technology on government, particularly for legislators, will be an "amazing access to information and low-cost publishing," DeVaen said.

He recommended that every legislator have an official Web site because it will enable them to get their message directly to constituents. The effects will include new levels of public participation and improved service to constituents.

DeVaen described legislators as "power knowledge workers," who have to communicate with a large number of people every day.

After the presentation, several audience members asked questions about DeVaen's predictions and other technology issues. Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center) asked if prices of laptop computers will drop along with those of desktop computers.

DeVaen said higher-end features tend to be added to laptop computers, which keeps the prices higher than desktop models, but prices are dropping. When they were first developed, some laptops cost more than \$10,000, whereas now they are available for \$1,500 to \$6,000.

When another audience member asked if DeVaen could predict the outcome of a pending anti-trust lawsuit against Microsoft, DeVaen replied, "I predict that I shouldn't answer that question."

However, he added that there will probably be an appeal regardless of the outcome and that the matter will ultimately be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Michael O'Keefe, newly appointed commissioner of the Department of Human Services, said the improvements in software have required constant learning and relearning, and he asked, "Is it ever going to stop?"

"Our potential is limited only by our imagination, and I hope you can appreciate that we haven't imagined everything yet," DeVaen said. "It is our work to be improving (software) all the time. One of the things that drives us is to make it simpler to allow more people to use it."

He later addressed legislators in the audience and said, "We'll stop changing software when you stop passing laws." 🐼

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

Mahoney working for bright future on the East Side

By Sarah Hallonquist

A self-described “street fighter,” Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) said he is getting to know some different rules to work in the Legislature.



Rep. Tim Mahoney

“The East Side kid in me sometimes has to learn to shut the door and take a deep breath,” said Mahoney, 45, who was born and raised in St. Paul’s East Side neighborhood. He has lived there all but nine years of his life.

A seat in the Legislature is a switch for Mahoney, a union pipe fitter with the St. Paul Pipefitters Local 455. After graduating from Harding High School in 1971, he attended St. Paul Technical College. He has done work in all kinds of buildings, from nuclear reactor sites to apartment complexes to the Judicial Center in the Capitol complex.

He said he’s prepared for a lot of on-the-job-training as a lawmaker.

“There’s no road map for this kind of job,” said Mahoney, who acknowledges that working behind a desk — rather than carrying a tool box — each day is something different.

Unlike pipe fitting, he said, legislative work doesn’t always allow him to know what his day will entail. So far, Mahoney said his new job has met and exceeded his expectations. While overwhelming at times, he’s not intimidated.

“This isn’t supposed to be rocket science,” he said.

Mahoney’s legislative priorities reflect his strong connection to his district. During his

campaign, he championed causes such as neighborhood and school safety, affordable housing, public education, and economic development. Many of those issues are key to the East Side, where many low- and moderate-income families live.

“It warms your heart to think you can have an impact,” he said. “Very few people get to say that.”

In the House, Mahoney wants to work on efforts to reduce youth crime and increase economic development in areas throughout the state. He also wants to help the growing community of Southeast Asian immigrants in his district.

The East Side includes Swede Hollow, an area that was home to many immigrant groups over the years. First, European immigrants including Swedes and Germans lived in the area. Later immigrant groups to live in Swede Hollow came from Mexico and Central America.

The ramshackle housing was cleared from the hollow years ago, but Mahoney sees the example of those earlier immigrant groups as an indication of what is possible for current newcomers to his district. He said today’s immigrant groups must have at least the same chances for success as their predecessors.

“It’s now the Southeast Asians’ turn to march through the East Side,” Mahoney said.

He serves on the House Civil Law, Family & Early Childhood Education, and Crime Prevention committees. He has not introduced any bills on his own yet because he wants to learn the process in full “before jumping in with both feet.” However, he is co-sponsoring nearly a dozen bills.

When the chance came up last year to run for the seat being vacated by former Rep. Jim Farrell, Mahoney jumped at it, knowing it was a rare opportunity.

“I made the decision to step in and see if I could help people from my side of town,” he said.

Farrell, who lost the race for Ramsey County attorney in November 1998, held the historically DFL-friendly District 67A seat for four terms. Mahoney knew the primary race would be the toughest part of his campaign; he faced three other Democrats in September 1998.

“I didn’t have any clue I was going to win until September 15 at about 8:15 p.m.,” he said of his victory.

Mahoney’s door-knocking, neighborhood work, and many endorsements paid off in the general election, too. He beat out the Republican and Reform Party candidates with 59 percent of the vote.

Mahoney is a single parent with two daughters, ages 11 and 19. During his spare time, Mahoney keeps busy with home improvements, baking, and reading. He said he’s somewhat of a history buff, with a particular interest in the Civil War.

District 67A

1995 population: 32,769

Largest city: St. Paul

County: Ramsey

Location: inner city

Top concern: “Youth crime, chemical dependency, child care, and economic development are really big issues that affect the East Side.”

— Rep. Tim Mahoney

Continued from page 14

1999 to 68.4 percent in 2000. The governor’s budget would increase that share to 69.6 percent in 2000.

The governor makes several recommendations concerning the state’s tobacco settlement money. Between this year and 2003, the state will receive \$1.31 billion in one-time settlement payments and \$574 million from annual payments.

The governor wants lawmakers to view the settlement payments aside from the normal state budget considerations, not as general revenues.

Under the Ventura budget, the \$1.31 billion in payments would be divided for a non-profit

foundation and three health-related endowments. The funds would be invested so that the principal would never be touched.

A Minnesota families foundation would be founded with \$600 million of the settlement money, and would provide grants to organizations promoting independence from government programs.

Another \$450 million would create two endowments to fund medical education and research, one at the University of Minnesota and one for statewide institutions. The remaining \$260 million would fund an endowment that would provide financial assistance to the state’s 49 community health boards.

In his letter accompanying the budget, Ventura promises voters that his administration will only grow stronger and its moves more spectacular as it gets more comfortable in the political ring.

“This proposal reflects only the initial budget,” he said. “The differences in this administration’s approach to governing will be even more evident in future budgets when I’ve had two years, instead of two months, to review programs.”

Whirlwind campaign helps Storm touch down in House

By Jon Fure

When new Rep. Julie Storm (R-St. Peter) began campaigning for the 1998 House election, she told people she had "more energy than a spring thunderstorm."



Rep. Julie Storm

She couldn't have known that soon tornadoes would cause major destruction throughout her district, but after those disastrous storms in April 1998, she wondered if her words would come back

to haunt her.

"I was fearful that it would work against me, but it worked for me," she said.

She said she attended as many public meetings and events as possible and knocked twice on every door in her district — which includes parts of Nicollet, Le Sueur, and Blue Earth counties. She said several people she met on the campaign trail made comments such as, "Storm — from St. Peter — I can remember that."

The destruction in Storm's district attracted media attention from around the country. Many volunteers helped the communities clean up the damage, and state and federal governments sent millions of dollars to help pay for rebuilding efforts.

The publicity also brought a few onlookers to check out evidence of the power of Mother Nature. At least one visitor decided that a Storm campaign sign would make a good souvenir.

Storm said she received one telephone call

from a man who wanted a new yard sign because he had given his to a passerby who asked for it. Although Storm was happy to replace the sign, she told the man if anyone else asked for the sign, he should ask if they wouldn't mind waiting until after the election.

The outside assistance and the residents' working together were among the positive outcomes of the disaster, Storm said. The neighborly climate was apparent in many ways, including two churches — one Lutheran and one Catholic — sharing a sanctuary while repairs were made to one of the buildings. Neighbors were often seen talking and lending each other a hand.

"It really brought the town together," Storm said.

Many homeowners have been repairing their houses with an eye for restoring historic character, Storm said. Open front porches and other vintage features are re-appearing on homes that have been modernized over the years. Storm predicts St. Peter will soon look better than ever.

Her love of historic architecture is apparent in her business, the Engesser House bed & breakfast. The Victorian-style home was built in the 1880s by Joseph Engesser, she said. The Engesser family came from Germany to start a brewery, which they operated in St. Peter from 1857 to 1942. Storm and her husband restored the home and converted it into a bed & breakfast in 1994.

Storm has been active in the St. Peter Chamber of Commerce and served three years as chair of the area's tourism bureau.

Gustavus Adolphus College is St. Peter's

main attraction, and the city also includes the Treaty Site History Center, where the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux and other historic treasures are on display.

Storm has also been president of the Minnesota River Valley Scenic Byway Alliance, a group made up of volunteers and local government representatives that promotes sites along much of the river valley. The river scenery includes everything from rolling farmlands in southern Minnesota to rocky areas near Granite Falls, and there are many tourist attractions and recreational areas, she said.

Before moving to St. Peter, Storm owned and operated her own interior design business in Florida for 10 years.

Her business background led to her being chosen as vice chair of the House Jobs and Economic Development Committee. In that role, Storm said she hopes to advocate tourism as a way to promote jobs and economic development, especially in Greater Minnesota.

Her primary concerns include returning the state tax surplus to residents, reducing class sizes in elementary schools, and increasing state assistance for agriculture.

District 24B

1995 population: 34,922

Largest city: St. Peter

Counties: Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Nicollet

Location: south-central Minnesota

Top concern: "Returning the tax surplus to residents and increasing the budget for agriculture at a time when it is needed so much."

— Rep. Julie Storm

Frequently called numbers

(All numbers are area code 651)

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol 296-0271

Voice mail/order bills 296-2343

Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate

110 Capitol 296-2887

Index, House

211 Capitol 296-6646

Information, Senate

231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House

175 State Office Building 296-2146

Committee Hotline, Senate 296-8088

Committee Hotline, House 296-9283

Sergeant at Arms, Senate

Senate Chamber 296-7159/6-1119

Sergeant at Arms, House

45 State Office Building 296-4860

Legislative Reference Library

645 State Office Building 296-3398

Revisor of Statutes

700 State Office Building 296-2868

Governor's Office

130 Capitol 296-3391

Attorney General's Office

102 Capitol 296-6196

Secretary of State's Office

180 State Office Building 296-9208

Capitol Security

B-4 Capitol 296-6741

Emergency

296-2100

TTY*, Senate

296-0250

Toll free 1-888-234-1112

TTY*, House

296-9896

Toll free 1-800-657-3550

House chaplain offers spiritual support for lawmakers

By Paul Wahl

When the Rev. Lonnie E. Titus of Apple Valley was named House chaplain, he had only a passing familiarity with the position. But he certainly didn't expect it to be controversial.

However, just three days into the legislative session, a debate over new House rules included the passage of an amendment to require that prayers offered by the chaplain and visiting chaplains be "nondenominational" and "reflect the diversity of the House."

The controversy was sparked by repeated references to Jesus Christ in a song included in opening-day ceremonies. Several House members said the song did not fit the occasion and they expressed concerns about future religious references.

Titus, an ordained Assemblies of God minister, said he doesn't have a problem with abiding by the wishes of the majority who supported the rule change.

"If I do use 'Jesus' in a prayer, it will certainly be unintentional," said Titus, adding that it's difficult to undo a lifetime of training in a few short weeks. "Some things you say by default."

An official letter, containing a reminder to be circumspect, will be sent to all visiting House chaplains.

Beyond the issue of prayer content, Titus said his overriding goal is to be a friend to House members.

"Those in high positions have high pressures," Titus said. "Often they don't know who their friends are."

Titus said he believes that eventually everyone needs God.

"Then people look for a friend, someone who has expressed selfless friendship, who doesn't push his religion but is ready and willing to be there in time of need," he said.

Titus first heard of the House chaplain position last fall after he resigned his position as executive outreach pastor at Mount Olivet Assembly of God in Apple Valley to begin his own independent ministry — called Reaching Entrepreneurs and Politicians or REAP.

He said his interest in politicians goes back to his early years pastoring in his native North Dakota.



Newly appointed House Chaplain Lonnie E. Titus leads the prayer to open a House floor session.

One day, when reading a passage in 1 Timothy that encourages Christians to pray "for all that are in authority," he felt a twinge of guilt.

"I was pretty good at criticizing, but not too good at praying," Titus said.

He began a daily routine of praying for city, county, and state officials and began learning their names and taking an interest in the political scene.

"Things began to happen," Titus said, noting that opportunities to interact with public officials arose, including relationships with two North Dakota governors — one a Democrat and one a Republican.

Titus grew up in Mohall, N.D., and earned an associate's degree in business accounting at North Dakota State University-Bottineau prior to attending Trinity Bible Institute in Ellendale, N.D., which is operated by the Assemblies of God.

He served as youth pastor at an Assemblies of God church in Moorhead, then as senior

pastor for churches in Mott, Kulm, and Williston, N.D.

He returned to Minnesota in 1994 and served as the national crusade director for Lowell Lundstrom Ministries in Burnsville before joining Mount Olivet.

He has also served several volunteer hospital and police chaplaincies, as an adviser for a battered women's council, and as a National Guard chaplain, among other community positions.

Before the session began, Titus submitted his name to a committee that advanced chaplain choices to House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon). He had strong recommendations from members of his community, politicians, and business associates.

"I think they liked my desire to be supportive of all the legislators," Titus said. "I'm not a political person. I can work with both sides of the aisle."

Titus said the work is ideal for him because he doesn't have commitments to a church and congregation.


REAP is an independent ministry outreach dedicated to reaching leaders in the community with a message of hope and support, Titus said.

He attends a Wednesday morning Bible study conducted by Rep. Arlon Lindner (R-Corcoran) and is open to starting additional Bible studies at different times to serve the needs of legislators and staff.

In the Minnesota House, the chaplain is elected — along with other officers — by the full body.

A chaplain has been a part of the House since its inception in 1857. John Penman was the first to serve in that capacity.

Today, the chaplain is paid \$1,500 for his service during the legislative session. Visiting chaplains, often pastors recommended by House members, are paid \$25. If the House chaplain offers the prayer, he is paid the \$25.

The practice of paying a chaplain with public funds has been challenged in the courts on several occasions. Most recently, in 1983, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a legislative body retaining a chaplain didn't violate the establishment of religion clause of the Bill of Rights and contended that the opening prayer was "a part of the fabric of society." 

Bill Introductions

HF386-HF529

Monday, Feb. 1

HF386—Erickson (R) **Education Policy**

State Board of Teaching member confirmation process modified.

HF387—Skoglund (DFL) **Crime Prevention**

Retailers required to record serial numbers of goods purchased with a credit card.

HF388—Nornes (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Office of Tourism appropriated money.

HF389—Nornes (R) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Fergus Falls tax increment financing district expenditures authorized.

HF390—Davids (R) **Commerce**

Credit union tax exempt provisions eliminated.

HF391—Seifert, J. (R) **Civil Law**

Punitive damages limited in cases involving Food and Drug Administration approved products or devices.

HF392—Solberg (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Office of Tourism promotional activities funded and money appropriated.

HF393—Finseth (R) **Taxes**

Lawful gambling tax rates reduced.

HF394—Greiling (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Lobbyist reporting requirements modified and conduit funds regulated.

HF395—Dawkins (DFL) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Municipalities required to request a primary design from the state designer selection board for certain projects.

HF396—Howes (R) **Taxes**

Clothing repair and alterations sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF397—Knobloch (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

State legislator election provided without party designation.

HF398—Howes (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Hubbard County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF399—Kielkucki (R) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Home rule charter and statutory cities authorized to establish sidewalk utilities.

HF400—Winter (DFL) **Agriculture Policy**

Pork producer emergency support payments provided and money appropriated.

HF401—Mulder (R) **Taxes**

Agricultural land general education levy exemption provided and general education aid increased.

HF402—Finseth (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

Secondary vocational program funding restored and money appropriated.

HF403—Ness (R) **Education Policy**

Uniform minimum school year length established.

HF404—Erickson (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

Advanced placement and international baccalaureate programs funded, and money appropriated.

HF405—Johnson (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

School district deferred maintenance equalized discretionary aid and levy created, and money appropriated.

HF406—Howes (R) **Crime Prevention**

Firearms; right to keep and bear arms for certain purposes not abridged, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF407—Skoglund (DFL) **Crime Prevention**

Misdemeanor prosecution pilot grant program established at Minnesota law schools to enhance education and training, and money appropriated.

HF408—Goodno (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Practice of pharmacy definition modified and patient counseling defined.

HF409—Skoglund (DFL) **Crime Prevention**

Criminal gang definition expanded.

HF410—Entenza (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Correctional employees retirement plan service credit provided.

HF411—Tomassoni (DFL) **Commerce**

Steel; President requested to ban imported steel products from certain countries.

HF412—Schumacher (DFL) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Deer and elk hunting allowed in shooting preserves.

HF413—Mulder (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Physician, acupuncturist, and athletic trainer licensing and registration requirements modified.

HF414—Gunther (R) **Agriculture Policy**

Swine pseudorabies control program extended and money appropriated.

HF415—Rhodes (R) **Taxes**

Gold and silver coins and bouillon sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF416—Rhodes (R) **Commerce**

Local telephone service interference investigation and improvements required.

HF417—Hasskamp (DFL) **Taxes**

Resort improvement construction equipment and materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF418—Hasskamp (DFL) **Taxes**

Temporary and seasonal resorts property tax classification requirements modified.

HF419—Wenzel (DFL) **Transportation Finance**

Northstar corridor extension from St. Cloud to Little Falls feasibility studied and money appropriated.

HF420—Haas (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Brooklyn Park; housing improvement area established.

HF421—Haas (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Hennepin County authorized to convey tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF422—Clark, K. (DFL) **Taxes**

Vitamin, mineral, and whole food supplement sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF423—Daggett (R) **Civil Law**

Independent motor vehicle contractor income withholding for child support purposes clarified.

HF424—Westfall (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Living-at-home/block nurse program expanded and money appropriated.

HF425—Stanek (R) **Judiciary Finance**

Northwest Hennepin Human Services Council community law enforcement project funded and money appropriated.

HF426—Rukavina (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

BWCA and Superior National Forest; President and Congress memorialized to expedite state and federal land exchange for the purpose of enabling proper discharge of each government's management duties.

HF427—Kahn (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Computerized voting studied by the secretary of state and money appropriated.

HF428—Kahn (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Volunteer firefighter pension association and retirement fund created, reports required, and money appropriated.

HF429—Bradley (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Programs for persons with developmental disabilities alternative licensing system pilot project duties transferred to the Region 10 Quality Assurance Commission, federal waiver request required, and money appropriated.

HF430—Kahn (DFL)**Commerce**

St. Paul authorized to issue a temporary license to sell beer on State Capitol grounds in connection with the Twin Cities Marathon.

HF431—Howes (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Tax-forfeited land sale and rental proceeds apportionment provision eliminated.

HF432—Orfield (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Minneapolis Teachers Retirement Fund Association members permitted to designate a supplemental needs trust as an optional annuity beneficiary.

HF433—Howes (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Cass County authorized to exchange and sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF434—Opatz (DFL)**Capital Investment**

Paramount Arts District Regional Arts Center previous appropriations grant recipient name corrected.

HF435—Milbert (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

MSRS; service credit purchase authorized for a certain member.

HF436—Mares (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

State Patrol Retirement Fund and Public Employees Retirement Association early retirement provisions modified, and certain consolidations provided.

HF437—Abrams (R)**Taxes**

Taxes and tax administrative provisions modified, and Internal Revenue Code conforming changes provided.

HF438—Swenson (R)**Capital Investment**

Independent School District No. 2887, McLeod, previous grant provision modified.

HF439—Orfield (DFL)**Commerce**

Minneapolis authorized to issue an on-sale liquor license to Dudley Riggs Theatre.

HF440—Abrams (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Teachers Retirement Association sabbatical leave service credit purchase authorized for a certain member.

HF441—Knobloch (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Campaign finance provisions modified.

HF442—Reuter (R)**Transportation Policy**

Freeway metered ramp study required and money appropriated.

HF443—Greenfield (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nonprofit health care trust defined, agreements and transactions with noncharitable entities regulated, and financial statement information specified.

HF444—Stang (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Sauk River Watershed District administrative funds levy authorized.

HF445—Abrams (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Minnesota Federation of Teachers retired employee benefits election permitted, and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System required to pay increased costs.

HF446—Kuisle (R)**Transportation Finance**

Passenger automobile registration tax depreciation rate decreased, and motor vehicle sales tax revenue allocated.

Tuesday, Feb. 2**HF447—Winter (DFL)****Agriculture Policy**

Livestock price discrimination prohibited and civil penalties provided.

HF448—Seifert, J. (R)**Civil Law**

Intrusion upon seclusion, appropriation, and publication of private facts actions two-year statute of limitations established.

HF449—Broecker (R)**Judiciary Finance**

Ramsey County All Children Excel (ACE) project start-up funded and money appropriated.

HF450—Jaros (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Duluth tax increment financing district pooling authorized.

HF451—Broecker (R)**Judiciary Finance**

Dodge-Fillmore-Olmsted, Arrowhead regional, and Ramsey County community corrections agencies productive day initiative programs expanded to include juveniles, and money appropriated.

HF452—Koskinen (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

MinnesotaCare eligibility requirements exemption provided for persons terminated from continuation coverage.

HF453—Koskinen (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Minneapolis required to enroll trades and electrical workers, stagehands, production technicians, and apprentices in the deferred compensation plan.

HF454—Seifert, M. (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nursing home administrator requirements modified.

HF455—Biernat (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Secondary students public transportation grants provided to school districts and money appropriated.

HF456—Juhnke (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Trunk Highway No. 12 reconstruction between Delano and Wayzata included in the statewide transportation plan and improvements program.

HF457—Solberg (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Senior citizen drug program appropriated money.

HF458—Skoe (DFL)**Education Policy**

Rural teacher loan forgiveness program established and money appropriated.

HF459—Carlson (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

High-occupancy vehicle lanes prohibited on I-394 and reversible one direction lanes designated.

HF460—Smith (R)**Civil Law**

Custodial parent child support and public assistance accounting required upon request.

HF461—Smith (R)**Civil Law**

Child support, custody, and visitation orders six-month review required.

HF462—McGuire (DFL)**Civil Law**

Seat belt and child restraint system use civil action evidence admissibility provisions clarified.

HF463—Davids (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Ambulance services and first responders review provided.

HF464—Jaros (DFL)**Jobs &****Economic Development Policy**

Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center bonds refunded.

HF465—Ozment (R)
Crime Prevention

Firefighter training and education board created, training reimbursement program established, and money appropriated.

HF466—Schumacher (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Zimmerman wastewater treatment facility repair funded and money appropriated.

HF467—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Medicare certification exemption allowed for nursing facilities under certain circumstances and criteria specified.

HF468—Dorn (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Emergency medical services fund appropriation automatic inflation adjustment provided.

HF469—McGuire (DFL)
Crime Prevention
DWI; maximum allowable blood alcohol level lowered for operation of a motor vehicle, recreational vehicle, aircraft, and while hunting or handling explosives.

Wednesday, Feb. 3

HF470—Larson, D. (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Term limits imposed on legislative and constitutional offices, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF471—Knoblach (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
St. Cloud Police Consolidation Account special one-time postretirement adjustment provided.

HF472—Harder (R)
Taxes
Windom Multipurpose Center construction materials and supplies sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF473—Harder (R)
Education Policy
High school diploma warranty coverage exception provided for students refusing to repeat a grade.

HF474—Vandever (R)
Taxes
Property tax rebate for senior citizens made permanent and money appropriated.

HF475—Stang (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Costs and legal fees reimbursement provided for defense against criminal charges arising from performance of duties by town officers or employees.

HF476—Juhnke (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Ambulance services and first responder standards modified; emergency medical technicians, medical response units, and emergency medical technician instructor certification and training program approval required; and penalties imposed.

HF477—Carruthers (DFL)
Education Policy
Virtual school district created and money appropriated.

HF478—Haas (R)
Commerce
Structured settlement payment rights protected related to tort or workers' compensation claims.

HF479—Westrom (R)
Agriculture Policy
Agricultural producer contract advisory task force established; livestock, agricultural commodity, and specialty crop contracts studied; and money appropriated.

HF480—Workman (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Carver County intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR) reconfiguration project authorized.

HF481—Marko (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Washington County; Grey Cloud Island State Park plan proposal required.

HF482—Pelowski (DFL)
Education Policy
K-12 supervisory personnel required to teach at least one one-term course per school year as a condition of licensure.

HF483—Tuma (R)
Education Policy
Special education provisions modified and rulemaking provided.

HF484—Paulsen (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Initiative and referendum implementation act adopted, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF485—Tomassoni (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School district declining pupil unit aid established and money appropriated.

HF486—Bakk (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Riparian landowners and aircraft operators allowed bulk delivery of nonoxygenated gasoline.

HF487—Storm (R)
Agriculture Policy
Foreign ownership of agricultural land used for poultry production allowed.

HF488—Greiling (DFL)
Education Policy
Special education provisions modified and rulemaking provided.

HF489—Carruthers (DFL)
Civil Law
Civil commitment standards and procedures clarified, and mentally ill and dangerous person commitment procedures modified.

HF490—Tuma (R)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Child guide prevention program appropriated money.

HF491—Rukavina (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Secondary student technical training program funded at the Mesabi Range Community and Technical College, and money appropriated.

HF492—Dorn (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
Mankato State University authorized to construct the Taylor Center multipurpose facility.

HF493—Greiling (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School district teacher training and experience revenue restored, and money appropriated.

HF494—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Emergency deer feeding funds disposition modified.

HF495—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Nonpaved alternative trails developed adjacent to the Heartland Paul Bunyon State Trails, and money appropriated.

Thursday, Feb. 4

HF496—Hilty (DFL)
Commerce
Farm winery sales regulations modified.

HF497—Rest (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Runoff election created for congressional, state legislative, or constitutional offices if no candidate receives a majority of the votes; and money appropriated.

HF498—Erhardt (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Patient services definition clarified for the purpose of the MinnesotaCare provider tax.

HF499—Seifert, J. (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Health care provider reimbursement and nonadministrative staff pay increased, and money appropriated.

HF500—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Nonmetropolitan county prepaid medical assistance (MA) and prepaid General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) program contract rates increased.

HF501—Davids (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nursing home licensed bed inactive status provided, and moratorium on facility monetary penalties established.

HF502—Osskopp (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Wabasha County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF503—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Little Fork community center, recreation complex, and grandstand constructed; and money appropriated.

HF504—Skoe (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
White Earth Reservation Pine Point School Facility and community center provided, and money appropriated.

HF505—Swenson (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Sporting license subagents authorized to retain a sales commission.

HF506—Greiling (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Special primaries and elections required to be conducted by mail under certain circumstances, and election schedules modified.	HF512—Koskinen (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Senior citizen drug program eligibility expanded, funding cap removed, and money appropriated.	HF519—Sykora (R) K-12 Education Finance School district cost of living index created, general education formula allowance modified, and money appropriated.	HF524—McCollum (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Finance Maplewood; historic farm buildings relocated, and money appropriated.
HF507—Daggett (R) Taxes Lawful gambling, pull-tabs, tip-boards, and combined receipts tax rates reduced.	HF513—Mares (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Ramsey and Washington counties regional trail land acquisition and development around White Bear Lake provided, and money appropriated.	HF520—Pelowski (DFL) Higher Education Finance Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) Winona State University capital projects funded, and money appropriated.	HF525—Westerberg (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Anoka County; city administration of dangerous dog registration system provided.
HF508—Van Dellen (R) Taxes Unimproved real estate bordering public waters property tax class rate reduction provided.	HF514—Chaudhary (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Real property alternative description method authorized by counties.	HF521—Seagren (R) K-12 Education Finance Minnesota Valley and Synergy residential academies provided facility and operating funding, and money appropriated.	HF526—Mullery (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board employee appointment provided.
HF509—Swenson (R) Agriculture Policy Manure digester technology demonstration project shared loans provided, manure waste methane recovery system energy purchase required, rebates provided, and money appropriated.	HF515—Koskinen (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs County recorders provided alternative document numbering.	HF522—McCollum (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Education benefits program established for resident members of federal armed forces reserves, tuition and textbook reimbursement grants provided, and money appropriated.	HF527—Clark, K. (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Finance Learn to earn summer youth employment and community initiative programs funded, and money appropriated.
HF510—Biernat (DFL) Civil Law Child and medical support order administrative process repealed, family law magistrates appointed, and money appropriated.	HF516—Opatz (DFL) K-12 Education Finance School finance system provided increased equity, general education formula allowance increased, and money appropriated.	HF523—Rest (DFL) Education Policy State investment in children program created for post-secondary education, health care, or housing-related expenses.	HF528—Westrom (R) Transportation Policy Fiberglass and steel underground fuel storage tank specifications required.
HF511—Erhardt (R) Taxes Hospital district truth in taxation hearings required.	HF517—Skoe (DFL) Taxes Proposed property tax notification date modified.		HF529—Anderson, I. (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy State employee medical clinic access improved through health plan contracting requirements.
	HF518—Seifert, J. (R) Civil Law Uniform correction or clarification of defamation act adopted.		

The freedom to assemble sometimes requires a permit

Even though the state Capitol belongs to the citizens of Minnesota, they often need permission to speak their minds on its premises.

Organizers of the nearly 175 public demonstrations, concerts, and other events held annually at the Capitol must first secure a permit granted by the Minnesota Department of Administration.

Bernie Steele, complex services manager for the department's Plant Management Division, said his office receives about 200 requests a year, but only about 85 percent of those groups actually complete their applications and hold events.

Steele said he rarely denies a permit to a group. Often, he said, groups are surprised by the amount of paperwork and the restrictions involved with planning a Capitol event and decide not to complete the application.

Some of the restrictions include prohibitions on candles, balloons, and sound systems. Also, participants may not move any Capitol furnishings and must keep noise below 85 decibels. Additionally, groups are responsible for their own cleanup.

And during the final six weeks of each legislative session, noise restrictions become even tighter. For example, choirs are not allowed inside the building during those final weeks.

"It's truly so we don't disrupt the occupants," Steele said.

The Capitol also rents out equipment such as chairs, tables, coat racks, risers, podiums, public address systems, televisions, and videocassette recorders. Permits are granted only for public events, which means that weddings, commercial events, or other private gatherings are not allowed.

Even with these restrictions, Minnesota's policy is liberal compared to other states, Steele said. In addition to the rules, Capitol security monitors the events for safety precautions. Of his 29 years at the Capitol, Steele said the enthusiasm levels at the Twins World Series rallies caused them to be the most dangerous events.

"We actually pride ourselves on the non-violent type of situations," he said.

Under its Rules Governing Public Rallies, the department requires a permit application to be filed with the Plant Management Division at least one week before the scheduled event. However, if time and staff availability allow, permits might still be granted for events past the filing deadline.

To obtain a permit application, call (651) 296-6404.

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

For information updates, call

House Calls at (651) 296-9283.

All meetings are open to the public.

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MONDAY, Feb. 8

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF136 (Rostberg) Persian Gulf War veterans bonus application period extended. HF55 (Tomassoni) Trained force of firefighters maintained by the commissioner of natural resources, and public employee definition expanded.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF40 (Bradley) Nursing facility residents allowed to request the use of restraints. HF188 (Kuisle) Nursing homes' immediate jeopardy fines imposed by the Department of Health waived.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: training for members and staff on using budget books, Department of Finance; budget presentations by the Boxing Board, Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals, and World Trade Center Corporation.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: budget presentation by Department of Public Safety continued; overview of federal funds, Frank Ahrens, Office of Fiscal Administrative Services; Katherine Burke Moore, Driver and Vehicle Services; Kathryn Swanson, Traffic Safety; Ron West, Pipeline Safety; Janet Cain, Office of Technical Support.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF74 (Luther) Health care directive suggested form modified.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources performance report.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: allocation formulas, Laura King, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's K-12 budget.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF102 (Osskopp) Local government aid base increased for certain cities.

HF104 (Hackbarth) Local government base aid increased for certain cities.

HF235 (Hackbarth) Agricultural property tax classification extended to include property used for insect sales production.

HF220 (Solberg) Property tax penalties and interest distribution modified.

HF125 (Erhardt) Noncommercial seasonal residential recreational property second tier property tax class rates reduced.

HF211 (Abrams) Noncommercial seasonal residential recreational second-tier property tax class rate reduced.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: budget overview; testimony by Commissioner Christine Jax, Department of Children, Families and Learning; Stephanie Andrews and Deb Bednarz, Department of Finance.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF371 (Stang) Local government historical work contribution limit removed; and public or private, nonprofit senior citizen center contributions authorized.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: presentations concerning telecommunications and deregulation issues by the Minnesota Telephone Association, Minnesota Association for Rural Telephones, AT&T, and AT&T Wireless.

1 p.m.

Outdoor Recreation Task Force

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Hackbarth

Agenda: discussion on trail damage due to snowmobile carbide studs continued.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

TUESDAY, Feb. 9

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: discussion of mental health issues.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF134 (Erickson) Marketing and infrastructure changes due to Ontario waters and Mille Lacs Lake limitations funded, and money appropriated.

Discussion on affordable housing issues continued.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: budget request presentations, Department of Human Rights and Sentencing Guidelines Commission.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: presentation on commuter rail feasibility study phase II by Railroads & Waterways Director Al Vogel, Department of Transportation.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: budget presentation continued, Department of Employee Relations.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF112 (Bishop) Fraudulent use of another's personal identity provided felony penalties, and civil forfeiture of property authorized.

Community notification law and civil commitment study group overviews.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: Education Minnesota and Minnesota School Board Association report on survey results of the Profile of Learning; Profile of Learning, Executive Vice President and Provost Robert Bruininks, University of Minnesota; HF15 (Kielkucki) Graduation standards advisory panel recommendations implemented, Profile of Learning requirements modified, state performance packages eliminated, and advisory group established.

Note: meeting continued at 2:30 p.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF59 (Bakk) Snowmobile trail grants-in-aid provisions modified to include maintenance of Voyageurs National Park trails. HF288 (Rostberg) Pollution Control Agency Mississippi River emergency spill response equipment and training provided, and money appropriated. HF137 (Rostberg) Collector watercraft licensing requirement exemption provided.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF378 (Daggett) Individual income tax long-term care insurance credit increased. HF190 (Harder) S corporations federal tax treatment conformity provided.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's agriculture budget; Department of Agriculture and Department of Finance.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: to be announced.

2:30 p.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: graduation standards hearing continued. HF15 (Kielkucki) Graduation standards advisory panel recommendations implemented, Profile of Learning requirements modified, state performance packages eliminated, and advisory group established.

ETHICS

400S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Elaine Harder

Agenda: committee and staff introductions; ethics overview, House Research; adopting committee procedures.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 10

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: Indian gaming in Minnesota overview by executive director John McCarthy, Minnesota Indian Gaming Association.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF35 (Haas) Tobacco settlement money transferred from the general fund to the health care access fund, and MinnesotaCare premium and provider taxes repealed. HF311 (Goodno) Health Care Access Fund abolished, health maintenance organizations and nonprofit health service plan corporations insurance premiums tax repealed, and health care taxes phased out.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: budget presentations by Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation Board and Minnesota Technology.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Department of Transportation budget presentation.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF183 (Buesgens) Civil commitment; minor chemical dependency treatment parental consent provisions modified.

HF92 (Carruthers) Driver's license revocation for chemical test implied consent violations judicial review petition content requirements modified, and scope of discovery limited.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources federal funds review.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

University of Minnesota
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: bus tour of University of Minnesota campus.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's K-12 budget.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: to be announced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: animal feedlot regulation report, Office of the Legislative Auditor.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD

EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: budget overview of prevention programs continued.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF36 (Erickson) Onamia permitted an extension for commencement of tax increment financing district activities.

HF37 (Erickson) Milaca authorized tax increment financing district expenditures outside the district.

HF17 (Hasskamp) Nisswa tax increment financing district duration extension authorized.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: industry overviews concerning telecommunications and deregulation issues by US West, Frontier Communications, MCI Worldwide, Media One, and Sprint.

1 p.m.

Outdoor Recreation Task Force

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Hackbarth

Agenda: discussion on trail damage due to snowmobile carbide studs continued.

3 p.m.

RULES & LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tim Pawlenty

Agenda: to be announced.

THURSDAY, Feb. 11

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: member bills.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: presentation on corporate subsidies by executive director Greg LeRoy, Good Jobs First.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: budget request presentations by ombudsman for corrections and ombudsman for crime victims.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: budget presentations by Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Department of Military Affairs.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: HF142 (Pawlenty) Subsequent controlled substance conviction definition expanded to include convictions subsequent to a stay of adjudication.
HF143 (Pawlenty) Domestic assault enhanced penalty provisions expanded to include malicious punishment of a child convictions.
Camp Ripley adult work program overview.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: to be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: HF379 (Erhardt) Mortgage registry and deed taxes technical corrections provided.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness
Agenda: agriculture education.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach
Agenda: Higher Education Asset Preservation and Renewal Account presentation by representatives of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids
Agenda: agency overview and presentation by the Office of the Attorney General.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

4 p.m.

Hennepin County Delegation

118 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Ron Abrams,
Rep. Linda Wejcman,
Sen. Linda Higgins,
Sen. Martha Robertson
Agenda: mandate reform.

FRIDAY, Feb. 12

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: HF279 (Westfall) Veterans preference act modified.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: revenue maximization presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: budget presentations by Board of Accountancy; Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience and Interior Design; Barber Examiners Board, and Bureau of Mediation Services.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: HF14 (Fuller) Persons convicted of criminal sexual conduct considered ineligible to be a licensed teacher.
Youth experience at Camp Ripley overview.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: presentation by executive budget officer Lisa DeRemee, Department of Finance.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: Gov. Ventura's K-12 budget.

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Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota's budget

November 1998 forecast surplus for 1998-99 biennium, in billions	\$1.5
Amount of that surplus already allocated under current law, in millions	\$609
Amount of that surplus to be spent on sales tax rebate, as proposed by Gov. Jesse Ventura, in billions	\$1.1
November 1998 forecast surplus for 2000-01 biennium, in billions	\$1.8
November 1990 forecast deficit for 1992-93 biennium, in billions	\$1.2
Tobacco settlement payments slated to come into state coffers in 2000-01 biennium, in millions	\$727
Total income tax cuts proposed by governor for 2000-01 biennium, in millions	\$844
Total motor-vehicle registration fee cuts proposed by governor for 2000-01 biennium, in millions	\$287
Governor's proposed maximum annual vehicle registration fee	\$75
Forecast annual increase of state revenue for 2000-01 biennium, in percent	9.3
Projected annual inflation for 2000-01 biennium, in percent	2.5
Governor's proposed increase in spending from fiscal year 1999 to 2000, in percent	3.6
From fiscal year 2000 to 2001	3.9
Percent of spending increase from fiscal year 1989 to 1990	12
From fiscal year 1991 to 1992	3.3
Percent of new spending targeted for education in governor's proposed 2000-01 budget	70
Governor's proposed annual increase in total K-12 spending for 2000-01 biennium, in percent	5.3
Then-Gov. Arne Carlson's 1991 proposal for annual increase in total K-12 spending for 1992-93 biennium, in percent	7
Ventura's proposed increase in state funding aimed at reducing class sizes for 2000-01 biennium, in millions	\$150
Annual amount dedicated to class-size reduction under current law, in millions	\$87
Number of new foundations and endowments to be funded by tobacco settlement money, as proposed by governor	4
Governor's proposed funding for proposed Hiawatha corridor light-rail project, in millions	\$60
Current average annual state funding for public television and radio, in millions	\$4
Percent of that funding governor proposes to eliminate within four years	100

Sources: *Executive Budget Summary, 2000-01*, Gov. Jesse Ventura, 1999, Office of the Governor; *Minnesota Financial Report, Nov. 1998 Budget Summary*, 1998, Department of Finance; *1992-93 Proposed Biennial Budget*, 1991, Office of the Governor.

For more information



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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ February 12, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 6



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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • February 12, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 6

Reflections

In the House Chief Clerk's Office, Chief Clerk Edward A. Burdick and his staff of 26 full-time employees and five temporary workers are responsible for receiving all bills introduced in the House. They also provide and disseminate information about legislative proceedings, record legislative history, and provide assistance to the speaker and other members on legal and parliamentary requirements of the lawmaking process.

The chief clerk's staff plays a pivotal role in the Legislature. Some employees maintain records of all bills and proceedings and keep copies on file of all documents, including pending bills and journals of the preceding day.

Other staff members print agenda calendars, bills, and amendments for floor discussions, record results of floor proceedings, and prepare the House Journal. Information systems personnel place legislative proceedings on the Internet and troubleshoot for any legislative computer problems that may arise.

The clerks at the main desk of the chief clerk's office, found in the House chamber, are the most visible. During session, even after 10 hours or more of debate by members, you will see them at their stations managing the flow of bills, amendments, committee reports, messages from the Senate, the calendar agenda, and many other duties not mentioned.

When Al Mathiowetz, first assistant clerk, receives an amendment, for example, he or clerk Debra Fastner file it, make sure that all members receive a copy, and make it available to the public. The amendment then goes to the speaker, who passes it to the chief clerk to be reported to the members.

Then the second assistant clerk, Gail Romanowski, places the name and number of the document on the message board by her computer, and continues to stay tuned to the order of business. She also receives committee reports and copies of bills placed in the hopper. Bills are given a number and then passed on to leadership for review.

After the chief clerk calls the roll and a vote is taken on the merits of the legislation, Journal Editor Pat Murphy records all activity. Also, he and the chief clerk anticipate any debate decisions such as a ruling by the speaker, in order to have researched proof of prior journal entry available upon request.

Once legislative action is taken, Fastner reports it to the documents staff and the general public via Internet, and Romanowski receives a paper copy of the vote within 15 seconds after the voting board is closed.

As an indication of the propensity of some of the work by staff at the desk, the clerks recorded 1,352 roll calls, and 3,884 House bill introductions in the 1997-98 legislative session.

Burdick said he would not trade his main desk staff for any other legislative staff in the country. "You just cannot beat 142 years of collective legislative experience as we have at the main desk," he said.

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: A scene from the second floor of the Capitol.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

MinnesotaCare . . .

Tobacco bucks may replace health care provider tax

By Paul Wahl

Mention Minnesota's health care provider tax in a room full of doctors and you may need the services of one of them before you can beat a hasty exit.

The 2-percent tax appeared on the books in 1992, part of a strategy to finance landmark health care reform, including MinnesotaCare, a plan to extend insurance coverage to low- and moderate-income Minnesotans.

From the outset, the so-called "sick tax" has been the target of much debate and impassioned pleas to surgically remove it from the tax landscape.

A bill that would repeal the tax was approved Feb. 10 by the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee. The bill (HF35) is sponsored by Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin).

In addition to repealing the provider tax,

in the early 1990s. An income tax surcharge was also suggested, but that mechanism was also being eyed as a way of plugging a projected \$291 million budget deficit.

Proponents of MinnesotaCare argued that health care was as much a right of state residents as education and should be funded accordingly. Legislation to provide an optional state-run insurance program with a low-cost benefits package was originally passed by the Legislature in 1991; however, then-Gov. Arne Carlson vetoed the plan.

Carlson's diagnosis was that the plan was too expensive. He also favored a bill that would increase access to the private insurance market, instead of putting the state in the insurance business.

When the gavel fell to open the 1992 session, the race was on to see how quickly a health care reform prescription could find its

for calendar years 1998 and 1999, with an option to continue the lower rate in 2000, should sufficient revenue be available to fully fund the program.

That reduction was expected to save hospitals and health care providers about \$54 million.

By the beginning of this year's session, the state's health care access fund — to which the provider tax is a major contributor — was running a surplus of nearly \$190 million after reserves. One estimate produced in 1996 revealed that the surplus could have been as high as one-half billion dollars.

Supporters pointed to the abundant surplus in the fund to justify the cut. Others argued the tax generated sufficient revenue to decrease the rate even more.

Haas' bill to eliminate the tax and replace it with tobacco settlement money is one of the most sweeping attempted reforms of the 1992 legislation.

Under terms of the state's settlement with tobacco companies, Minnesota will receive a total of \$6.1 billion in total revenue over the next 25 years, including one-time settlement payments and annual payments to continue in perpetuity.

Haas proposes using those ongoing payments, estimated to level at \$204 million by 2004, to fund MinnesotaCare.

A waiting room full of health care activists appeared to give the bill a glowing diagnosis before the Health and Human Services Committee.

"The 'sick tax' is an expensive tax and is contributing to health care costs," said Dr. Judith F. Shank, president of the Minnesota Medical Association. "The most troubling aspect of the tax is the cost to patients, both sick individuals and those who are trying to stay well."

Shank said her group supports MinnesotaCare, but noted that since all Minnesotans benefit from it, everyone should help finance it appropriately.

Representatives of business and insurance groups also lauded the proposed "taxectomy."

Even Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls), one of the architects of the original legislation, agreed that the time may have arrived to kill some of the taxes outlined in the bill.

However, Greenfield and others were concerned about the permanence of the tobacco



A health care provider tax would be abolished under a bill approved Feb. 10 by the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee. The tax currently helps fund MinnesotaCare, the state's health insurance program for the disadvantaged. The bill would substitute funds from tobacco settlement payments.

the bill aims to axe the 1-percent premium tax on nonprofit health plan companies and the 2-percent premium tax on indemnity health insurers.

In place of the revenue generated by the taxes, Haas proposes to substitute \$204 million the state expects to receive annually from the tobacco settlement.

Ironically, a hefty tax on cigarettes was the original suggestion for funding MinnesotaCare, then called HealthRight, back

way to the governor's desk. Carlson signed the legislation on April 23, 1992.

In addition to MinnesotaCare, the legislation also set forth goals for containing costs and implemented insurance reforms.

Although there have been nearly annual revisions of the original legislation, the provider tax remained a constant until 1997.

Then, with a significant balance building in the funds designated for MinnesotaCare, the Legislature reduced the tax rate to 1.5 percent

revenues. Under terms of the settlement, the payments may go down if the number of smokers in the state decreases and the cigarette manufacturers' ability to make a profit evaporates.

Susan Stout, a representative of the Minnesota Nurses Association, said her group opposes the bill because it doesn't contain a solid plan to keep MinnesotaCare healthy, while allowing for growth and expansion.

She pointed out that despite the program's efforts, the level of uncompensated care being provided continues to rise. The nurses group was one of the earliest and strongest proponents of MinnesotaCare.

Greenfield also pointed out that the bill has a long course ahead, even if it is eventually approved by the full House. Gov. Jesse Ventura has gone on record in favor of using tobacco settlement money for health care endowments. And the Senate may have other plans.

Greenfield succeeded in amending Haas' bill to include a provision that if the tax is removed, the savings would be passed directly back to the people who paid originally, through reductions in premiums and charges.

The bill moves to the House Taxes Committee. 🐼

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* news magazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

Clarification

The Feb. 5 edition of the *Session Weekly* included a story about **HFI**, the \$1.5 billion tax rebate bill passed by the House. The story mentioned an amendment adopted on the House floor calling for about \$400 million in property tax rebates, in addition to the roughly \$1.1 billion the bill would provide for income tax rebates. The property tax rebate amendment was offered by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), who is chief sponsor of the rebate bill, and won bipartisan support.

As times change, so do committee names



A few changes were made in the names of House committees between the 1998 and 1999 sessions. For instance, the former House Economic Development and International Trade Committee is now the House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee.

But those changes pale in comparison to those that have occurred over the past century.

Glancing back at the changing monikers of House committees can reveal a picture of how times have changed. In past decades, committee names have reflected important issues of the times.

Many committees have evolved to cover a broad area instead of a particular issue. Today, there is no Voice Mail, Fax Machine, or Internet committee, unlike 60 or 70 years ago when there was a House Telephones and Telegraphs Committee.

In the 1950s and 1960s, some committees still had the word "communications" in the name, but now such issues are dealt with in the Regulated Industries Subcommittee of the House Commerce Committee.

The transportation committees of today have also evolved from panels that in the past covered several separate but related issues. Over the years, transportation issues were divided into quite specific areas.

The 1929 House dealt with transportation in four separate panels: the Aircraft and Airways, Motor Vehicles and Motor Vehicle Tax Laws, Public Highways, and Railroad and State Motor Transportation committees. The names changed slightly over the next 10 years. In 1939, similar House panels were called the Aviation, Commercial Transportation, Motor Vehicles, and Public Highways committees. Variations of those committees were around until the 1970s, when all were fused into one transportation panel.

Liquor — or the lack thereof — has been important enough in past years to merit its own committee. Liquor licensing and related issues are among those that are dealt with in today's Commerce Committee. But in past decades, the issues have been dealt with in House committees with names like the Temperance Committee (1929), the Liquor Control Committee (1939), and

the Temperance and Liquor Control Committee (1949 and 1959). By 1969, no such committee existed.

Issues relating to municipalities have been addressed by many different committees. Some committee names have referred to cities of first, second, or third classes — which are based on population. Other variations of those committee names have been Local and Urban Affairs, Metropolitan and Urban Affairs, Municipal Affairs, and Towns and Counties. In 1999, the House only has one such committee, the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee.

Other former House committee names include Claims, Engrossment and Enrollment, Printing and Publishing, and State Development and Immigration committees.

Between the 1998 and 1999 sessions, some single House committees were divided into two separate panels, making them more similar to the Senate's committees. For instance, issues covered in 1998 by the House Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Finance Committee are now divided between the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee and the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

Others, like the House State Government Finance Committee, had been a division of another committee in previous years. And last year's House Education Committee and its three finance divisions are now four separate committees: Education Policy, Family & Early Childhood Education Finance, K-12 Education Finance, and Higher Education Finance.

The opposite is true of the Commerce Committee, which is a combination of three committees from the previous session: Commerce, Tourism and Consumer Affairs; Financial Institutions and Insurance; and Regulated Industries & Energy. Today's Commerce Committee also has a Regulated Industries Subcommittee.

Although many committee names have changed, several others reflect a consistent focus throughout Minnesota's history. The Agriculture, Education, Judiciary, Taxes, and Ways & Means committees are a few that have been consistently prominent in the Legislature. 🐼

Highlights



BUSINESS

Booksellers seek tax cut

E-commerce — business transacted on the World Wide Web — is writing an unpleasant chapter for many of Minnesota's independent booksellers.

A volume of them appeared to testify in support of a bill (**HF365**) that would exempt all book sales in the state from sales tax to help "level the playing field."

Sponsored by Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls), the bill would expand the current sales tax exemption for newspapers and subscription magazines to include magazines and periodicals sold "over the counter" and would also exempt all book purchases.

Previously, exemptions were allowed for textbooks purchased by students. "We exempt food and clothing now," Kelliher said. "Let's consider books food and clothing of the mind."

Kelliher told members of the House Taxes Committee that book sales on the Internet now account for 20 percent or more of all book sales in the U.S. She noted that books are rapidly becoming the fastest-selling item on the Web through large corporate sites, such as Amazon.com and others.

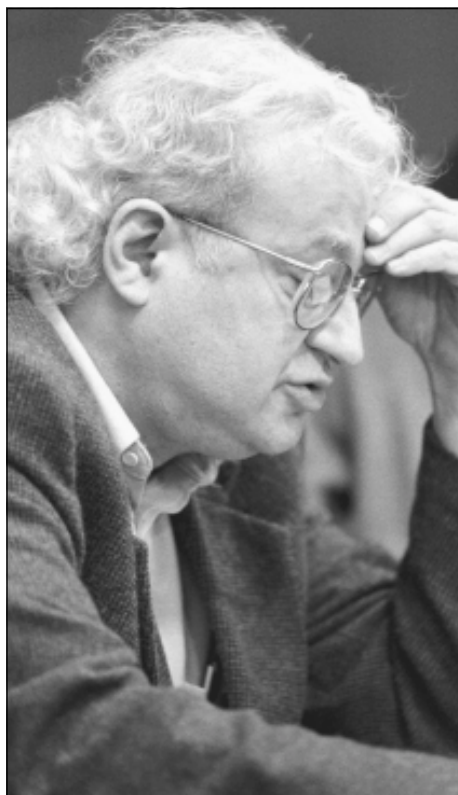
Web entities aren't required to collect sales tax. They do charge for shipping and handling, but consumers don't seem to mind that as much as they do a tax.

Kelliher said purchasing books online was often a first-time experience in e-commerce for the curious. She said that if fewer people were given reasons to purchase books online, they might not make other purchases, also not subject to state tax.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnesota), chair of the Taxes Committee, said the federal government has imposed a three-year moratorium on states taxing Internet sales while a comprehensive approach is examined.

Susan Walker, who heads the Upper Midwest Booksellers Association, said the sales tax has begun cropping up in conversation with customers who wonder why they should shop locally when they can avoid the tax on the Web.

As to the tax revenue the state would lose under the bill — estimated at \$49 million over the next biennium — she pointed out that if



David Unowsky, owner of the Hungry Mind Bookstore in St. Paul, tells members of the House Taxes Committee Feb. 11 that his store faces stiff competition from Internet booksellers. He spoke in support of a bill that would exempt books from sales taxes.

the sales weren't being made here, there wouldn't be any tax collected anyway. And if small booksellers are forced out of business, the state won't have property tax or income tax revenue, either.

David Unowsky, owner of Hungry Mind Bookstore in St. Paul, said the 52 employees at his store are "at-risk" because of e-commerce and consolidation in the world of books.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) questioned whether the sales tax is the problem or whether it is the fact the larger operations can sell their books cheaper.

Noting that the amount of lost revenue would be considerable, Abrams said that the bill would be considered for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

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CRIME

Protecting calls for help

A law frequently used to prosecute domestic assault offenders would be expanded under a bill approved Feb. 5 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Under current law, prosecutors can charge a person who interferes with a phone call to a 911 dispatcher with a gross misdemeanor crime. This law is often used against domestic assault offenders who try to prevent their victims from calling the police for help.

The bill (**HF193**), sponsored by Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul), would expand the law to include all emergency calls to police, ambulance services, or fire departments, not just calls placed through 911.

Steven Schleicher, assistant attorney for Winona County, described a domestic assault case that he said demonstrates the need for the bill. In the case, a woman called police when her husband became abusive. The husband grabbed the cordless phone and threw it against the wall.

When police arrived, they saw the broken phone and arrested the husband for both domestic assault and interference with a 911 call.

However, because the woman had dialed the seven-digit phone number for the local police department, the suspect could not be charged under the interference law.

Schleicher said the interference law is an effective tool against domestic assault offenders. He estimated that his office prosecutes about 25 cases a year.

"Prosecution under this statute as it exists is probably as common as prosecution for domestic assault," he said.

The bill now goes to the House floor.



DEVELOPMENT

Big money, small payoff

Economic development programs in Minnesota generally provide large subsidies that result in low-wage jobs. That was the message from Greg LeRoy of Good Jobs First to members of the House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee Feb. 11.

LeRoy's group released a study this month that examined 550 economic development

disclosure reports totaling more than \$176 million in loans, grants, and tax-increment financing.

"Overall, we found high costs, low wages, and no standards," he said.

LeRoy said his group looked at Minnesota's economic development practices because the state's subsidy accountability law passed in 1995 provides excellent data. That law requires local governments and state agencies to report the goals and results of each deal to the Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development.

According to the study, the economic development deals often involve very high dollar amounts for the number of jobs created. The study found that 123 deals studied cost the state more than \$35,000 per job, and that 38 of the subsidies investigated cost the state more than \$100,000 per job.

The study found that wages — both promised and actually paid — were generally low compared to existing wages. About half of the deals studied reported low actual wages — 20 percent or more below market levels for their industries. But on the positive side, the report points out that almost one-fourth of the companies report actual wages above existing levels.

The study states that the low wages are somewhat surprising considering two-thirds of the companies studied are in industries that typically offer high-wage jobs.

Although the 1995 law does require companies to refund subsidies if they fail to meet targets within two years, the study found no cases where companies were required to return funds.

Like with other government programs, the report states, policy-makers should revise economic development subsidies to lower costs and improve benefits.

The report recommends creating wage floors based on the local labor market and subsidy caps related to the number of jobs created. The study also advises clarifying the current subsidy law to provide ways to improve compliance and to make the law more effective for agencies, companies, and workers.

LeRoy told the committee that state-funded economic development efforts need to focus more on quality job creation as opposed to simple job creation.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) said lawmakers should put some of the report's findings in perspective. He said that the study only provides a "snapshot" of wages in the two-year period since the reporting requirement was instituted, and those wages may simply be starting wages.

"I would argue that some of this data isn't as accurate as I'd like it to be," he said.

McElroy also said that the report doesn't

take into consideration the fact that there are three different tax-increment financing programs, and that those programs need to be evaluated separately, keeping their specific goals in mind.

For example, McElroy said, some programs seek to redevelop polluted areas, and to evaluate those programs simply for job creation does not reflect the whole picture.



ENVIRONMENT

Cleaning up river spills

A bill that aims to improve response times to hazardous spills in the Mississippi River was approved Feb. 9 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

The bill (**HF288**) would provide money to equip and train members of 14 local fire departments to serve as first responders to oil spills. It would appropriate \$225,000 from the state's petroleum tank fund to pay for the equipment and training for departments from northern Hennepin County to the Mississippi's headwaters.

Companies that have underground fuel tanks in Minnesota pay fees into the petroleum tank fund, which is used for pollution cleanup projects.

Rep. Jim Rostberg (R-Isanti), sponsor of the bill, said it would be the third phase of a program, called the Mississippi River Defense Network, that has focused on the Mississippi River north of the Twin Cities.

The purpose of the program is to establish a comprehensive plan to clean up spills upstream of the Twin Cities. It is funded through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the state.

Rostberg said he hopes the program can be copied and expanded to include all of Minnesota's rivers.

Facilities that have the potential for spilling oil are also required to have employees or contractors who are trained to clean up an oil spill, said Steve Lee, supervisor of the emergency response team at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). But most contractors are located in the Twin Cities, so it would take them several hours to respond to a spill in outstate areas, he said.

Lee said the MPCA already trains members of local fire departments to take some precautions after an oil spill, such as evacuating an area. But the bill would give local crews the equipment and training to do the initial cleanup. Lee said members of some departments have been receptive to the proposal.

An oil spill in a river is particularly difficult to clean up, said David Brostrom, coordinator

of the Mississippi River Defense Network. On average, only about 10 percent of spilled oil is cleaned up. The rest evaporates, is absorbed by plants, or stays in the water.

"Unless you can get there very quickly, you might as well forget it," Brostrom said.

Lee added that nearly all of the oil was cleaned up from a recent spill in South St. Paul because of a fast response. However, fast responses are nearly impossible if a spill occurs in an outstate area because of a truck or railroad accident.

The bill now moves to the House Commerce Committee.



GOVERNMENT

Boosting building budgets

Gov. Jesse Ventura's plan to address what some call the looming iceberg of state building maintenance was presented Feb. 9 to members of the House Capital Investment Committee.

Lee Mehrkens, an official from the Minnesota Department of Finance, said the governor would like the current gap between what agencies need for building maintenance and what they are currently spending to be tightened by about 5 percent.

The Statewide Facilities Management Group, a consortium of agency building managers, estimates that state agencies would have to spend \$500 million over the two-year budget cycle to properly keep up with maintenance needs. The group reports that agencies are currently spending a total of \$87 million every two years for building upkeep.

Mehrkens said that the governor is recommending an additional \$36 million to assist with the problem. He said the idea is to keep up with maintenance so the state doesn't have to pay for major projects.

"The hope is that you can intercede early and solve the problem at a less expensive phase," Mehrkens said.

He also said that the governor wants a law passed that would require state agencies to establish separate repair and replacement accounts. The accounts would be part of the agencies' operating budgets.

"We think it is a major step forward to separate these accounts from the rest of the budget," he said.

Currently, agencies budget for building maintenance. However, the funds are often used for other purposes and maintenance is sometimes neglected.

Mehrkens said that the change would make agencies more accountable for building main-

tenance and would be the first step in a coordinated statewide policy for dealing with the issue.

Last year, the Legislature enacted a law requiring the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) to set up separate repair and replacement accounts.

The governor's recommendations follow a report issued in February 1998 by the Office of the Legislative Auditor. That report offers several approaches for strengthening and coordinating the maintenance programs for state facilities. The report also suggests creating a funding formula to deal with the problem in individual agency budgets.

Altogether, the higher education institutions and state agencies oversee more than 4,800 state-owned buildings with about 73 million square feet of space. The replacement value for all state buildings would exceed \$7 billion, according to the auditor's report.

The committee took no action on the proposal.

Returning trade program funds

The House passed a bill (HF184) Feb. 8 that would return money to the general fund that had been intended for Minnesota's participation in the United Nations' Global Trade Point Network. The vote was 128-0.

The U.N. program was designed to create a network for global trade, which includes several hubs, called Secure Electronic Authentication Links (SEAL). The University of Minnesota would have been the SEAL for North America.

Since 1996, the Legislature has appropriated \$1.3 million for costs related to the program. Those funds have been mostly distributed to various sources, including the Minnesota Office of Technology, the University of Minnesota, and the World Trade Center.

But the program stalled in 1998, and then Gov. Arne Carlson froze spending for the program.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview), would return the unused portions of that money to the general fund.

The Office of Technology has proposed restarting the program through Bemidji State University. But Krinkie said the bill would ensure that funds are not spent until the Legislature has investigated the issue.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

Roll call of sorrow



Lisa Brannan of Minneapolis listens to the roll call of women and children who were killed by their spouses, parents, or companions in 1998, during the annual Battered Women's Action Day at the Capitol Jan. 8.

higher — by 101 to 125 percent — than those for similar coverage in the private market. But revenue from the premiums still does not cover the costs of claims.

The state funding partially offsets the difference. However, the industry makes up the remaining deficit by charging higher premiums for traditional health plans, Haas said. Because many large companies are self-insured, those higher premiums fall mainly on the shoulders of small businesses that provide benefits to employees, he said.

Lynn Gruber, MCHA's president, said premiums provide about half the funding needed for MCHA to break even. Losses in 1997 were \$47.8 million. Estimated losses for 1998 were \$50 million, \$15 million of which will be paid by the state for a net loss of \$35 million.

Haas' bill (HF208), would continue the state's \$15 million appropriation, plus provide up to \$20 million more to pay 50 percent of the remaining deficit.

The bill would also repeal a related sunset provision of a 1997 law. That law forbids the state Medical Assistance or General Assistance Medical Care programs from keeping people with severe illnesses on MCHA and paying MCHA's premiums instead of the more costly claims.

People insured under the comprehensive pool sometimes become eligible for Medical Assistance or General Assistance Medical Care, which are jointly funded by the state and federal governments to cover lower-income families who cannot afford insurance.

Haas estimated that keeping a person on MCHA coverage and out of the other programs had increased the pool's deficit by as much as \$10 million before the 1997 law halted that practice. But that provision is scheduled to sunset June 30, 1999. The bill would make the provision permanent.

The bill now moves to the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

INSURANCE

Funds for health plan

A statewide insurance pool for people with chronic health conditions would receive increased state funding under a bill approved Feb. 4 by the House Commerce Committee.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), the bill's sponsor, said the state currently pays \$15 million per year to the Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association (MCHA), which provides insurance to Minnesotans who can't otherwise get coverage because of chronic health conditions.

State law requires health insurers and health maintenance organizations to operate MCHA, Haas said. The association's premiums are

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cities seek a cut of penalties

Minnesota's cities and counties are battling over a proposal to change the method by which penalties and interest collected on property taxes are distributed.

Under existing law, penalties and interest are split evenly between the county in which the property is located and the school districts within that county.

But cities, especially smaller cities, should be entitled to a portion of those funds, said Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey).

Solberg is sponsoring a bill (HF220) that

would distribute the money to all units that levy taxes on the property in proportion to the levy imposed in the year the penalties and interest are collected.

Solberg told the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee Feb. 8 about a ski resort in his district that fell upon hard times and did not pay property taxes for five years, causing financial hardship to nearby Hill City. To aggravate matters, once the penalties and interest on the back taxes were paid, the city didn't share in the windfall.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby) agreed that cities should receive at least some of the penalties and interest collected.

"How can you justify not giving up a portion of this money just from a pure fairness issue?" she asked.

But Joe Harris, a Dakota County commissioner representing the Association of Minnesota Counties, said counties suffered additional costs associated with collecting delinquent taxes and thus shouldn't have to share.

The committee took no action on the matter, but will consider the bill for possible inclusion in this year's omnibus tax bill.

Freeing funds for projects

A bill that would eliminate spending caps for cities contributing money to certain local projects was approved Feb. 8 by the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee.

The bill (**HF371**), sponsored by Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring), would eliminate the \$2,000 per year spending limit for cities funding local historical preservation efforts.

It would also allow cities to contribute municipal dollars to senior citizen and youth centers. Under current law, cities may only fund recreational activities for the centers. Stang's bill would eliminate that provision and allow cities to donate money for any purpose connected with those centers.

The bill originally covered only senior centers until Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) offered an amendment to include youth centers as well.

A group of residents from Paynesville told the committee about how a transportation program connected with their city's 9-year-old senior citizen center needs funding. But because the transit program is not considered recreational, the city cannot fund it under current law.

In addition, Paynesville residents noted that there are historical projects that the city could fund more adequately without the spending caps.

Some lawmakers voiced concern over eliminating the limits completely.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) said there should be a mechanism in place so city governments don't overuse tax dollars for projects voters have not approved.

Although no amendments were offered to add spending limits, Stang said he would consider adding language to accommodate his colleagues' concerns.

HF371 now moves to the House floor.



SPORTS

Report jabs boxing board

The head of the Minnesota Board of Boxing defended his agency before a House committee Feb. 8, following a recent recommendation that the board be eliminated or placed under another agency's authority.

James O'Hara, executive secretary of the Board on Boxing, told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee that his agency is responsible for Minnesota's reputation as a safe place to box.

"Minnesota is respected throughout the nation and internationally," he said. "They used to call our state a sissy state because we don't want any injuries."

The recommendations concerning the board were included in a report on occupational regulation by the Office of the Legislative Auditor. The auditor found that overall the state's policy on regulating occupations is inconsistent, and that oversight of the regulatory agencies needs to be improved.

The auditor's report specifically names the Board of Assessors, the Board of Private Detectives and Protective Agents, and the Board

of Boxing as regulatory agencies that should be reviewed by the Legislature.

The auditor's report points out that the boxing board is exempt from the law requiring boards to be funded through licenses and other fees. The report also notes that all other professional and amateur sports are regulated by private organizations.

O'Hara said that boxing should be overseen by people who know the sport, not "clerks" in a state agency. He also said that the board has kept its fees low because it tends to serve underprivileged and disadvantaged youth, and that the board makes sure that every boxer in the state is insured.

The Board of Boxing, located in the Golden Rule Building in downtown St. Paul, regulates boxing, full contact karate, and kick boxing. Annual licenses for referees, managers, and boxers range from \$2 to \$25. The board issued 183 such licenses in 1998.

The committee took no action on the recommendations.



TAXES

Incentive for insurance

Auto, homeowner, life, and health insurance premiums are common expenses for most Minnesota families. Long-term care insurance isn't.

Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee) would like to change that. She is sponsoring a bill (**HF378**) that would significantly increase the state's income tax credit for purchasing long-term care policies.

Citing the need to begin preparing now for

Student march



Students from state universities, community colleges, and technical colleges rally for more state aid and lower tuition increases than called for in Gov. Jesse Ventura's proposed budget. The students marched to the Capitol and rallied on the front steps Feb. 10.

the eventual swell of state residents who will need nursing home care, Daggett urged her colleagues on the House Taxes Committee Feb. 9 to raise the credit five-fold.

Under a 1997 law, the credit is set at \$100 or 25 percent of the amount paid per beneficiary, with a maximum credit of \$200 annually on a joint return or \$100 for other filers.

The bill would increase the maximum credit to \$500 per person or \$1,000 per joint return.

Daggett said the \$3.4 million price tag to provide the credit to an estimated 16,000 filers over the next biennium should be viewed as a long-term investment in the solvency of the state.

Daggett said when today's baby boomers age, they will need taxpayer-supported nursing home care in record numbers. And there will be fewer workers to pay taxes to help cushion those costs, estimated now at \$39,000 per patient annually.

However, the amount the state would have to pay would decrease substantially as more people purchase long-term care insurance.

"We need a carrot to save tax dollars in the long run," Daggett said.

The bill would also make the credit refundable and would eliminate a provision of the 1997 law that required policies to have an automatic benefits inflation clause in order to qualify for the credit.

That provision would bring state law into conformity with federal law. The Internal Revenue Service requires insurance plan sellers to offer the inflation-adjusted policy, which is roughly twice the cost of a regular policy.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) said he does not believe there is a need for a tax credit because people will buy the policies anyway to protect their assets. Before most people can qualify for state and federal nursing home aid programs, they must deplete their personal financial capacity.

Daggett said many people purchase the policies to assure they have choices if nursing home care becomes inevitable. She noted that most states around Minnesota have similar tax credits and that the numbers of policies sold in those states far exceeds the number sold in Minnesota.

Considering that the state could "save a fortune" over the long run, Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby) questioned whether the tax credit Daggett is proposing is sufficient. Hasskamp suggested upping the ante and including something for family members who assist with the care of an elderly loved one, thereby putting off the need for nursing home care.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Farmer bugged by policy

If you raise insects for a living, are you considered a farmer? Not under state statutes that define agricultural property and how it's taxed.

That fact so dismayed Gordon Vadis of Ham Lake that he decided to do something about it. And he convinced Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) to sponsor a bill (HF235) that would expand the state's definition of agricultural products to include "insects primarily bred to be used as food for animals" in determining if property qualifies for the agricultural property classification.

Vadis told the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee Feb. 8 that he has been raising crickets for the past nine years, each year claiming the agricultural property tax classification.

But after a recent visit to his 50-acre farm from the Anoka County assessor, he was told the law had changed and that classification now applied only to those who raised food for human consumption. Vadis does not qualify.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), who chairs the Taxes Committee, said he aims to incorporate the change into this year's omnibus tax bill.

"This is a prime example of someone who has done nothing wrong but is being rung up by the system," Abrams said.

And, he said, it is decisions like this one that foster public mistrust and resentment of the state's revenue department.

"Someone had to have looked long and hard to determine this property doesn't qualify," added Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul).

Rep. William Kuisle (R-Rochester) said the committee may also want to consider broadening the scope to include those insects raised to eat other insects, an increasingly popular method of decreasing the amount of insecticide used in raising farm crops.

Vadis said insect farming is a growing industry nationwide. He produces about 325,000 crickets weekly on his farm. They are used for a variety of purposes.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has determined the bill would have no fiscal impact. The committee took no action on the bill.

Cities seek revenue hike

The formulas under which the state provides direct revenue to cities are complicated, and some municipalities don't believe they're treated fairly.

Bills requesting additional money for two cities – Pine Island (HF102) and St. Francis (HF104) – were discussed Feb. 8 in the Property Taxes Division of the House Taxes Committee.

Pine Island is seeking \$102,000 in additional aid, and St. Francis wants \$300,000. If the funds are awarded, that amount would be subtracted from the next round of money to be distributed to all qualifying cities.

Steve Bjork, planner and coordinator for St. Francis, told the committee his city has struggled for years to provide adequate services. He presented a chart that showed St. Francis receiving \$61,556 in local government aid for fiscal year 1999, while cities of similar size received about \$330,000 each.



Rep. Ron Erhardt, center, and his staff don bug antennae during a Feb. 8 discussion of a bill that would allow insect farmers to receive new agricultural property tax classification. Also pictured are Committee Administrator Margaret Amundson, left, Legislative Assistant Michelle Boulay, second from right, and Legislative Assistant Erin Buie, right.

He noted that part of the crunch in his city is caused by the St. Francis School District, which operates four schools with 5,200 students, district offices, and busing operations inside the city limits. The student population causes a heavier drain on public services than would be expected in a town of 4,000. Additionally, all of the school-owned property in the city is exempt from paying city taxes.

Bjork, one of three employees at St. Francis City Hall, said that although the town has grown from 2,463 in 1990 to an estimated 4,600 in 1998, its ability to tax hasn't kept pace with needs.

Many residents are in the low- and moderate-income bracket. He said only eight miles of 25 road miles in the city are paved and the remainder are gravel.

Pine Island's story is similar. For years it has received less local aid than its neighbors of similar size and less than average.

Pine Island city administrator Elmer Brocker said the city actually receives less local government aid from the state today than it did in 1990.

Despite the low funding level, the city has managed to accommodate rapid growth and to cut taxes, said Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), sponsor of **HF102**.

"And they're being penalized for their success," Osskopp added.

Abraham Algadi, executive director of the Pine Island Economic Development Authority, said the city faces a number of development hurdles in the next few years. Completing them would be difficult without an injection of state funds.

The bills would raise St. Francis' per capita aid base from \$6.79 to \$86 and Pine Island's from \$83 to \$129.

Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) is sponsoring **HF104**.

Both bills were laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

ated money for a local government Y2K loan fund.

The Y2K bug is a problem that may occur in many computers that were not programmed to handle the switch to the year 2000. Many older programs use only the last two digits to track the year, and at the end 1999, those programs will roll to 00. That means some computers will think it's 1900, which could cause major technical malfunctions and create troubles industries such as airline travel, banking, and utilities.

Several legislators voiced concern over the liability and debt service issues in the bill, and some said the measure was too broad in its scope.

Rep. Bill Hilty (DFL-Finlayson), the bill's sponsor, said that under normal conditions his bill would not be considered good legislation because of its scope.

"This is one very unusual and unprecedented circumstance," he said.

However, Hilty encouraged members to approve the bill, saying that if the Legislature does not take steps to address potential problems, the level of Y2K hysteria could get out of hand.

"We're going to foster very irrational behavior," he said.



TRANSPORTATION

Report reveals rail options

The Twin Cities area has the capacity to support a six-line commuter rail system at a cost of \$1.4 billion, according to a study produced by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

The report was discussed Feb. 9 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

Now in its second phase, the study was directed by the 1997 Legislature for the purpose of determining whether a commuter rail system would be a cost-effective option for mass transit in the seven-county metropolitan area. Projected population growth has led various organizations to estimate a substantial growth in traffic congestion during the next two decades.

In 1998, the study presented possible rail lines that would run into downtown Minneapolis or St. Paul originating from six cities: Bethel, Northfield, Norwood-Young America, Elk River, Hastings, and Forest Lake. There could also be a Minneapolis-St. Paul connector route.

This year's update includes cost and ridership estimates, and a suggested plan for implementation. Another part of the study seeks to

measure the level of support for a commuter rail system.

According to the report, 90 percent of people surveyed showed support for the concept of commuter rail.

About 18,000 people would use commuter rail, and department officials said that could decrease traffic congestion by 2 to 7 percent.

Most train trips would not significantly differ from car travel times, but many would be shorter than a bus trip. Depending on the length of the trip, ticket prices would range from \$2 to \$5.75.

Commuter rail lines would operate on existing freight railroad lines using passenger cars. The trains would run primarily during rush hours and would serve a mostly suburban population. Chicago, Boston, and Los Angeles have commuter rail systems.

The concept is different from light-rail transit, which is used primarily for shorter trips in urban areas.

In 1998, the Legislature allotted \$40 million for light rail construction in the Hiawatha Corridor in Minneapolis. The U.S. Congress followed with a \$120 million appropriation. Construction for that project, which is under the Metropolitan Council's direction, could begin as early as 2000.

Although no plans were presented, department officials said it would be possible for commuter and light-rail systems to co-exist in the metro area.

The committee took no action on the report.

Long waits for driving tests

The lines are too long and the license plates are running out, said Katherine Burke Moore of the Driver and Vehicle Services Division of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

Moore presented the governor's budget recommendations for her department Feb. 8 to members of the House Transportation Finance Committee.

She said waiting times at driver's license testing centers are the longest they've ever been. In the summer of 1998, 40 percent of the state's testing sites exceeded the standard two-week appointment wait times.

A proposed biennial increase of \$1.9 million would pay for 18 new driver's license examiners, testing machines, and a 24-hour hotline to book appointments. The division also has plans to add five languages, including Vietnamese, Somalian, Hmong, and Russian, to its written test format.

In addition, Moore said the state will likely run out of license plates by April 1. The governor's budget includes an emergency



TECHNOLOGY

No OK for Y2K plan

A bill that aims to provide some damage control for the so-called Y2K bug was rejected Feb. 8 by the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee.

The bill (**HF73**) would have protected some types of Y2K information from civil liability and would have authorized the governor to declare a state of emergency based on problems associated with the bug.

It would have also allowed cities to incur debt for spending to address year 2000 problems without voter approval and appropri-

supplemental appropriation of \$629,000 to keep up with current demand plus additional funding for the biennium.

Moore said the increase was caused by a 4 percent growth in vehicles on the road, which surpassed the division's estimates. More cars than usual are receiving a third set of plates, too. The state requires license plates be replaced every seven years.

The division's budget also calls for \$580,000 to fund a pilot program for Internet and telephone vehicle registration over the next two years.

The committee took no action on the issue.



VETERANS

Extending deadline for bonuses

A bill that would extend the deadline for Persian Gulf War veterans to apply for a bonus was approved Feb. 8 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee.

The 1997 Legislature allocated \$17 million for bonuses and related administration costs, but fewer Persian Gulf War veterans than expected have applied for a bonus through the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs.

The law apportions bonuses at three levels. About 13,200 veterans who are eligible for the Southwest Asia Service Medal — essentially those who served in the war zone — can receive \$600 each. Another 30,500 veterans who were preparing to be shipped overseas can each receive \$300. The families of the nine Minnesota soldiers killed in the war are each eligible for \$2,000.

The bonuses are similar to those paid to veterans of the Vietnam War, except that families who lost a loved one during that war received \$1,000.

Rep. Jim Rostberg (R-Isanti), sponsor of the bill (**HF136**), said only about half of the \$17 million has been claimed by Gulf War veterans. The bill would extend the deadline to apply for a bonus from June 30, 1999, to June 30, 2001, in hopes of allowing more veterans to claim the money.

The bill now moves to the House State Government Finance Committee.

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

Preventing homelessness



Cindy Murphy Kelley, *right*, executive director of the Learning Center for Homeless Families, is accompanied by three of her students as she testifies Feb. 5 before the House Jobs & Economic Development Finance Committee concerning homeless prevention programs available for children and their families.

Profile of Learning fails test in the House

The House passed a bill (**HF15**) Feb. 11 that would repeal the state's Profile of Learning. The vote was 92-35.

The bill would do away with all provisions of the profile and create a "rigorous academic standards" plan that would incorporate basic skills testing and required subject areas, but leave the implementation and curriculum up to school districts.

The Profile of Learning is half of the state's Graduation Standards initiative, together with the basic skills tests. The program was designed to ensure students could apply knowledge on real-world tasks.

In order to graduate from high school, students must complete 24 content standards in 10 learning areas. The profile has been criticized by some educators, parents, and legislators as a set of mandated curricula with a burdensome system of record-keeping.

The version of the bill that passed contained significant changes from the original bill introduced by Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie).

The original measure would have reduced the Profile of Learning's required learning areas and content standards, added a standardized test, and eliminated performance packages, which are curriculum and assessment plans used by teachers to measure student achievement.

Kielkucki said the amended version was drafted in response to constituent concerns

and what he heard during long hours of public testimony in the House Education Policy Committee.

"It supports the responsibility of education and puts it back where it belongs — with our parents, our teachers, and our schools," Kielkucki said.

The bill calls for a foundation of reading, writing, and math, and would establish 15 subject areas that school districts must offer. Under an amendment offered by Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie) and approved on the House floor, abstinence-based sex education would also be required in school health classes.

Rep. Gene Pelowski (DFL-Winona), a strong supporter of the bill, said it would end an eight-year cycle of "bashing public education" under former Gov. Arne Carlson.

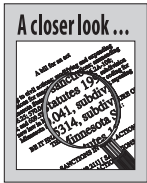
Many DFLers objected to the bill, saying it goes too far in setting new standards that could create problems similar to those that teachers currently have with the Profile of Learning. "We are not fixing it by gutting it," said Rep. Leslie Schumacher (DFL-Princeton). "We are not fixing it by shoving politics down our children's throats."

Others said teachers, administrators, and parents were not given enough time to respond to the amended version of the bill, and should have been brought in for committee testimony.

HF15 goes to the Senate.

Task force creates plan to allow studs, fix trail damage

By Jon Fure



Repealing the statewide ban on metal traction devices — or studs — for snowmobiles was a high priority for several House members this session.

The House passed a bill Jan. 21 that would repeal the ban, with bill supporters citing potential losses in tourism revenue and other problems with the 1998 law.

Damage to state-funded paved trails was one of the main factors that led to the ban. Although stud use was already prohibited on paved trails, some felt that a statewide ban of stud use on all state surfaces — including public lands, unpaved trails, and roads — was necessary to curb the ongoing, illegal use of studs on paved trails.

The ban is set to go into effect July 1, and snowmobilers who use studs this winter are required to pay a special fee.

Repairing the damage to state trails has been estimated at \$1 million, with damage to local and county trails bringing the estimate up to \$3 million.

Proponents of the bill (**HF6**) vowed to find solutions to trail damage and other stud-related problems in separate legislation, and the Outdoor Recreation Task Force was formed to study those issues in more detail.

“We wanted to fast track that bill because we want to get the tourism back,” said Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), task force chair and sponsor of **HF6**. “But we wanted more public input on those other issues, so that’s why we created the task force.”

A bill has been drafted, but not yet introduced, that incorporates the findings of the House task force. The bill would require snowmobilers who use studs to help pay for damage to paved trails.

Minnesota residents who wish to use snowmobile studs would be able to purchase a \$10 sticker to be displayed on their machine, similar to the state licenses required for all snowmobiles. Revenue from the sticker would go to the snowmobile trails and enforcement account in the state’s natural resources fund, and it could only be spent on repairing publicly owned paved trails.

Those provisions aim to address what many see as a problem with the 1998 law. That measure requires snowmobilers to purchase a \$50 sticker if they want to use metal studs until the ban becomes effective later this year. But the law does not include a mechanism to



A wide-reaching ban on snowmobile studs would be repealed under a bill already passed by the House, but a second measure expected to be introduced would make snowmobilers financially responsible for damage done to paved trails resulting from illegal use of the metal studs.

spend that money on trail repairs or the like.

The task force proposal would raise money to repair trails over the next five years, instead of trying to repair all the damage in one year.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has provided estimates of the revenue from the \$10 stickers, assuming there are 277,000 registered snowmobiles in the state. If 30 percent of those registered snowmobile users were to buy a sticker, \$831,000 would be raised. If 40 percent use the sticker, more than \$1.1 million would be generated, and \$1.39 million would be generated if 50 percent of registered snowmobiles use the sticker.

The department also noted that keeping the ban means the state would lose sales tax revenue from the sale of snowmobile studs.

Hackbarth said Feb. 10 that the task force will not continue meeting. He said he plans to present a bill and a report on the task force’s findings to the chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee, Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount).

Hackbarth’s proposal would not charge a fee to non-Minnesota residents. Task force member Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) said tourism in outstate areas has already suffered from the stud ban, and that excluding non-residents from the fee would be like “extending an olive branch” to welcome snowmobilers from Wisconsin and other neighboring states.

Snowmobiling on Minnesota’s lakes and trails has brought in millions of dollars in tourism revenue, according to the Minnesota

Office of Tourism. A 1996 survey of registered snowmobile owners estimated that Minnesotans spent almost \$104 million related to snowmobile use. Snowmobilers from outside the state spent an estimated \$43.8 million that year, according to the survey.

Hackbarth said the looming stud ban has already caused people from other states to avoid snowmobiling in Minnesota.

“I’ve gotten calls from Illinois, Iowa, South Dakota, and North Dakota,” Hackbarth said. “They’ve said, ‘Why should I go to Minnesota this year or ever again?’ We’ve already taken a big, big hit.”

Not only has Hackbarth heard from people outside the state, but, he said, metro-area snowmobilers have said they are choosing to take their snowmobiles to northern Wisconsin or Michigan to avoid having to take the studs off their machines or pay additional fees.

Since passing the House, **HF6** has moved to the Senate. It was approved by the Senate Environment and Natural Resources and State Government Finance committees and now moves to the Senate floor.

The Senate amended the bill to include fines for snowmobilers caught using studs on paved trails. The first offense would be a \$50 fine, the second offense would be no more than \$300, and subsequent offenses would be no more than \$600. Under the 1998 law, second or subsequent violations of the stud ban are punishable by confiscating the violator’s snowmobile. **HF6** would repeal that penalty. 🐾

Minnesotan cast crucial vote to save Andrew Johnson

By Grant Martin

When Minnesota's Republican Legislature sent Daniel S. Norton to Washington, D.C. to serve as U.S. senator, legislators expected him to tow the party line.

Norton, however, chose to follow his own path, including casting a crucial vote for acquittal at President Andrew Johnson's impeachment trial.

Norton served as a state senator from Winona from 1863 to 1865. In his first election bid, he failed to receive the Republican endorsement at the district convention. So he briefly joined with the Democratic Party and won the election. While serving in the state Senate, he quickly went back to calling himself a Republican.

Norton was elected to the U. S. Senate in 1865. After a desperate fight to gain the Republican caucus endorsement, Norton didn't even attend the full vote by a joint session of the Minnesota Legislature. Elected 46-12 over the Democratic nominee, Mr. Norton was off to Washington.

In the years leading up to the 1868 impeachment, Republicans both nationally and in Minnesota had been dissatisfied with their Democratic president.

Johnson, a former slave owner who had served as the military governor of Tennessee under Union occupation, became president following President Abraham Lincoln's assassination in April 1865.

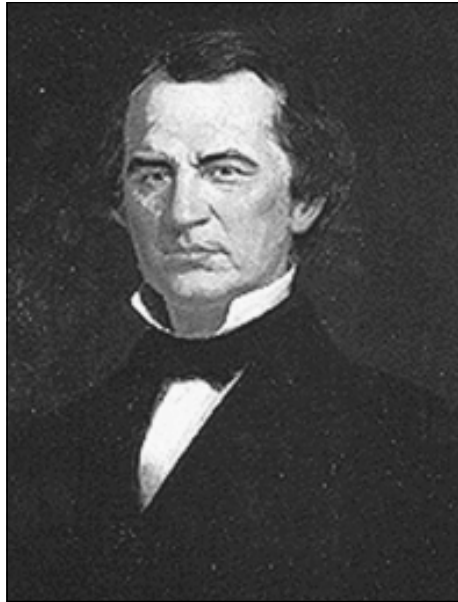
Johnson's presidency was defined by his continual battle with the Republican-controlled Congress, primarily over the issue of how to bring the 11 states of the Confederacy back into the Union.

Johnson believed that the former Confederate states should be brought back to the Union as quickly as possible. Republicans, however, wanted several safeguards put into place to ensure that the South would not rise again. Norton went against his Republican colleagues and sided with Johnson on such issues.

In 1866, Norton voted against the Republican civil rights bill and the supplementary Freedman's Bureau bill. Both bills were later vetoed by Johnson.

Norton voted against the attempt to override the veto of the civil rights bill, and later voted against the joint resolution to send the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution to the state legislatures.

Norton's votes went unnoticed in Minne-



President Andrew Johnson survived an impeachment trial thanks in part to the support of Daniel S. Norton, a U.S. senator from Minnesota.

sota for the most part. However, William Pitt Murray, a Democrat serving in the state Senate, was keeping an eye on Norton's activity in Congress. At the close of the 1866 session, Murray offered a resolution thanking Norton for his statesmanship and his recent votes in Congress.

Republicans in the Minnesota Senate, thinking Murray's resolution a concession to one of their own, gladly supported his decree, and it was adopted.

That very day, Norton was casting a vote against a Republican bill that would have excluded southern senators and representatives from serving in Congress until the members approved their admissions.

In June 1866, Johnson, who had grown tired of fighting the Republicans Congress, called for the creation of a new party, which he christened the National Union movement. Johnson hoped to combine the political support of Democrats and conservative Republicans.

In Washington, Republicans claimed that Johnson's actions were simply a way to win support for Democrats, and promised to run out of the party any Republicans who participated. Norton officially endorsed Johnson's National Union movement.

H. P. Hall, the Republican editor of the St. Paul Press at the time, felt that Norton's primary purpose in siding with Johnson had to do with political advantage.

"Here Norton saw, or thought he saw, his

opportunity," Hall wrote. "Johnson was notoriously exchanging patronage for support, and, to Norton's vision, his becoming a supporter of the president would enable him to dispense all the patronage of Minnesota. He accordingly Andy Johnsonized as a full-fledged Democrat."

When the Minnesota Legislature met in 1867, Norton's activity soon became the subject of debate.

The Minnesota House passed a resolution declaring that Norton had "wickedly betrayed and renounced fidelity to his former expressed principles." The resolution suggested that he should resign his office as senator. The Minnesota Senate passed a similar decree.

From that point on, Norton considered himself excommunicated from the party, and he voted consistently with the Democrats.

The final straw for the Republican Congress came when Johnson attempted to fire Edwin M. Stanton from his position as the Secretary of War. The House of Representatives impeached Johnson in February 1868, based on Johnson's violation of the Tenure of Office Act. That law, passed over Johnson's veto, required the president to seek permission from Congress to fire a cabinet member.

The Minnesota Legislature passed a joint resolution March 6, 1868, giving hearty support to Congress' efforts to impeach Johnson.

On May 16, Johnson held on to the presidency by a single vote, 39-16. Most noticeable, seven radical Republicans voted against their caucus, and for acquittal.

When the votes for impeachment were listed in the papers, the Republican's names were listed in Roman letters, and Democrats were listed in italics. Norton's "not guilty" vote was listed in italics. Hall wrote that Norton's vote on impeachment came as a surprise to no one.

"Mr. Norton, though elected by a Legislature overwhelmingly Republican, was not regarded as a traitor to his party in his vote against impeachment," Hall wrote. "He had long since gone over to the Democrats, and his name simply appeared in the impeachment voting list in italics. Even the Minnesota Republican papers did not criticize Norton then."

In a speech to a Democratic rally in 1869, Norton defended his departure from the Republican ranks. "I saw that the course of a man who desired to restore his country and bring in to its olden-time reunion and glory did not lie with that party and with the prosecution of its measure and what it proposed," he said. "So I left it."



Speaker gives education on future of online learning

By Paul Wahl



If you can earn a degree in front of your computer at home, why venture out into the cold and snow to sit in a classroom?

And what's in store for Minnesota's higher education programs given the proliferation of learning opportunities on the World Wide Web?

Those were key questions that Michael Dolence asked legislators and others to consider in a presentation Feb. 11 at the Minnesota History Center.

Dolence, a consultant and education researcher, said a "new learning landscape" was emerging, requiring greater flexibility in higher education and innovative planning and legislation.

The speech was part of the Capitol Forum Series, an annual series of lectures sponsored by the McKnight Foundation and Minnesota Technology, Inc.

In a presentation filled with statistics, Dolence painted a challenging picture for traditional higher education.

He said there are about 76 million learners nationwide in adult education programs — over half of them for work-related purposes and almost as many for personal enrichment.

Of the 40 million who undertook work-related learning, only 20 percent were enrolled in traditional post-secondary education. The bulk were part of education programs sponsored by businesses.

Dolence said that the country's Big Three auto companies each spend nearly a billion dollars apiece on "corporate universities." That's \$3 billion that ordinarily would be spent at the nation's colleges and universities. It's not being spent there, he said, primarily because the companies could not find the educational packages they needed for their workers.

Companies have told Dolence that learning in the 21st century is so important to their bottom line and their worldwide competitiveness that they have established corporate universities in order to advance their learning goals at a more rapid rate than competitors and thereby seize their strategic position for the future.

Meanwhile, traditional higher education programs are worrying about how much time a student spends in a classroom and about hurtful assessment processes.

"We place learners in an environment where



Michael Dolence, a higher education consultant, tells lawmakers and staff that computer technology will soon revolutionize educational programs. Dolence spoke Feb. 10 at the third event of this year's Capitol Forum Series.

they feel they can't learn," Dolence said. "Do we care more about learning and building a learning environment or keeping students in seats? Sixty-five percent of 40 million students come self-funded and we've let it go because of our rules.

"If we cannot build a system, if you as a legislators cannot enable higher education to respond to that kind of blossoming need, then we are going to give up all of that learning to commercial operations."

Dolence, who has taught extensively and is currently a business owner, said that's dangerous because it means a competitive disadvantage for labor supply purposes.

Noting that states can't legally restrict the flow of information across state lines, Dolence said the colleges of the future will have to be prepared to compete globally.

"The minute that happens, the state purview over education policy becomes diminished," he said. "It's not because we don't have a commitment to fund education, it's because no matter what we do to curriculum in the state, nimble competitors from outside our state can now steal students from our own universities."

Dolence lauded Minnesota's commitment to education as among the best "on the planet," but added one caveat.

"It's great now, but everyone on the planet is after it," he said. "They want to leapfrog over

you to seize high ground by capitalizing on early acknowledgement that the rules have changed."

Dolence believes there's little time to waste. Forty states, including Minnesota, have already adopted virtual university strategies, and more than 17,000 courses are already offered online. Some entities have created "credit banking," which allows students to pick and choose online courses that best suit their needs and gather them under one umbrella for degree-granting purposes.

He said eventually the federal government will adapt its educational loan and grant programs to cover Internet-based learning, which should facilitate a giant burst in popularity of that format.

Dolence admitted that not everything can be taught online. He said there will always be a need for the traditional classroom.

"What online sets us is a more fluid learning system to combine both, and the state has to protect both," he said.

In response to a question about Minnesota's Profile of Learning, Dolence said the program is commendable because it moves away from measuring students by how much time is spent in a seat and bases performance measurements instead on how much a student learns.



For new DFLer, thoughtfulness is the name of the game

By Jon Fure

The 1998 election was a satisfying one for Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington). Not only did she win as a DFLer in a tradition-



Rep. Ann Lenczewski

ally Republican district, she was the only member of her party statewide to gain a seat that was last held by a Republican.

And she did it with a name that doesn't exactly lend itself to catchy slogans.

"People have said for years that I should change my name," she said. "But I like my name. I think it's interesting."

Her husband's name is Nels Erickson, and Lenczewski said her decision to keep her surname was not some sort of statement. She would have been just as happy to be known as Ann Erickson, but she's learned to like having a name that makes her stand out in a crowd.

"I talked to him and said I was thinking about keeping my name, and he said, 'That's fine, just don't ask me to take it,'" she recalled. "But if he had had a problem with it, I would have changed it."

Bloomington residents have gotten used to seeing and hearing Lenczewski's name. She had been on the city council there for five years. Still, she had her name spelled phonetically (len-CHESS-key) on her campaign signs so her supporters could all pronounce the name they checked on the ballot.

As a city council member, Lenczewski also

stood out because she was always the only Democrat, but that never bothered her.

"I'm not a very partisan person," she said. "I'm used to working with Republicans."

Her main goals as a House member are to study hard and make informed, logical decisions — instead of having a biased agenda or making a decision before listening to the debate.

"I love public policy," she said. "I enjoy the debate of public policy. And being on the council heightened my awareness, seeing how much the state was influencing what we tried to accomplish as a council."

She became interested in holding public office when she began serving on some local advisory commissions and task forces.

"I looked at the elected body and said to myself, 'I could do that,'" she said. "It always looks like an easier job from the outside."

She got into politics to do what she can to improve people's lives.

"I know that sounds corny, but that's been my experience with elected officials, both Republicans and Democrats," she said. "No matter how conservative or liberal you are, you really are trying to make things better for people. I know people don't always believe that, but I really have found that to be true most of the time."

She credits her parents for influencing her interest in public policy. Her mother was valedictorian at the College of St. Catherine and later earned a graduate degree in a time when not many women attended to college. Her father earned several graduate degrees and

taught in the Edina school district, so education and related issues were frequent topics of discussion at the Lenczewski dinner table.

Lenczewski has a bachelor's degree in psychology from the College of St. Benedict and studied at the University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs.

She is a lifelong Bloomington resident, a graduate of Thomas Jefferson Senior High School, and she has four children ages 2, 6, 8, and 9.

As a member of the House Taxes Committee, Lenczewski said she is proud to have been a part of the bipartisan effort to fast track HF1, a tax rebate bill passed by the House Feb. 4. She said she feels fortunate to be on the tax panel, which is an uncommon assignment for a freshman lawmaker.

With returning the state tax surplus to residents being in the forefront at the Legislature this year, Lenczewski said she has been told the taxes committee is working at a faster pace than usual. She also serves on the Property Taxes Division of the Taxes Committee, as well as the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs, Transportation Finance, and Transportation Policy committees.

District 40B

1995 population: 32,499

Largest city: Bloomington

County: Hennepin

Location: southwestern metro

Top concern: "To work as bipartisanship as possible in a very partisan environment, and to stay in touch with people in my district."

— Rep. Ann Lenczewski

NOTES

"Anybody got a soldering gun?" asked Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights), popping up from behind the sound system control panel with a pen knife in one hand and tape in the other.

Unfortunately, the lawmakers and lobbyists waiting for the start of the House Crime Prevention Committee meeting Feb. 9 just shrugged their shoulders. Broecker, acting as committee chair while Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove) recovered from surgery, couldn't start the meeting because of a short in the system that records the meetings. Broecker finally got the system working with the help of a page who held the wires together throughout the meeting.

Gov. Jesse Ventura has announced that he will give his State of the State Address at noon March 2 in the House chamber.

Traditionally, governors have made their speeches nearer the beginning of the legislative session, but Ventura, who ad-libbed his brief inaugural speech, has been slow in committing to a date. Perhaps he has been preparing some notes on the \$23 billion budget he released a couple weeks ago.

The governor will address members of the House and Senate, and there is limited seating for members of the public in the House gallery.

During a Feb. 11 hearing on a bill that would exempt tickets for Minnesota State High School League events from sales taxes, several members of the House Taxes Committee wondered what the league would do with the money saved.

David Stead, the league's executive director, assured the committee the money would be returned to member schools.

"I think I can guarantee that they won't use it to raise the salaries for referees," said the bill's sponsor, Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey), noting the presence of House Speaker Steven Sviggum, who has been a referee for events sponsored by the league over the years.

Sviggum said he was pleased to hear that and added he supported the bill.

For Cassell, helping schools supercedes other concerns

By Sarah Hallonquist

Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria) used to be a cowboy, but when it came to running for the Legislature, it was Cassell who had to be roped in for the job.



Rep. George Cassell

He was barely a year into his retirement as a school superintendent when Alexandria community leaders asked him if he'd consider running for the House seat vacated by former Rep. Hilda Bettermann.

Cassell, 63, had been looking forward to a less public lifestyle and initially wasn't sure if he was up for a legislative career. But after talking it over with family members and doing a lot of thinking, Cassell and his wife, Carol, decided to accept what they considered another call to serve the public.

For now, he's put off work on his 80-acre hobby farm outside Alexandria, and stays in a rented apartment in downtown St. Paul during the week.

The former Wyoming cowboy keeps a cowboy hat with a snakeskin band hanging in his office, and he jokingly threatens to wear his spurs onto the House floor if he needs to dig in his heels during debate. His well-worn boots sit waiting near the cowboy hat.

Carol works alongside her husband almost every day. Behind a laptop computer and seated at a table stacked with papers, she helps him stay organized and efficient.

She's used to the task, having moved with him between various teaching and superintendent positions from Minnesota to Idaho to Wyoming and back to Minnesota. Married in 1955, the couple has three grown children — Susan, George Jr., and Robert — and nine

grandchildren. Two more grandchildren are on the way.

After retiring from education in 1997, Cassell thought he'd have some time to travel and get away from life in a fishbowl.

He was superintendent of the Alexandria schools for 10 and one-half years. Before that, he held two other superintendent positions, directed a special education center, led an elementary school as a principal, coached track and basketball, and worked as a school administrator while teaching middle school students.

Less than a full month after his retirement, Cassell received a request to be an interim superintendent in Herman, Minn. He took the part-time position, unwilling to refuse the call for help.

The Cassell family has almost always had a busy schedule. Right out of high school in Tomahawk, Wis., George traveled to Wyoming to work on a ranch. After nearly a year, he received a draft notice, so he returned to Wisconsin and joined the Coast Guard.

The Cassells were married in 1955 and spent the last three years of George's tour of duty together. Their first child was born in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., just before they were transferred to Rhodes, Greece, and their second child was born in Africa just before they returned to the United States. After his discharge, Cassell worked for his father while going to college to begin his career in education. The couple's third child was born during Cassell's first year in college.

Although they've often yearned to live a quieter life, the Cassells have resolved to embrace whatever comes their way.

"We just try to enjoy life and make the best out of whatever we're doing," Carol said.

Cassell's legislative priorities reflect his experience and thoughtful approach to his job.

He is sponsoring a bill (HF355) that would repeal a law requiring some businesses to pay their sales taxes in June. The law was passed in the 1980s when the state needed the early payments to balance its budget, but Cassell said the law is not necessary anymore. He also supports lowering property taxes, a system that he believes is regressive.

Cassell earned his degrees — all the way up to a doctorate — at universities, but he also believes practical experience can help educators as much as anything when they are learning the trade.

Between three states, Cassell has 35 years in education under his belt. Minnesota's system is one of the best, he said.

He supports local control of schools and firmly believes teachers have the best perspective on solutions to classroom problems.

As a superintendent, he said he tried to allow teachers to seek creative solutions to classroom problems, rather than addressing them with top-down mandates.

"I think we've ignored that principle in many of the recent innovations we have attempted in education," he said.

Cassell said his philosophy as a superintendent was that "great things happen when we work together and do not care who gets the credit." And, he said, that philosophy has followed him to the House.

District 10B

1995 population: 34,942

Largest city: Alexandria

Counties: Douglas, Pope, and Stearns

Location: west-central Minnesota

Top concern: "The two major issues are the rapidly accelerating property taxes and assuring there is local control of education."

— Rep. George Cassell

Frequently called numbers

(all numbers are area code 651)

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol 296-0271

Voice mail/order bills 296-2343

Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate

110 Capitol 296-2887

Index, House

211 Capitol 296-6646

Information, Senate

231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House

175 State Office Building 296-2146

Committee Hotline, Senate 296-8088

Committee Hotline, House 296-9283

Sergeant at Arms, Senate

Senate Chamber 296-7159/6-1119

Sergeant at Arms, House

45 State Office Building 296-4860

Legislative Reference Library

645 State Office Building 296-3398

Revisor of Statutes

700 State Office Building 296-2868

Governor's Office

130 Capitol 296-3391

Attorney General's Office

102 Capitol 296-6196

Secretary of State's Office

180 State Office Building 296-9208

Capitol Security

B-4 Capitol 296-6741

Emergency 296-2100

TTY*, Senate 296-0250

Toll free 1-888-234-1112

TTY*, House 296-9896

Toll free 1-800-657-3550



How to get here

Location

The Capitol complex is north of I-94, just minutes from downtown St. Paul. It is accessible from the east and west on I-94, and from the north and south on I-35E.

I-94 eastbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn left. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

I-94 westbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn right. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

I-35E northbound: Exit at Kellogg Boulevard. Turn left. Go to John Ireland Boulevard and turn right. Metered parking spaces line both sides of the boulevard.

I-35E southbound: Exit at University Avenue. Turn right. Go to Rice Street and turn left. Go one block and turn left to enter Parking Lot D.

Visiting the Minnesota State Capitol complex can be a rewarding and educational experience for everyone. There are buildings to explore and tours to take almost any time you choose to visit. And when the Legislature is in session during the first part of every year, there are floor sessions to observe, committee meetings to attend, and legislators to meet. Remember that this is your state Capitol, and you are always welcome.

Parking

Public metered parking is available in Lot Q, north of the Capitol at Cedar Street and Sherburne Avenue; Lot D, next to the State Office Building off Rice Street on Aurora Avenue; Lot F, directly behind the Transportation Building; Lot K, across from the Armory on Cedar Street (enter from 12th Street); and on the orange level of the Centennial Office Building Ramp at Cedar Street and Constitution Avenue. All-day metered parking is available in Lot Q. Capitol Security personnel will issue tickets for expired meters.

All-day parking permits may be purchased for \$3.50 from Plant Management on the third floor of the Ford Building. Cash or checks are accepted and correct change is appreciated. For more information, call (651) 297-3993.

Outdoor handicapped parking is available in Lot O, which is on the northeast side of the Capitol, and in Lot F.

Indoor handicapped parking is available on the lower level of the State Office Building Ramp (use the call box at the ramp entrance to gain entry); on the blue level of the Centennial

Office Building Ramp; and on the entry level of the Administration Building Ramp (two stalls).

There are two handicapped entrances to the Capitol. One is on the northeast side of the building, just off Lot O; the other is a drop-off entrance under the south main steps at the front of the building.

Since parking is limited during legislative sessions, busing may be easier. Freeway express bus service is available. Bus number 94B takes you to the Capitol and the State Office Building. Call the Transit Information Center at (651) 349-7000 for schedule and route information.

What to do

Tours

Tours of the Capitol are offered through the Capitol Historic Site Program of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Tour guides lead the 45-minute tours on the hour Mondays through Fridays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (last tour leaves at 4 p.m.); Saturdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.); and Sundays between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.). The tours are free of charge and begin at the Capitol's information desk at the end of the corridor to the right of the main entrance. Brochures in about 20 foreign languages also are available there.

Tour participants may request customized tours that emphasize either the building or state government.

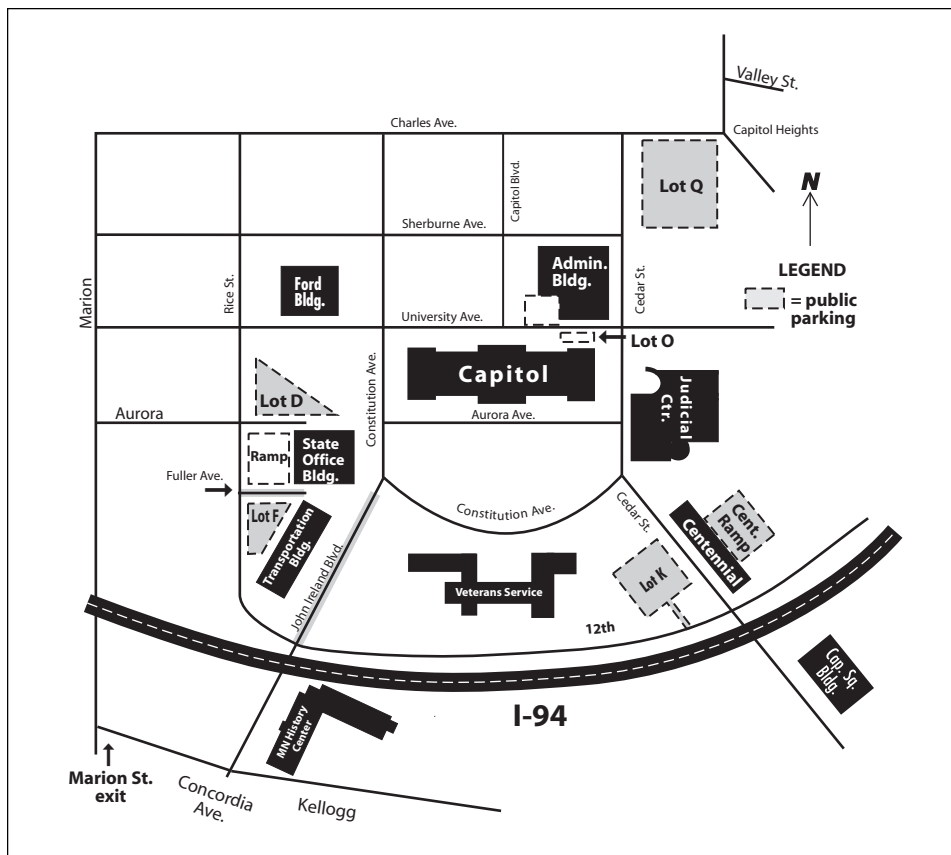
Historical society officials ask that groups of 10 or more call at least two weeks in advance to reserve a tour time.

The society offers "Voice of the People: Your Role in Minnesota Government," a half-day session for students in grades 9-12.

Also, special tour events are scheduled monthly throughout the year. Some of these events entail admission fees; others are free. A special events guide is available upon request.

For a recorded message regarding tours and events, call (651) 297-3521.

For more information about the tours or to reserve a time, call the Capitol Historic Site Program, (651) 296-2881.



Legislative sessions

Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate debate bills when the Legislature is in session.

At the beginning of a legislative session, the pace of floor sessions is generally slow as new bills are assigned to committees and non-controversial items are discussed. At about the session's midpoint, however, the legislative pace quickens.

The House usually meets at 2:30 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays, and the Senate meets at 11:30 a.m. Mondays and at 9 a.m. Thursdays during the first few weeks. House floor sessions are scheduled for the afternoon because committees meet in the morning and early afternoon. As the session nears the end, however, both bodies may meet several times a day, often into the night.

All House and Senate floor sessions are open to the public. Visitors interested in observing these sessions may call the House Chief Clerk's Office, (651) 296-2314, or Senate Information, (651) 296-0504, with questions. Spectators may sit in the galleries of either chamber.

Committee meetings

Visitors wanting to attend a committee meeting may call the committee hotlines for prerecorded messages with the meeting times and agendas for each day: House, (651) 296-9283; Senate, (651) 296-8088. Printed agendas for the week also appear in each issue of the *Session Weekly* and the *Senate Briefly*.

Committee meetings are open to the public. When a public hearing is scheduled, the committee may listen to comments from the audience (when time permits) in addition to the scheduled speakers. Committees have different policies on hearing testimony depending upon their size and workload. Informational handouts that committee members receive during meetings or hearings are considered public information and are available to the audience on a first-come, first-served basis.

Major proposals often have several public hearings so committee members may listen to all arguments for and against a bill.

Each committee has a chair, vice chair, administrator, and legislative assistant. A list of committees and members is available in the House Public Information Office in Room 175, State Office Building or the Senate Information Office in Room 231, State Capitol.

Groups and individuals wishing to testify before a committee should call the appropriate committee's legislative assistant well in advance of the meeting and ask to be placed on the agenda. Committees prefer requests one week in advance but will accept later notification when unexpected issues appear on the committee schedule. A brochure containing tips on testifying at legislative committee hear-

ings is available from the House Public Information Office.

Dining

Most buildings in the Capitol complex have their own cafeterias. The small State Office Building cafeteria is usually open only when the Legislature is in session, but it will remain open year-round during the restoration of the Capitol cafeteria, due to be completed in 2000. A large, year-round cafeteria is available in the Transportation Building.

Also, there are many restaurants within walking distance. On Rice Street, there is Benjamin's Restaurant and Lounge located inside the Kelly Inn, Cafe Capitol, the Lagoon Vietnamese Restaurant, White Castle, and El Bravo Mexican Restaurant. On University Avenue, there is McDonald's, Burger King, Mai Village, and other restaurants. There also are dozens of restaurants only minutes away in downtown St. Paul. Bus rides downtown cost 25 cents. Bus stops are located Constitution Avenue.

Group visits

Sometimes groups plan a "legislative day" at the Capitol in order to express a particular viewpoint to legislators.

Rooms for special conferences or speakers can be reserved by calling the State Office Building room scheduler at (651) 296-5408 or the Capitol room scheduler at (651) 296-0866.

If group members want to meet with their individual legislators or testify before a committee (see "Committee meetings"), arrangements should be made at least a week in advance.

Often such groups have members wear a distinctive name tag or badge to indicate their concern about a particular issue.

Groups planning a trip to the Capitol should remember that seating is fairly limited in some committee rooms — particularly when the topic is controversial.

E-mail schedules

Anyone with e-mail can receive both House and Senate committee schedules. To receive the House schedule, send a message to:

listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us
Leave the subject line blank, and in the body of the message, enter:

subscribe h-schedules

To receive the Senate schedule, send a message to:

listserv@senate.leg.state.mn.us

Leave the subject line blank, and in the body of the message, enter:

subscribe sen-schedules

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* newsmagazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

House Television Services

216C State Capitol (651) 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>

All televised floor sessions and committee hearings are close-captioned for people with hearing impairments.

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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 (651) 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 committee, topic, author, file number, and other categories. The office can also give you the current status of legislation.

Senate Information Office

231 State Capitol (651) 296-0504

The Senate Information Office is responsible for all information about the Senate, including the committee schedule, bill status, legislator information, and the distribution of bill copies.

Senate Media Services

B-44 State Capitol (651) 296-0264

Senate Media Services, a bipartisan office, produces television programs, multi-media productions, scriptwriting, photography and graphics. It offers live coverage of the Senate floor sessions and some committee hearings.

Bill Introductions

HF530-HF709

Tuesday, Feb. 9

HF530—Orfield (DFL) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

County commissioners authorized to serve as metropolitan council members, candidate contributions regulated, and study required.

HF531—Orfield (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Portable wading pools provided public swimming pool regulations exemption, certain day care home use permitted, and health and human services rules amended.

HF532—Orfield (DFL) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Metropolitan Council made an elective body, and candidate contributions regulated.

HF533—Orfield (DFL) **Taxes**

Individual income tax rates reduced.

HF534—Hackbarth (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Municipal tort liability exclusion provided for special wildlife hunting or trapping season losses.

HF535—Greiling (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Campaign finance definitions clarified, reporting requirements modified, public subsidy return policy required, and penalties provided.

HF536—Broecker (R) **Crime Prevention**

Carisoprodol schedule IV controlled substance listing effective date delayed.

HF537—Boudreau (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Complementary and alternative health care freedom of access act adopted.

HF538—Abrams (R) **Taxes**

Resident definition clarified related to individual income tax.

HF539—Huntley (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

MFIP face-to-face orientation exemption provided for minor parents.

HF540—Mullery (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

MinnesotaCare eligibility requirements exemption provided for persons terminated from continuation coverage.

HF541—Stanek (R) **Civil Law**

Tort liability relief provided to 911 dispatchers giving prearrival medical advice.

HF542—Bishop (R) **Crime Prevention**

Number of district court judges increased.

HF543—Peterson (DFL) **Agriculture Policy**

Cooperatively owned livestock processing plant development program established and money appropriated.

HF544—Anderson, I. (DFL) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Ontario; Office of the United States Trade Representative urged to resolve Canadian international trade agreement violations affecting Minnesota tourism.

HF545—Solberg (DFL) **Crime Prevention**

Sale of tobacco to minors criminal penalties modified.

HF546—Greenfield (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Federal TANF block grant funds transferred to the child care block grant, Title XX, and MFIP employment and training grants; and money appropriated.

HF547—Greenfield (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Single adults and households without children MinnesotaCare eligibility expanded.

HF548—Paulsen (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Senate and House of Representatives size reduced.

HF549—Lenczewski (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Former legislators prohibited from lobbying for one year after leaving office.

HF550—Chaudhary (DFL) **Transportation Finance**

Columbia Heights streetscape improvements funded and money appropriated.

HF551—Mulder (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Luverne community hospital privatization pension benefit accommodation provided for certain employees.

HF552—Chaudhary (DFL) **Transportation Finance**

Northstar corridor joint powers board grant provided for Fridley commuter rail station planning and design, and money appropriated.

HF553—Carruthers (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Volunteer firefighters allowed unpaid leave to perform duties.

HF554—Chaudhary (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

General education basic formula allowance inflationary increase provided and money appropriated.

HF555—Dorn (DFL) **Commerce**

Homeowner's insurance nonrenewal due to burglary prohibited.

HF556—Rukavina (DFL) **Transportation Policy**

St. Louis and Lake counties regional rail authority required to grant an easement across its right-of-way in Lakewood.

HF557—Tunheim (DFL) **Taxes**

Relative homestead treatment extended to include property occupied by the owner's niece or nephew.

HF558—Tunheim (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Ontario; northern Minnesota resorts affected by Canadian fishing limitations provided financial assistance and money appropriated.

HF559—Tunheim (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Canadian border; Northwest Angle tourism marketing and development funded, and money appropriated.

HF560—Bishop (R) **Crime Prevention**

Prosecutorial rebuttal report requested and order of final argument repealed.

HF561—Sykora (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Family homeless prevention and assistance program funded and money appropriated.

HF562—Paulsen (R) **Commerce**

Collection agencies regulated, out-of-state agencies exempted, and exception provided.

HF563—Ozment (R) **Taxes**

Farm machinery definition modified to include equipment used to produce flowering or ornamental plants including nursery stock relating to sales and use tax.

HF564—Ozment (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Automatic landscape irrigation system rain checks required.

HF565—Reuter (R) **Transportation Policy**

Driver right-hand lane use required unless overtaking slower vehicles.

HF566—Reuter (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Health care provider product and network contract stacking regulated, and remedies provided.

HF567—Hackbarth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Anoka County authorized to convey or sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water or wetlands.

HF568—Clark, K. (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
General and health care interpreter voluntary registration programs established, spoken language interpreter pilot training program developed, and money appropriated.

HF569—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Correctional employee retirement fund early retirement provisions modified.

HF570—Clark, K. (DFL)
Judiciary Finance
Intensive case management services provided for prostituted individuals and money appropriated.

HF571—Westrom (R)
Transportation Policy
Trunk highway contract documents required to express measurements in the English system only, and commissioner prohibited from requiring otherwise for county contracts.

HF572—Chaudhary (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Passenger automobile and hearse additional registration tax rate reduced, and motor vehicle sales tax revenue distribution provided.

HF573—Stang (R)
Transportation Policy
Excess rail bank land conveyance authorized.

HF574—McCollum (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 622, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale, provided alternative facilities bonding and levy program authority.

HF575—Lenczewski (DFL)
Taxes
Sales, use, and motor vehicle sales tax rates reduced.

HF576—Tunheim (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
State partisan primary voters authorized to vote for candidates from more than one political party.

HF577—Tuma (R)
Education Policy
Private career school requirements modified and clarified.

HF578—Skoglund (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Antipaper terrorism act; public official and employee protection provided, fraudulent lien filing prohibited, and remedies and penalties provided.

HF579—Larsen, P. (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Metropolitan waste control commission established, and disposal system ownership and operation transferred from the metropolitan council.

HF580—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Minnesota cold weather research center grants provided and money appropriated.

HF581—Rostberg (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund payments for failing individual sewage treatment systems authorized.

HF582—Kielkucki (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School finance system provided increased equity, general education formula allowance increased, and money appropriated.

HF583—Gunther (R)
Commerce
Township Mutual Insurance Company investments regulated.

HF584—Dawkins (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Low-income housing income tax credit provided.

HF585—Erickson (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Independent School District No. 473, Isle, community center grant match requirement modified.

HF586—Kielkucki (R)
Education Policy
Standard statewide application for employment form developed for licensed educational personnel, and money appropriated.

HF587—Chaudhary (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Columbia Heights authorized to establish an enterprise zone and high technology business tax incentives provided.

HF588—Anderson, B. (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Municipal board sunset provision repealed.

HF589—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Qualified tax-sheltered annuity vendors expanded for the purpose of employer contributions.

HF590—Anderson, B. (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Private property rights protection act adopted.

HF591—Anderson, B. (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Private property protection act adopted.

HF592—Larsen, P. (R)
Civil Law
Municipal utilities customer data classification provided.

HF593—Nornes (R)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Emergency services grant and transitional housing programs funded, and money appropriated.

HF594—Clark, K. (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Teenage prostitution prevention and intervention grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF595—Holsten (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Petrofund reimbursement reductions standard of proof provided, aboveground storage tank upgrade or closure reimbursed, and contaminated land cleanup regulated.

HF596—Solberg (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Tobacco settlement proceeds deposited in the health care access fund, MinnesotaCare premium and provider taxes repealed, senior citizen drug program funding cap removed, and eligibility recommendations required.

HF597—Larsen, P. (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Health record defined and provider definition modified.

HF598—McCollum (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Physicians assistants and supervising physicians provided immunity from civil liability for rendering care in disasters.

HF599—Huntley (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Federal TANF reserve account funds transferred to the child care and Title XX block grants.

Wednesday, Feb. 10

HF600—Skoglund (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Repeat felony offenders provided increased penalties and consecutive sentences authorized, tolling of a stay of sentence provided, and consecutive sentencing policy modified.

HF601—McCollum (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Minimum wage increased and indexed.

HF602—Peterson (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Madison historic preservation and downtown redevelopment program funded, bond issuance authorized, and money appropriated.

HF603—Murphy (DFL)
Commerce
Proctor authorized to issue an additional on-sale liquor license.

HF604—Luther (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
MinnesotaCare four-month uninsured requirement exemption provided, and part-time student eligibility requirements modified.

HF605—Tuma (R)
Education Policy
Diabetes and schools task force established, and money appropriated.

HF606—Peterson (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Ethanol producer payment eligibility expanded.

HF607—Peterson (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Madison historic preservation and downtown redevelopment program grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF608—Rukavina (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Municipal unincorporated land annexation procedures and criteria provided.

HF609—Westfall (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Mourning dove hunting season authorized, and stamps and impact report required.

HF610—Tingelstad (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
State safe drinking water act public water supply definition modified.

HF611—Rest (DFL)
Taxes
Materials used in metalcasting sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF612—Seifert, M. (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Minnesota tax increment financing district expenditures authorized.

HF613—Abrams (R)
Taxes
Taxpayers allowed an election to treat all income as business income for the purpose of corporate franchise tax.

HF614—Davids (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Community integrated service network reserve corridor expanded, and review organization definition modified.

HF615—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nursing facility provider training and education program established, and money appropriated.

HF616—McElroy (R)
Education Policy
School district general obligation debt allowed for special assessment prepayment.

HF617—Rukavina (DFL)
Taxes
Alcoholic beverage sales tax rate reduced.

HF618—Abeler (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School districts with significant enrollment eligible for free or reduced price lunches provided additional compensatory revenue.

HF619—Hackbarth (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Shooting ranges preserved, net losses limited, and relocation costs provided.

HF620—Orfield (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Metropolitan Council made an elective body, economic interest statements and candidate contributions regulated, report required, and money appropriated.

HF621—Fuller (R)
Crime Prevention
Arson definition expanded to include flammable and combustible gas, first degree arson plea agreements prohibited involving sprinklers, and juvenile fireball ignition penalties provided.

HF622—Clark, K. (DFL)
Civil Law
Names of elected officials registering property complaints made public.

HF623—Daggett (R)
Taxes
Production of water exemptions expanded for the purpose of sales and use tax.

HF624—Stanek (R)
Crime Prevention
Dishonored checks; theft and related crimes penalty uniformity provided, civil penalties increased, and pretrial diversion program created.

HF625—Solberg (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Grand Rapids Township authorized to hold November general elections.

HF626—Larsen, P. (R)
Judiciary Finance
State fire marshal division fire code development and training position funded, and money appropriated.

HF627—Larsen, P. (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Washington County; housing and redevelopment authority commissioners term length modified.

HF628—Fuller (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District Nos. 38, Red Lake, 115, Cass Lake, 299, Caledonia, and 306, LaPorte, maximum effort capital loans approved; bonds issued; and money appropriated.

HF629—Mariani (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Ethiopia; United States government memorialized to urge the Ethiopian government to respect the human rights of Eritreans.

HF630—Kubly (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Maximum allowable recreational vehicle combination length increased.

HF631—Kubly (DFL)
Transportation Policy
School buses required to load and unload students from designated off-shoulder bus stops at parental request, and stop signal arm and flashing red light use required.

HF632—Kubly (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Rural dispute resolution act adopted, and money appropriated.

HF633—Seagren (R)
Judiciary Finance
Cornerstone Advocacy Services, Inc. battered women shelter services grant provided and money appropriated.

HF634—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Crisis nursery development funding increased and money appropriated.

HF635—Osskopp (R)
Education Policy
Independent school district No. 253, Goodhue, permitted to begin school on August 30, 1999.

HF636—Paymar (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Tobacco manufacturers required to report hazardous substances to assist in local ordinance enforcement.

HF637—Paymar (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Camp Ripley work program scope expanded.

HF638—Haas (R)
Education Policy
Virtual school district created and money appropriated.

HF639—Rest (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Elective office age eligibility lowered and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF640—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
State Advisory Council on Mental Health membership, duties, and reporting requirements modified.

HF641—McCollum (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Combat wounded veterans honorary plaque placed in the court of honor on the capitol mall.

HF642—Finseth (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 627, Oklee, fund transfer authorized.

HF643—Bishop (R)
Civil Law
All persons under civil commitment status provided the same legal rights.

HF644—Holsten (R)
Commerce
Heating and ventilating contractor licensing required, advisory council created, powers and duties prescribed, penalties imposed, and money appropriated.

HF645—Tingelstad (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Water supply and wastewater treatment operator certification requirements federal conformity provided, and advisory council expiration date eliminated.

HF646—Gunther (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Youth intervention program grants provided and money appropriated.

HF647—Sykora (R)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Maximum child care assistance reimbursement increased, payment requirements modified, and streamlined system developed.

HF648—Kielkucki (R)
Education Policy
State high school league provisions modified.

HF649—Rostberg (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Persons with mental illness employment support services and programs standards established, and money appropriated.

HF650—Hackbarth (R)
Civil Law

Shooting range servitudes provided and operator liability limited.

Thursday, Feb. 11

HF651—Trimble (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Labor interpretive center appropriated money.

HF652—Westerberg (R)
Crime Prevention

Disorderly conduct law application clarified to include acts committed in the presence of peace officers or public safety personnel.

HF653—Osskopp (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Legal firearm requirements for taking big game modified.

HF654—Tingelstad (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Metropolitan area regional parks maintenance and operation funded, and money appropriated.

HF655—Anderson, B. (R)
K-12 Education Finance

School district maximum effort debt service levy definition and loan repayment account modified.

HF656—Daggett (R)
Taxes

Tree growth tax law public hunting and fishing requirement exception created for nonindustrial privately owned forest land.

HF657—Trimble (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

St. Paul teachers retirement fund investment by the state board of investment provided.

HF658—Osskopp (R)
State Government Finance

Noncommercial television stations provided grants for conversion to digital broadcast signals, and money appropriated.

HF659—Davids (R)
Commerce

Health care coverage required for diagnostic or surgical procedures involving the bones and joints of the jaw or face.

HF660—Smith (R)
Civil Law

Joint custody procedures and presumptions modified.

HF661—Haas (R)
Commerce

State registration exemption provided for certain securities, and timely issuance of small company offering registered securities authorized.

HF662—Sykora (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Partners for quality school improvement pilot training program appropriated money.

HF663—Daggett (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

State project wage payment provisions modified.

HF664—Knoblach (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Campaign finance provisions modified.

HF665—Wenzel (DFL)
Crime Prevention

Marijuana; possession or sale of small amounts provided increased criminal penalties.

HF666—Storm (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Public employees retirement association salary credit purchase authorized for a certain person.

HF667—Milbert (DFL)
Taxes

Proposed property tax optional public hearings authorized and reverse referendum for levy increases required under certain circumstances.

HF668—Solberg (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Veteran transportation to veterans medical facilities funded and money appropriated.

HF669—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Medical Assistance income standard increased.

HF670—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Medical assistance eligibility expanded to include employed persons with disabilities.

HF671—Molnau (R)
Taxes
Road and bridge maintenance equipment purchased by counties sales tax and motor vehicle sales tax exemption provided.

HF672—Kuisle (R)
Transportation Policy
Plats on real property bordering county highways provided county review and approval.

HF673—Solberg (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Itasca County; unorganized township road and bridge fund accounting and expenditure requirements modified.

HF674—Clark, K. (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Family homeless prevention and assistance program funded and money appropriated.

HF675—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS), Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA), and Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) provisions modified; and service credit pilot program established.

HF676—Hilty (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Carlton County cemetery levy for Sawyer authorized.

HF677—Jaros (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
International medical exposition previous unexpended appropriation transferred to the world trade center.

HF678—Davids (R)
Agriculture Policy
Crop and revenue insurance assistance, agricultural property tax relief and assistance, feedlot manure processing and odor control technology development assistance, and right-to-harvest provided; and money appropriated.

HF679—Jaros (DFL)
Commerce
Football boards authorized in retail establishments licensed to sell alcoholic beverages.

HF680—Jaros (DFL)
Civil Law
Income calculation modified in cases of split physical custody.

HF681—Jaros (DFL)
Taxes
Vitamins and minerals sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF682—Anderson, B. (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Veterans preference termination rights expanded to include state employees.

HF683—Clark, K. (DFL)
Judiciary Finance
Restorative justice program grants and training funded, and money appropriated.

HF684—Dawkins (DFL)
Commerce
No-fault automobile insurance medical benefits required to include sign interpreting and language translation.

HF685—McCollum (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Massage and oriental bodywork therapist registration system established, rulemaking authorized, and penalties imposed.

HF686—Dehler (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Dice games authorized in retail establishments licensed to sell alcoholic beverages.

HF687—Kubly (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Personal care services rate increase provided.

HF688—Kubly (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Hydroponic greenhouses corporate farm law exemption provided.

HF689—Lindner (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Payment of wages upon discharge provisions modified.

HF690—Smith (R)
Civil Law

Prohibited inmate actions challenging rehabilitation program expenditure levels restricted.

HF691—Smith (R)
Crime Prevention

Peace officers allowed four hours to arrest crosswalk violators.

HF692—Smith (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Legislative bill fiscal note requirement established.

HF693—Smith (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Biennial election of one-half of the members of the senate and house provided, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF694—Smith (R)
Civil Law

Real property and debt transfer notices required related to marriage dissolution.

HF695—Howes (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Minnesota festivals and events association tourism promotion funded, and money appropriated.

HF696—Orfield (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Urban growth boundaries established by metropolitan area local governments, Metropolitan Council approval required, and open space preservation agreement with the St. Cloud region provided.

HF697—Rhodes (R)
K-12 Education Finance

School district alternative facilities bonding and levy program space requirement reduced.

HF698—Workman (R)
Transportation Policy

Major transportation projects commission established and report required.

HF699—Gunter (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Blue Earth River basin initiative supported and money appropriated.

HF700—Davids (R)
Commerce

Fire protection notification required in contracts for the sale of newly constructed residential dwellings.

HF701—Pelowski (DFL)
Education Policy

School board staff development committee outcomes and revenue modified.

HF702—Davids (R)
Commerce

Fire and homeowner insurer bad faith actions provided.

HF703—Van Dellen (R)
Taxes

Single factor sales apportionment adopted related to corporate franchise tax.

HF704—Bishop (R)
Crime Prevention

State financial responsibility provided related to costs associated with sexually dangerous or psychopathic persons.

HF705—Juhnke (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

School district maximum crime-related costs levy amount increased.

HF706—Lenczewski (DFL)
Education Policy

Persons convicted of criminal sexual conduct considered ineligible to licensed as teachers.

HF707—Bakk (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Shooting ranges preserved, net losses limited, and relocation costs provided.

HF708—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Minnesota state retirement system (MSRS), public employees retirement association (PERA), and teachers retirement association (TRA) authorized to purchase or construct an administrative building.

HF709—Cassell (R)
Education Policy

Educational facility construction and remodeling prevailing wage provision repealed.

Organ donor shortage



Heart transplant recipient Connie Price of St. Paul speaks of the importance of organ donation during a Feb. 5 press conference. Bemidji resident Jeanne Torfin, right, whose husband died waiting for a donor heart, also spoke in support of a proposed statewide initiative to address organ donation and the shortages of organs and tissues.

Where to find information

House Index Department

211 State Capitol (651) 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 committee, topic, author, file number, and other categories. The office can also give you the current status of legislation.

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

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MONDAY, Feb. 15

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF97 (Dehler) Gambling tax exemption provided to certain organizations.

HF465 (Ozment) Firefighter training and education board created, training reimbursement program established, and money appropriated.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Presentations by State Health Boards.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Budget presentations by Minnesota Historical Society and Labor Interpretive Center.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Department of Transportation budget presentation continued, Pat Hughes, Operations Division; Dick Stehr, Metro Division; Andy Terry, Office of Electronic Communications; Ray Rought, Office of Aeronautics; Donna Allan, Office of Transit; Bob Winter, Metro Division; and Al Vogel, Office of Freight, Railroads and Waterways.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF74 (Luther) Health care directive suggested form modified.

HF382 (Seifert, J.) Common interest ownership act, certificates of title, and real property provisions modified.

HF423 (Daggett) Independent motor vehicle contractor income withholding for child support purposes clarified.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Budget hearings, Minnesota Wisconsin Boundary Commission, Minnesota Academy of Science, and Science Museum of Minnesota.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Budget presentation by University of Minnesota President Mark Yudof.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's K-12 budget.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF125 (Erhardt) Noncommercial seasonal residential recreational property second tier property tax class rates reduced.

HF211 (Abrams) Noncommercial seasonal residential recreational second-tier property tax class rate reduced.

HF303 (Erhardt) Local government unit levy limits extended through taxes payable in 2001.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Community prevention programs, Mary Ellison, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

State and federal funding overview by Cynthia Templin, House Fiscal Analysis Department.

HF593 (Nornes) Appropriating money for emergency services grants and transitional housing programs.

HF344 (Rhodes) St. Louis Park Meadowbrook collaborative housing project youth outreach services funded and money appropriated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF49 (Ozment) Health coverage for survivors of police officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty expanded to include spouses. HF50 (Dempsey) Goodhue County levy limit adjustment authorized for certain payments in lieu of tax.

HF475 (Stang) Costs and legal fees reimbursement provided for defense against criminal charges arising from performance of duties by town officers or employees.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: Industry overviews by Minnesota Cable Communications, Means Telecom, Sprint, Northern States Power, Minnesota Rural Electric Association, and Minnesota Power.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

4:15 p.m.

3rd Congressional District Caucus

400S State Office Building

Agenda: University of Minnesota regent candidate recommendations.

5 p.m.

Joint House CIVIL LAW/ Senate JUDICIARY

15 State Capitol

Chrs. Rep. Steve Smith,

Sen. Jane Ranum

Agenda: Overview of Minnesota Statute 604.10.

6 p.m.

2nd Congressional District Caucus

400N State Office Building

Chr. Sen. Charles Berg

Agenda: University of Minnesota regent candidate recommendations.

8th Congressional District Caucus

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Willard Munger

Agenda: University of Minnesota regent candidate recommendations.

TUESDAY, Feb. 16

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF215 (Howes) Comprehensive advanced life support rural medical personnel training program established, and money appropriated.

HF377 (Goodno) Abortion notification data reporting required and civil penalties imposed.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF238 (Stanek) Peace officer posttraumatic stress syndrome considered an occupational disease for the purpose of workers' compensation.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF113 (Broecker) Bomb disposal expense reimbursement provided to the

commissioner of public safety, and money appropriated.

HF114 (Stanek) FBI drugfire computer program grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF425 (Stanek) Northwest Hennepin Human Services Council community law enforcement project funded and money appropriated. Budget request presentations by Private Detective and Protective Services Board and the Uniform Laws Commission.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF296 (Opatz) Disability parking privilege expanded to include certain pregnant women.

Introduction to Metropolitan Council Chair Ted Mondale.

Metropolitan Council overview, Ted Mondale and Nacho Diaz.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Budget presentations continued, Department of Military Affairs and Office of Strategic & Long Range Planning.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF197 (Pawlenty) Criminal trial final argument prosecution rebuttal provided. HF560 (Bishop) Prosecutorial rebuttal report requested and order of final argument repealed. HF262 (Entenza) DWI; vehicle forfeiture proceedings held at the same time as implied consent hearings requirement eliminated.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: Report on central depository of employment data on licensed educational personnel, Board of Teaching.

HF586 (Kielkucki) Standard statewide application for employment form developed for licensed educational personnel, and money appropriated.

HF386 (Erickson) State Board of Teaching member confirmation process modified.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: Recommendations for protecting public shoreland on Minnesota waters, Jack Skrypek and Patricia Burke, Department of Natural Resources.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF98 (Osskopp) Property tax refund payments provided to personal representatives of deceased claimants.

HF355 (Cassell) June accelerated sales, liquor, cigarette, and tobacco tax payments abolished. HF71 (Rest) Sales and use tax rates reduced; and June accelerated sales, liquor, and tobacco tax payments abolished.

12:30 p.m.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: To be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF478 (Haas) Structured settlement payment rights protected related to tort or workers' compensation claims.

HF233 (Rukavina) Fireworks; limited personal use of fireworks authorized, safety guidelines affidavit required, and penalties imposed.

1:30 p.m.

Legislative Audit Commission

316 State Capitol
Chr. Sen. Deanna Wiener

Agenda: Election of Legislative Audit Commission officers.

Remarks by Legislative Auditor James Nobles. Report on program evaluation topic selection.

2 p.m.

Adult Basic Education Workgroup/ FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Funding of rural vs. urban sites.

6 p.m.

Joint House EDUCATION/ Senate CHILDREN, FAMILIES & LEARNING

200 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Harry Mares,
Sen. LeRoy A. Stumpf,
Sen. Lawrence J. Pogemiller,
Sen. Pat Piper

Agenda: Selection of University of Minnesota regent candidates.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 17

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Continuation of State Health Boards presentation.

HF208 (Haas) Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association (MCHA) funding continued, certain insurance-related assessment reductions allowed, medical assistance and MCHA relationship specifications sunset repealed, and money appropriated.

HF218 (Tingelstad) Youth housing programs funded and money appropriated.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Public Service budget presentation.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Department of Transportation budget presentation continued, Ward Briggs, Office of Motor Carrier Services; Julie Skallman, State Aid for Local Transportation; Barbara Sundquist, Finance and Administration Division; Paul Jensen, Buildings Engineer; and Maureen Jensen, Regional Transportation Management Center.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF53 (Biernat) Uniform child custody jurisdiction and enforcement act adopted.

HF346 (Smith) Freelance court reporter contract arrangements and practices limited, and services regulated.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Pollution Control Agency (PCA) budget overview.

Protecting the water budget presentation, PCA.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: University of Minnesota budget presentation continued.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's K-12 budget.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency comments on auditor report on animal feedlot regulation, Lisa Throving and staff.

HF370 (Harder) Nonregistered pesticide distribution permitted for certain uses outside the state.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Energy assistance, Pam Marshall, Energy Cents Coalition. Headstart, Early Childhood Family Education (testimony to be announced).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF202 (Boudreau) Faribault tax increment financing district activities ratified. HF389 (Nornes) Fergus Falls tax increment financing district expenditures authorized.

HF450 (Jaros) Duluth tax increment financing district pooling authorized.
HF174 (Stang) Richmond annexed to the Paynesville area hospital district.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: Industry overviews by Reliant Energy, UtiliCorp United, Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association, and Sustainable Energy for Economic Development.

4:30 p.m.

WAYS & MEANS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: Bill(s) referred from the House Taxes Committee.

6:30 p.m.

Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

5 State Office Building
Vice Chr. Sen. Leonard R. Price

Agenda: Introductions.
Elections to three vacant positions on executive committee (chair, secretary, additional executive committee member).

Presentations of award to Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Coalition and recognition of their \$2,236.76 donation to the trust fund.

Consider amendment to 1999 recommendations to extend the availability of the appropriation for 1997 Mercury Manometers, Department of Agriculture.

Status of SF149 and HF385.

Consider request for variance from the provisions of MS 89.022, requested by Department of Natural Resources.

Discussion of summer calendar for factfinding and strategic plan revision.

Immediately following Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

Executive Committee/Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

5 State Office Building

Agenda: Consider approval of administrative budget for 1999-2001, Director John Velin.
Consider work for 1999 summer and fall.

THURSDAY, Feb. 18

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: Member bills.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF10 (Pawlenty) School stability initiative for homeless children established under the Housing Finance Agency, and money appropriated.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Budget request presentations by the Police Officer Standards and Training Board and the Crime Victim Services Center.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: Northwest Airlines presentation.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Budget presentations by Department of Finance and Board of Investment.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF381 (Stanek) New police pursuits model policy adopted by the POST board, municipal and state law enforcement compliance and officer training required, tire deflator and driving simulator distribution programs provided, and money appropriated.

HF542 (Bishop) Increases the number of the district court judges.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF473 (Harder) High school diploma warranty coverage exception provided for students refusing to repeat a grade.

HF403 (Ness) Uniform minimum school year length established.

HF213 (Greiling) Oral deaf education teachers exempted from American Sign Language licensure requirements.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF7 (Haake) Motor vehicle emissions inspection program repealed.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF35 (Haas) Tobacco settlement money transferred from the general fund to the Health Care Access Fund, and MinnesotaCare premium and provider taxes repealed.

12 p.m.

Joint House/Senate Session

Immediately following session

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Dairy industry.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: To be announced.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

(Note: committee will meet in front of State Office Building.)

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Tour of southwestern Minnesota campuses (two-day tour).

Gustavus Adolphus College, South Central Technical College, Mankato State University, Minnesota West Technical College Jackson, Southwest State University and Minnesota West Technical College Granite Falls.

**4 p.m. or immediately
following session**

WAYS & MEANS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: Overview of Gov. Ventura's budget.

FRIDAY, Feb. 19

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF127 (Luther) Minnesota organ donor decision campaign funded, and money appropriated.

Uncompensated care discussion.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Budget presentation, Public Utilities Commission.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF263 (Gerlach) Counterfeited intellectual property manufacturing, distribution, selling, or possession criminal penalties imposed; and forfeiture provided.

HF536 (Broecker) Carisoprodo schedule IV controlled substance listing effective date delayed.

HF621 (Fuller) Includes gases under arson definition and limits juvenile use of lighters.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Protecting the water budget presentation continued, Pollution Control Agency (PCA). Protecting the air budget presentation, PCA.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's K-12 budget.

Minnesota House of Representatives 1999 Members

District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-	District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-
		Room*				Room*	
49A	Abeler, Jim (R)	581	1729	33A	Lindner, Arlon (R)	417	7806
45A	Abrams, Ron (R)	585	9934	47A	Luther, Darlene (DFL)	371	3751
19B	Anderson, Bruce (R)	411	5063	67A	Mahoney, Tim (DFL)	223	4277
3A	Anderson, Irv (DFL)	343	4936	55A	Mares, Harry (R)	401	5363
6A	Bakk, Thomas (Tom) (DFL)	345	2190	65B	Mariani, Carlos (DFL)	209	9714
59A	Biernat, Len (DFL)	303	4219	57B	Marko, Sharon (DFL)	221	3135
30B	Bishop, Dave (R)	453	0573	55B	McCollum, Betty (DFL)	239	1188
25B	Boudreau, Lynda (R)	473	8237	36B	McElroy, Dan (R)	437	4212
30A	Bradley, Fran (R)	559	9249	54A	McGuire, Mary Jo (DFL)	259	4342
53B	Broecker, Sherry (R)	533	7153	39B	Milbert, Bob (DFL)	243	4192
35B	Buesgens, Mark (R)	415	1072	35A	Molnau, Carol L. (R)	443	8872
46B	Carlson, Lyndon R. (DFL)	279	4255	21B	Mulder, Richard (R)	515	4336
47B	Carruthers, Phil (DFL)	217	3709	58A	Mullery, Joe (DFL)	387	4262
10B	Cassell, George (R)	421	4317	7A	Munger, Willard (DFL)	283	4282
52A	Chaudhary, Satveer (DFL)	311	4331	8A	Murphy, Mary (DFL)	357	2676
23A	Clark, James T. (R)	583	9303	20A	Ness, Robert "Bob" (R)	509	4344
61A	Clark, Karen (DFL)	307	0294	10A	Nornes, Bud (R)	471	4946
11A	Daggett, Roxann (R)	439	4293	19A	Olson, Mark (R)	501	4237
31B	Davids, Gregory M. (R)	367	9278	16A	Opatz, Joe (DFL)	281	6612
65A	Dawkins, Andy (DFL)	215	5158	60B	Orfield, Myron (DFL)	377	9281
14A	Dehler, Steve (R)	491	7808	29B	Osskopp, Mike (R)	449	9236
29A	Dempsey, Jerry (R)	549	8635	66A	Osthoff, Tom (DFL)	273	4224
27A	Dorman, Dan (R)	579	8216	11B	Otremba, Mary Ellen (DFL)	393	3201
24A	Dorn, John (DFL)	201	3248	37A	Ozment, Dennis (R)	479	4306
64A	Entenza, Matt (DFL)	213	8799	42B	Paulsen, Erik (R)	445	7449
42A	Erhardt, Ron (R)	591	4363	38B	Pawlenty, Tim (R)	459	4128
17A	Erickson, Sondra (R)	407	6746	64B	Paymar, Michael (DFL)	331	4199
1B	Finseth, Tim (R)	517	9918	32A	Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)	295	8637
44A	Folliard, Betty (DFL)	211	3964	13B	Peterson, Doug (DFL)	287	4228
4A	Fuller, Doug (R)	525	5516	39A	Pugh, Thomas W. (DFL)	267	6828
36A	Gerlach, Chris (R)	531	5506	46A	Rest, Ann H. (DFL)	277	4176
63B	Gleason, Mark S. (DFL)	313	5375	28A	Reuter, Doug (R)	507	5368
9A	Goodno, Kevin (R)	563	5515	44B	Rhodes, Jim (R)	409	9889
58B	Gray, Gregory (DFL)	229	8659	32B	Rifenberg, Michelle (R)	423	1069
62A	Greenfield, Lee (DFL)	207	0173	18A	Rostberg, Jim (R)	545	5364
54B	Greiling, Mindy (DFL)	253	5387	5A	Rukavina, Tom (DFL)	375	0170
26A	Gunther, Bob (R)	379	3240	17B	Schumacher, Leslie J. (DFL)	327	5377
52B	Haake, Barb (R)	429	0141	41A	Seagren, Alice (R)	477	7803
48A	Haas, Bill (R)	569	5513	57A	Seifert, Jim (R)	577	7807
50A	Hackbarth, Tom (R)	575	2439	21A	Seifert, Marty (R)	593	5374
22B	Harder, Elaine (R)	487	5373	2B	Skoe, Rod (DFL)	321	4265
12A	Hasskamp, Kris (DFL)	353	4333	62B	Skoglund, Wes (DFL)	251	4330
66B	Hausman, Alice (DFL)	245	3824	34A	Smith, Steve (R)	503	9188
8B	Hilty, Bill (DFL)	241	4308	3B	Solberg, Loren A. (DFL)	309	2365
37B	Holberg, Mary Liz (R)	433	6926	33B	Stanek, Rich (R)	543	5502
56A	Holsten, Mark William (R)	381	3018	14B	Stang, Doug (R)	597	4373
4B	Howes, Larry (R)	431	2451	24B	Storm, Julie (R)	527	7065
6B	Huntley, Thomas (DFL)	351	2228	28B	Sviggum, Steve (R)	463	2273
7B	Jaros, Mike (DFL)	291	4246	23B	Swenson, Howard (R)	539	8634
18B	Jennings, Loren Geo (DFL)	237	0518	43B	Sykora, Barb (R)	403	4315
48B	Johnson, Alice M. (DFL)	349	5510	50B	Tingelstad, Kathy (R)	567	5369
15A	Juhnke, Al (DFL)	329	6206	5B	Tomassoni, David J. (DFL)	233	0172
59B	Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)	255	4257	67B	Trimble, Steve (DFL)	289	4201
26B	Kalis, Henry J. (DFL)	317	4240	25A	Tuma, John (R)	369	4229
60A	Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (DFL)	231	0171	1A	Tunheim, Jim (DFL)	335	9635
20B	Kielkucki, Tony (R)	521	1534	34B	Van Dellen, Henry Todd (R)	571	5511
16B	Knoblach, Jim (R)	451	6316	51B	Vandever, Ray (R)	529	4124
49B	Koskinen, Luanne (DFL)	301	4231	63A	Wagenius, Jean (DFL)	227	4200
53A	Krinkie, Philip (R)	365	2907	61B	Wejcmán, Linda (DFL)	203	7152
15B	Kubly, Gary W. (DFL)	315	4346	12B	Wenzel, Stephen G. (DFL)	389	4247
31A	Kuisle, William (R)	565	4378	51A	Westerberg, Andrew (R)	523	4226
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List as of December 18, 1998

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Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

State prisons and prisoners

Number of adult prison inmates in Minnesota, July 1998	5,507
Percent incarcerated for sex offenses	20
Percent incarcerated for homicide	16.6
Percent incarcerated for drug offenses	12.8
Projected number of adult inmates in Minnesota, 2000	6,420
Number of adult inmates in Minnesota in 1975 (30-year low)	1,509
Number of inmates in Minnesota per 100,000 population, 1997	113
Number of states with lower incarceration rate that year	1
Total number of adult males incarcerated in Minnesota, July 1998	5,234
Of juvenile males	224
Of adult females	273
Of juvenile females	19
African-Americans as percent of adult inmate population, July 1998	36.6
As percent of juvenile inmate population, July 1998	22.6
As percent of Minnesota population, 1997	2.8
Whites as percent of adult inmate population, July 1998	48.6
As percent of juvenile inmate population, July 1998	53.5
As percent of Minnesota population, 1997	93.4
American Indians as percent of adult inmate population, July 1998	6.5
As percent of juvenile inmate population, July 1998	14.8
As percent of Minnesota population, 1997	1.2
Number of new prison beds added statewide from July 1996 to October 1998 ...	400
Number of new prison beds planned to be added statewide by 2000	1,062
Number of those to be at new close-custody facility in Rush City	950
Beds planned per cell at Rush City facility	2
Estimated construction costs for Rush City facility, in millions	\$89
Average per-day cost for one adult male inmate, 1998	\$82
For one adult male at Red Wing Correctional Facility	\$138
For one adult male at a contract facility	\$55
For one adult female inmate	\$116
For one juvenile at Sauk Centre Juvenile Correctional Facility	\$185
Adult inmates, in July 1998, whose formal education ended before	
ninth grade, as percent	6
Whose formal education ended between ninth and eleventh grades,	
as percent	31.9
Who had a college degree, as percent	15.1

Sources: *Adult Inmate Profile, 1998*, Minnesota Department of Corrections; *Juvenile Inmate Profile, 1998*, Minnesota Department of Corrections; *Minnesota Data Book for Legislators, 1999*, House Research Department; Minnesota State Demographic Center Web site (<http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/demography/demogest>); *State and Local Sourcebook, 1999*, *Governing* magazine.

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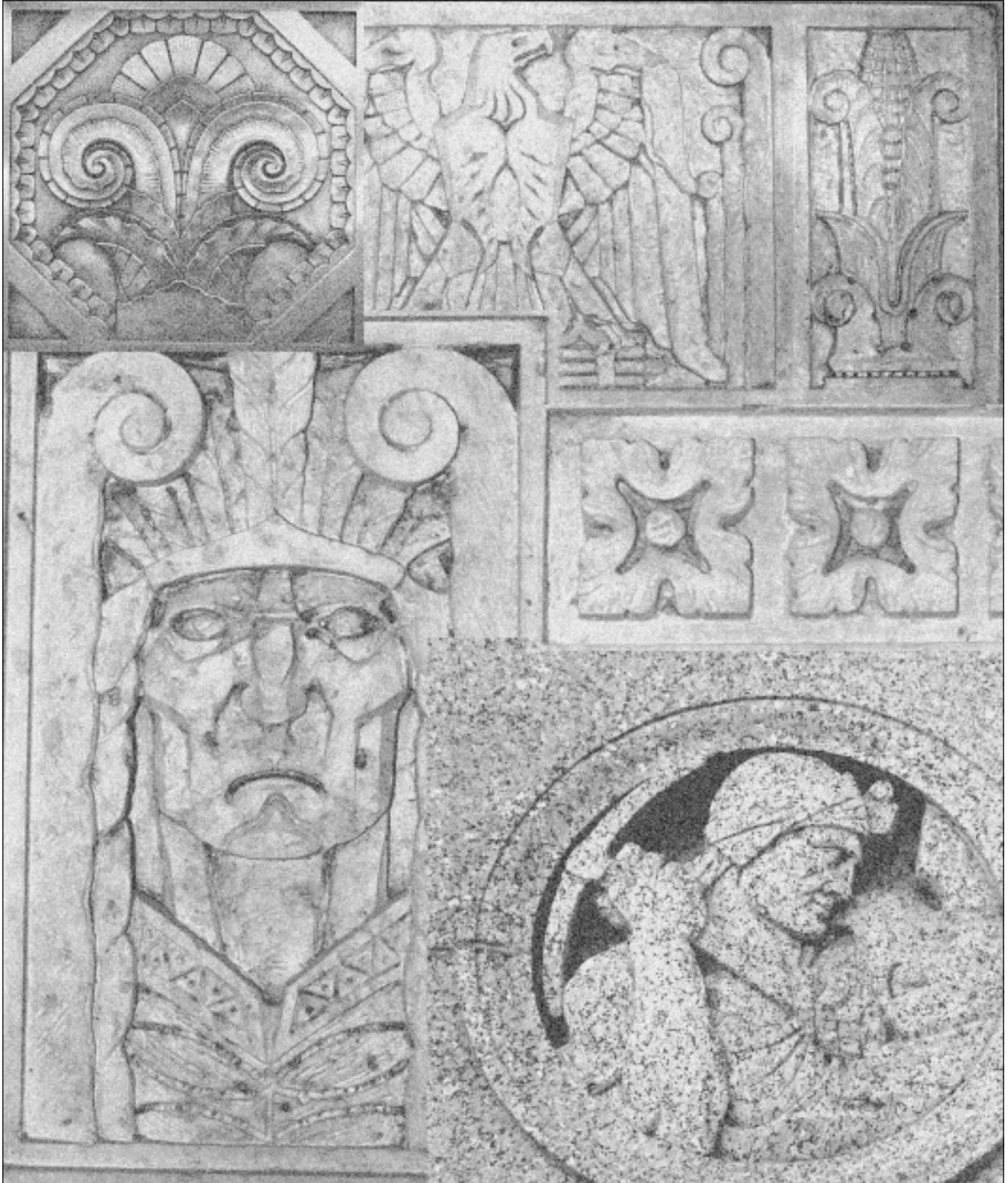
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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ February 19, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 7



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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • February 19, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 7

Reflections

Across the street and to the west of the Capitol is the State Office Building. The office building, or S.O.B. as it is fondly called, is home to House members and staff, the Office of the Revisor of Statutes, and the Legislative Reference Library.

It also houses one independent senator, all Republican senators and staff, senate media services, the secretary of state's office, various legislative commissions, a barber shop, and a cafeteria. All in all, some 630 people work in the building on a daily basis.

On a weekly basis, another 700 to 800 lobbyists, interested individuals, committee hearing participants, media, and visiting constituents can be added to the total number who pass through the busy hallways and offices.

The S.O.B. was erected in 1932 and housed state departments and commissions. Construction began under Gov. Theodore Christianson and was completed during Gov. Floyd B. Olson's term. A statue of Olson now keeps a watchful eye on the building from the west lawn of the Capitol.

In 1932 the new building, with its eight Ionic columns and Roman renaissance motif, was designed to match the old Historical Society Building directly across the Capitol lawn. The lobby and hallways were decorated with unique design patterns in the granite, marble, and terrazzo stone. Mostly found above eye-level, they are often overlooked by those who pass through the building.

Like the Capitol, renditions of the state's industry, its agricultural products of wheat and corn, and its first people — the American Indian — are captured here. Outside, two original 12-foot metal lampposts are found at each entrance. Their distinctive design is marked by cascading floral petals, now colored green with age.

When House members moved offices from the Capitol to the S.O.B. in the early 1970s, gaining more space was a major improvement. From 1905 until 1969, the only work space and area for receiving constituents was at members' desks in the House chamber or in small cubicles located throughout the Capitol building.

In 1986, the S.O.B. was remodeled to provide more House offices and space for nonpartisan and other state offices. Designs in the entrances and hallways were preserved, including the brass doors and copper additions throughout the nine floors of the edifice. But gone is the atrium that graced the center of the structure. The former open area has been replaced with new offices and conference rooms.

Also during the renovation, a top floor was added to the building for the revisor of statutes. One floor below, the space above the library reading room is a faint reminder of the indoor open space. Here, some of the original windows have been added.

Overall, the emblems displayed throughout the State Office Building are guideposts. They link Minnesotans to the past as people pass through to connect with state government.

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Emblems carved in stone and etched in metal around the main entrance and lobby of the State Office Building, built in 1932, depict the flora, industry, and first people of Minnesota.

—Photomontage by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

High-speed pursuit . . .

Lawmakers aim to guard public from dangerous chases

By Grant Martin

In the first morning hours following last Thanksgiving, Steven Winkel, 27, and Jeffrey Carlson, 23, not satisfied by their earlier feasts, were craving White Castle sandwiches. So they decided to take Winkel's Ford pickup to get a late-night snack.

As Winkel drove through a south Minneapolis intersection, two police officers pursuing a possible burglary suspect ran through a stop sign and rammed their squad car into the side of Winkel's truck. The impact of the crash sent both vehicles onto a residential lawn.

Carlson died in the ambulance on the way to the hospital, and Winkel died in the hospital eight days after the crash. Neither officer in the squad car was seriously injured.

The officers, who were trying to catch up to

done to make sure that what happened to her son does not happen to others. She said that officers need to be provided the tools to do their job safely.

"We need them to serve and protect the public, not to maim and kill innocent bystanders," she said.

Bill sponsor Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), a Minneapolis police officer, told the committee that his bill came as a result of collaboration between several law enforcement organizations.

Stanek said that his bill strikes a balance between vigorous law enforcement and ensuring the public's safety by stressing "continuous and effective" training for officers.

Stanek's bill addresses several issues involving police pursuits, including mandating

powerful cars and that they aren't prepared to get behind the wheel of the powerful squad cars.

Tracy Winkel Johnson, Steven Winkel's sister, also testified in support of the bill. She said that her brother's crash demonstrates the need for more training.

"Maybe if this officer was provided training to handle this pursuit, my brother would be alive with us this Easter," she said.

Stanek's bill would also require the POST board to develop a statewide model pursuit policy. This policy would then be used to develop policies for each local law enforcement agency.

Under current law, local agencies are given wide latitude to establish their own procedures for pursuit.

The bill would also provide funding for technologies that would both train officers and, hopefully, end pursuits more quickly. Toward that goal, the bill would provide funding for driving simulators that would be used to provide realistic pursuit scenarios for officers in training.

Dennis Delmont, a spokesman for the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, said that this provision of the bill would provide cost savings for the proposed training.

"We believe that the simulators, while they cannot replace the training on the track, will provide us the opportunity to train more officers more effectively and with less expense," Delmont said.

The bill would also set up a program to dispense tire deflators to local law enforcement agencies. Sometimes called stop sticks, the devices are placed on the road ahead of the fleeing offender and pop the tires when the car passes over them.

Other technologies are being developed to assist officers in police pursuits. One such device, often called a kill switch, would send an electronic beam that would turn off the engine of the offender.

The bill would also expand a current statute regarding prosecutions and convictions for fleeing a police officer.

In some situations, a person cannot be convicted for both fleeing an officer and for the original act that caused the officer to pursue.

Richard Hodsdon, an assistant Washington County attorney, said that sometimes prosecutors have to choose between one charge and the other.



A bill approved Feb. 18, by the House Crime Prevention Committee seeks to address police pursuits. The bill would mandate additional training for officers, create a statewide pursuit policy, and provide funding for new technologies for both training and actual pursuit.

a suspect in a car six blocks away, did not activate their lights or sirens when going through the intersection.

"The result of this officer's decision cost us our son's life and the life of his best friend Steve," said Jim Winkel, who testified Feb. 18 at a House Crime Prevention Committee hearing.

Winkel's family testified in support of a bill (HF381) that seeks to address problems with police pursuits. The bill, approved by the committee, comes in the wake of several recent deaths resulting from high-speed police chases.

Sue Winkel, Steven Winkel's mother, told the committee that something needs to be

additional training time for officers, creating a statewide pursuit policy, providing new technologies for training and pursuit, and strengthening the current laws against fleeing an officer.

Under the bill, the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board would establish a pursuit training course for police officer cadets. The bill would mandate that each cadet receive at least seven hours of training and that all current officers receive at least eight hours of training every two years.

Jim Winkel said that the current training is not sufficient. He said that people going into law enforcement are used to driving smaller, less



Jim Winkel, his wife, Susan, and daughter, Tracy, left to right, listen as members of the House Crime Prevention Committee discuss a bill Feb. 18 that would require law enforcement officers to receive training in high-speed pursuit driving every two years. Winkel testified about the day his son, Jeff, was killed when his pickup truck was hit by a Minneapolis squad car in high-speed pursuit of a burglary suspect.

"That's not a choice we think prosecutors should have to make," he said.

The bill would expand the law to allow offenders to be convicted and sentenced for both charges.

Although statewide data is not yet available for 1998, the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension does have records for 1997. According to the agency, there were 956 police pursuits in Minnesota in that year. Of those pursuits, 44 percent resulted in property damage to the squad car, the offender's vehicle, or other property. A little over half of the pursuits were initiated because of traffic violations. There were two chase-related fatalities in 1997.

Some critics of police pursuits have argued that because the risk to the public is high, pursuits should only be initiated for felony level offenders, or only for offenders who are dangerous to the public.

Although the bill was being heard in a policy committee rather than a finance committee, several members asked Stanek about the fiscal impact, especially funding for training.

As approved, the bill would also provide a yet-to-be decided amount to reimburse local law enforcement agencies for the cost of the additional training.

Reporting from the floor of the House



You won't find many newspaper editors serving in the House these days, but earlier this century, it wasn't all that uncommon.

Editors at small rural weekly papers were often the owners, business managers, ad salesmen, typesetters, photographers, and janitors. And given the trend for newspapers to be voices of one political party, involvement in government came naturally for some.

Gunnar B. Bjornson owned and operated the *Minneota Mascot* from 1900 to 1944. He was elected to the House terms beginning in 1913 and 1915, representing a district in southeastern Minnesota.

It soon became apparent that one benefit of having a newspaper editor as a legislator was the quality of his communication, in both editorials and personal letters. Reams of such Bjornson papers have been catalogued by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Bjornson, a Republican, took moderate to conservative stands on most issues. He supported the creation of a public utilities commission in the state in 1914, noting the need to protect individual citizens, and he warned about concentrating power in the hands of large cities. He also supported requiring public approval for counties to bond for road projects, decrying a state law that allowed bonding through a simple majority vote of the board of commissioners.

But he was an opponent of the nonpartisan primary, adopted by the state in 1913.

"It plays havoc with all party organization," said Bjornson, who was later to serve as the chair of the Republican State Central Committee. He noted that campaigning began in January for elections in June, then

began again and continued well into the fall.

"This makes for a whole year of campaigning, which is by no means desirable either for the public or the man who has to run for office," he wrote.

Bjornson treaded lightly on legislative issues dealing with newspapers. To the chagrin of staunch First Amendment advocates, he supported a bill that would have regulated newspaper activity in political campaigns.

Specifically, the bill would have made it impossible for newspapers to publish anonymous letters "attacking men running for office."

He termed the proposal "quite proper" and expressed hope that it would eliminate "communications of a spurious nature tending to influence elections."

He supported but would not allow his name to be connected to another bill that would have required publication of personal property tax lists, noting that it promised considerable revenue for some newspapers and created a conflict of interest for him.



Gunnar B. Bjornson


Bjornson was known as a stickler for details and despised typographical errors, both as a lawmaker and editor. On one occasion, he printed in the *Mascot* that a certain Ingibjorg Augustine Hurdal had arrived in the community from Winnipeg, Canada. He inadvertently published the incorrect courtesy title, "Mrs."

He apologized profusely in a subsequent edition, and when he later married Miss Hurdal, some said it was to make good on the error.

Bjornson died in 1959. His passing was memorialized by newspapers around the state, which heralded his contribution to both the political scene and the newspaper world.

Some members expressed concerns about the state paying for training that should be handled by the local government.

Given the tone of the questions in the policy committee, this training provision may raise eyebrows when the bill is heard next in the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Delmont said the Legislature should provide some assistance for the statewide initiative. "We are asking the Legislature to require this," he said. "We are also asking the Legislature to pay for it." 

Highlights



BANKING

Banking in Outing

A bank would be allowed to open a branch office in the small community of Outing, located in southern Cass County, under a bill the House passed Feb. 15. The vote was 122-2.

Current state law prohibits banks from operating in townships, and Outing is an unincorporated town in Crooked Lake Township.

Minnesota's "home office protection law" allows banks to establish branch offices in cities with a population less than 10,000 only with consent from all the banks that have their home office in that city. Banks are also prohibited from getting around that law by opening in townships just outside city limits.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), sponsor of the bill, said First National Bank of Crosby had planned to open an office in Outing, assuming it was a city. And because Outing has its own post office and zip code, many people don't realize that it has never been incorporated, she said.

The bill (**HF248**) now moves to the Senate.



CHILDREN

Rules for kiddie pools

When the north wind is stinging your face, it's hard to think of hot summer days, but members of the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee took on a warm-weather issue Feb. 18.

The committee approved a bill (**HF352**) that would exempt wading pools used at home-based day care businesses from rules designed for large public swimming pools.

Bill sponsor Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) appeared before the committee wearing swimming goggles, and his fellow committee members donned sunglasses of their own.

"This is serious business," Mulder assured the committee.

Diving into his testimony, Mulder explained that recent health department rules lump small, stand-alone wading pools in with larger swimming pools. So in order to comply with law, day care providers must attend a week of training in pool management, chlorinate their wading pool, and pay a \$200 fee.

Mulder said he could find no instances of death or illness linked to wading pool use in day care settings.

The bill has wide support from day care providers who believe the existing law is all wet.

"Children must be able to play in a large enough body of water in the summer to do a lot of pouring, sprinkling, measuring, and seeing what sinks and floats," said day care provider Kathy Baumgart of Coon Rapids. "Please inform the board of health that wading pools are not toilets. We can tell the difference, and certainly so can children."

Baumgart said playing in water is important for developing well-rounded children. She said kids would even take to splashing in the bird bath if no other source is available.

Mulder said the bill doesn't have a fiscal impact because to date no day care provider has paid the fee.

The committee sent the bill ahead to see if it floats before the full House.



CRIME

Firearm fingerprints

Like using fingerprints to know where people have been, police officers can use bullets and bullet casings to track where guns have been.

The National Integrated Ballistics Information Network, the program formerly known as Drugfire, is a database of the individual markings left by particular guns on bullets and bullet casings.

A bill (**HF114**), discussed Feb. 16 by the House Judiciary Finance Committee, would provide funding to the city of Minneapolis and to Hennepin and Ramsey counties for training and operating of the FBI program.

The governor's budget request also includes funding that would go to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension for the program.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), sponsor of the bill, said the FBI program is a huge advance for law enforcement.

"I think Drugfire is like fingerprints in the '80s and DNA in the '90s," he said. "It's a great tool for law enforcement."

Gary Jueckstock, a spokesman for the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, told the committee about a case where the FBI system

was used. Police officers investigating an attempted homicide found the bullet casings from a specific gun. The casings were analyzed and the information kept on file.

Later, when a gun was found on two suspects arrested for an unrelated charge, investigators test-fired the gun and matched the information to the attempted homicide. The suspects were arrested and later convicted.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) said that all guns should be test-fired before they are sold and the identifying marks kept on record for crime tracking purposes.

Bureau of Criminal Apprehension official Frank Dolejsi said Skoglund's suggestion was similar to ideas offered when law enforcement agencies began collecting DNA evidence. But like with DNA, gathering information on all guns would be cost prohibitive.

"It's technically feasible," he said. "But we have to focus our resources on what would be most productive."

The bill may be included as an appropriation in the committee's omnibus finance bill.

Paying the bomb squad

A program that assists local law enforcement agencies with bomb disposal costs would be continued, under a bill considered Feb. 16 by the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Currently, local law enforcement agencies must call on one of four police departments in Minnesota with bomb disposal units when dealing with bombs or other hazardous explosives.

Under an existing program, police departments can seek reimbursements from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety for costs incurred by bringing in these bomb disposal specialists.

The bill (**HF113**) would provide \$120,000 a year for the next biennium to continue to fund the program.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights), may be considered for inclusion in the committee's omnibus finance bill.

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EDUCATION

Tracking teachers

A state depository of information on licensed educators would be created under a bill sponsored by Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie). The plan would allow school districts to access extensive employment histories of job applicants.

The bill (**HF586**) calls for a centralized database operated by the Department of Children, Families and Learning and proposes a standard job application form that would be used by school districts statewide. The House Education Policy Committee considered the bill Feb. 16.

Kielkucki's proposal contains recommendations made by the state Board of Teaching, which conducted a study of the issue under a 1998 directive from the Legislature.

Among the recommendations in the board's report were the standard application form and the details of the database, which would include information on teachers, administrators, superintendents, and charter school directors.

The database would require mandatory reporting from school districts whenever a licensed educator leaves a position for any reason.

Kielkucki said he is backing the bill in response to an incident in his legislative district, where a teacher was hired with an invalid teacher's license.

Various lawmakers' concerns over the bill prompted the committee to delay action on the matter. Many said the bill is too far-reaching.

"It just seems to me that this is an octopus going in every direction," said Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel).

The committee is expected to take up the bill again later this session.

No confirmation needed

A bill that would eliminate the Senate confirmation process for appointees to the state Board of Teaching was approved Feb. 16 by the House Education Policy Committee.

The bill (**HF386**) is sponsored by Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), a former member of the board.

Erickson said the policy of having appointees confirmed by the Senate — a stipulation added in the 1998 omnibus education law — only serves to lengthen the appointment process. Prior to 1998, the appointments, made by the governor, did not require Senate confirmation.

Erickson said the Senate already confirms

many appointments, and the teaching board is the only licensing organization among those groups.

The board is made up of 11 members appointed by the governor, six of whom are classroom teachers. It was created in 1973 to regulate teacher licensing.

Erickson said board members often have to take time away from their regular working schedules for meetings and other board-related duties.

"A Senate confirmation would take another day out of the classroom," Erickson said.

Some lawmakers objected to the proposal, saying that the confirmation process is a check against the executive branch's power of appointment.

But others countered that the process just adds more time to an already lengthy search and application process for prospective board members.

HF386 moves to the House floor.

Milaca bill passes

The House passed a bill Feb. 15 that would retroactively authorize the school district in Milaca to begin the 1998-99 academic year earlier than allowed under state law. The vote was 96-28.

Students in Milaca began their school year Aug. 24, 1998, because the school district plans to start a construction project in May, forcing an early end to the school year.

Some lawmakers questioned why the school district should be allowed to technically break the law.

A 1986 state law mandated that schools could not begin classes before Labor Day. However, a 1997 law allowed school districts to begin classes on the Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday before Labor Day in 1998 and 1999. That law came about because Labor Day fell relatively late in September last year and will do so again this year.

That meant Sept. 2, 1998, was the earliest date districts could legally begin the current school year. (Beginning in the 2000-01 school year, districts will be authorized to start as early as Sept. 1, under another law passed in 1998.)

Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), the bill's sponsor, argued that the Milaca district should not be punished because the construction was approved during a special session of the 1998 Legislature, at which time she did not have the opportunity to offer a bill to take care of the issue.

Others argued that passing the bill could set a precedent for other school districts to disregard the law and seek retroactive approval.

Erickson disagreed.

"This is just a one-time thing," she said.

The bill (**HF58**) moves to the Senate.



ENVIRONMENT

Smart sprinklers

A bill that would help prevent lawns and gardens from receiving redundant watering was approved Feb. 16 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Automatic landscape irrigation systems that operate even when it is raining waste millions of gallons of water, said John Mickman of the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association. Those systems can be equipped with sensors that shut off systems when there is sufficient moisture in the soil, and the bill (**HF564**) would require such sensors to be put on all new systems.

"Water is a scarce resource, and we feel it's in the best interest of the state to prevent the waste of this resource," Mickman said.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), committee chair and sponsor of the bill, said the proposal would not require old systems to be retrofitted with sensors. It would apply only to new systems.

Mickman said the sensors cost less than \$40, and they are made by several different manufacturers.

The bill now moves to the House Commerce Committee.



FAMILY

Treatment for teens

Parents of teen-agers with chemical dependency problems often find their hands are tied when dealing with their children, but a bill approved Feb. 15 by the House Civil Law Committee aims to give them aid.

Under current law, children under the age of 16 can be admitted by their parents to a chemical dependency treatment program, provided that an independent evaluator confirms the need for treatment. However, for minors ages 16 and 17, the treatment must be voluntary.

The bill (**HF183**), sponsored by Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), would make 16- and 17-year-olds subject to the same requirements as children under the age of 16.

"It is highly questionable that a 16- or 17-year-old who is chemically dependent can make this choice by themselves," Buesgens

said at a meeting of the civil law panel Feb. 10.

Jordan resident Cindy Nevins testified in support of the bill. She said that following months of problems with her son, she took him to have an evaluation, and the counselor told her that her son needed treatment.

"In the same breath, she told us our son is 16, and if he chooses not to go, there's nothing we can do," she said.

The bill now goes to the House floor.



GOVERNMENT

Ventura signs first law



The first measure signed into law by Gov. Jesse Ventura addresses a procedural wrinkle caused by the fact that he is a third-party head of state.

Effective Feb. 18, the new law changes the process under which members are appointed to the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board. State law outlines the makeup of the board to avoid having too many members from the same political party. The board responds to questions about campaign finance and economic interest disclosure of candidates for state offices.

Under the old law, two board members had to be former legislators — one from the same political party as the governor and one from a different political party than the governor — and no more than three board members could support the same political party.

But the law had no provisions for how to proceed with appointments when there are no former legislators from the governor's political party, as is the case with Ventura's Reform Party.

The new law avoids the reference to the governor's political party, requiring instead that the board include two former legislators who belong to different parties.

Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park) and Sen. John Marty (DFL-Roseville) sponsored the measure.

HF139*/SF88/CH1



HEALTH

Abortion bypass bill advances

A bill that would establish a system for reporting data about certain minors who receive abortions was approved Feb. 16 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

The bill (**HF377**) would require physicians to report information, including age and race,

about minors who receive abortions after obtaining a judge's permission instead of parental consent. The data would become public.

Under current law, doctors are required to notify parents or guardians at least 48 hours before performing an abortion on a minor. But minors can bypass the parental notification by receiving a judge's permission.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), the bill's sponsor, said there is no good documentation to show how so-called "judicial pass through" is working, how often it is used, or what criteria judges use in granting their permission.

Goodno's bill would establish a reporting form that physicians would have to submit annually. The bill also specifies that the data compiled from the reports would be public.

Jackie Schwietz, a spokeswoman for Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, said that assuring parental participation in the decision to terminate a pregnancy is important. She said her group fears judges may not be taking requests for abortions from minors seriously.

Julie Neeum, who also spoke on behalf Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, told the committee she received judicial bypass to have an abortion at age 17. She said it was simple. She had to write a letter to the judge stating she was mature enough to make that decision and appear in court.

"I was a drug addict, abused alcohol, and practiced unprotected sex," Neeum said. "I obviously wasn't mature. The last thing I needed from society was an abortion."

Opponents of the bill said they are concerned that making such data public could expose doctors to the threat of physical harm, and possibly even death.

Patty Franklin, director of health law for the Minnesota Medical Association, said the data required under the bill would serve no public health purpose and that most of the information requested could already be found from other sources.

She said the bill could lead to harassment of doctors who are "engaging in legal activity" and put judges in harm's way, too.

She echoed a concern raised by Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls), who said that in small towns and counties, public reporting of ethnic background or even age could be sufficient information to identify women individually.

Goodno said the intent of the proposal wasn't to "paint a target" on anyone's back and reiterated his belief in the importance of involving the family in a decision to have an abortion.

The bill moves to the House Civil Law Committee.

Parking during pregnancy

Women with high-risk pregnancies would qualify for handicapped parking privileges, under a bill approved Feb. 16 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

Rep. Joe Opatz (DFL-St. Cloud) is the chief sponsor of the bill (**HF296**).

For some women who have high-risk pregnancies, walking can be a health hazard. Opatz's bill would extend the handicapped parking privileges to women whose physicians certify that walking would endanger the life of the mother or fetus.

Four students from St. Cloud State University brought the proposal to Opatz as part of a social work class.

Jana Cook, a senior at the school, said the idea came from her own personal experience.

While attending the University of Minnesota, Cook was pregnant and considered at risk by her doctor. She considered asking for a special parking permit, but was discouraged when others told her she wouldn't have much of a chance of getting one.

Current law regarding handicapped parking does not include women with at-risk pregnancies as being physically disabled.

The illegal use of handicapped permits also came up during the hearing. Margot Imdieke Cross from the Minnesota Disability Council said that many who park in Minneapolis have the permits but don't really need them. She said the permits are often stolen, borrowed from family members, or copied.

"There is an immense amount of abuse right now," she said.

Opatz said he is planning to introduce a bill this session to address that issue.

HF296 moves to the House floor.

Donor bill advances

A bill clarifying organ donation procedures in the 1998 health care directive law is on its way to the House floor after a brief delay in the House Civil Law Committee.

The bill (**HF74**) seeks to clear up a common misunderstanding about organ donation.

Bill sponsor Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park) said that while most doctors know that human tissue and eyes are organs, the average person considering donating his or her organs upon death may not always consider that fact.

She said that her bill, approved by the committee Feb. 15, would make a technical change to the health directive law to help clarify any misconceptions.

Under the 1998 law, people can use a health care directive to address all aspects of advanced planning for health care by appointing

an agent to make the person's health care decisions or by making statements about how the person's health care should be handled.

The bill would modify the suggested form for the directive by specifically listing human tissues and eyes, along with other organs already listed on the form.

The suggested directive form allows a person to give the health care agent the power to make decisions regarding health care, including whether the person's organs are donated upon death.

The bill was approved Jan. 19 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee. But when it was first heard by the civil law panel Feb. 8, Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) requested it be laid over because she wanted to make sure the change wouldn't substantially change the donor law.

Specifically, Boudreau said she was worried that the change could open up the possibility that a person making decisions for a patient could donate fetal tissue.

Luther laid her bill over so that Boudreau's questions could be addressed.

When the bill came up again Feb. 15, Boudreau said that she was satisfied that the bill made no substantial changes to the law. And the committee approved the bill.



HIGHER EDUCATION

Four regents elected

The Minnesota Legislature appointed four new members to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents on Feb. 18.

In a joint meeting of the House and Senate, lawmakers approved the slates of regent candidates forwarded to them by a Joint House Education and Senate Children, Families and Learning Committee.

William Hogan II, the current board chairman, was re-elected to a second term, representing the 3rd Congressional District. Hogan had become a finalist for the position, but was voted out in his district caucus. On Feb. 16, the joint committee overruled the caucus and chose Hogan as the district's candidate. A businessman from Eden Prairie, Hogan chaired the audit committee for the Board of Regents.

Another incumbent, William Peterson, was also re-elected. Peterson is the chief financial officer for Minnesota AFL-CIO and won an at-large position on the board. Peterson lives in Eagan and is also a board member of Regions Hospital in St. Paul.

From the 2nd Congressional District, Dallas Bohnsack upset incumbent Julie Bleyhl. Bohnsack won support during the interview-

ing process and secured his caucus's nomination.

Bleyhl was nominated twice during the joint meeting by Reps. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) and Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) in a last-minute plea for more female representation on the board. There are now three women on the 12-member board.

Dr. Anthony Baraga won election to the seat representing the 8th Congressional District. Baraga, from Hibbing, is also new to the board. He is a radiologist and a graduate of the U of M Medical School. He replaces Thomas Reagan, who stepped down after serving since 1990.

Every two years, the Legislature is called upon to elect members to the Board of Regents, which is the governing body of the university. Eight members are elected to represent each of the state's congressional districts, and the remaining are chosen on an at-large basis. One of those at-large seats must be filled by a student in the university system.

Candidates for the board must file an application to be considered by the Regent Candidate Advisory Council. The council, which is made up of community members, selects candidates to interview and then votes to narrow the field to two to four candidates per seat.

Then each congressional district holds a caucus to select one candidate to forward to the joint legislative committee. The committee can nominate additional candidates, and it then votes to choose the final candidate to bring to the full Legislature.

A joint convention of the House and Senate holds the final election, in which names can still be added to the ballot. The person who receives a majority of votes for each open seat is elected a regent.

Baraga, Bohnsack, Hogan, and Peterson will begin their terms immediately.

U of M seeks human capital

Last year, the University of Minnesota focused its legislative efforts on funding capital projects — building construction, facility improvements, and so on. This year, there's a request for a different resource.

"Intellectual capital is basically the commodity of the 21st century," University President Mark Yudof told members of the House Higher Education Finance Committee Feb. 15.

Attracting top-notch research faculty and strengthening undergraduate education programs are two ways university officials hope to raise the school's rank as a research institution. Right now, the university is ranked near the bottom in a list of 30 comparable schools; Yudof would like to see it among the top five.

The university is asking for increases over its base budget totaling \$198.8 million.

Officials have divided the requested funds into five goal areas: improving undergraduate education, financing health professional education, connecting the university to the community, providing quality service, and paying faculty and staff competitive salaries.

In 1998, the Legislature granted the U of M the largest capital appropriation in the school's history for several building projects and classroom improvements.

Yudof said this year's request is somewhat of a consequence of what happened last year in that the university must have the right people to use and take care of the resources granted in the capital budget last year.

The largest share of the U of M's request would go toward a 3-percent raise for faculty and staff members and another package to fund competitive salary increases.

Funding for smaller, discussion-oriented freshman seminars is another part of Yudof's mission. He taught a seminar last fall and would like to see more of them created in order to make the freshman experience less focused on large lecture courses.

"We need to make this undergraduate experience better than it's ever been," he said.

Yudof also said he hopes the Twin Cities campus, to which many students commute, can become a "24-hour community."

"If people enjoy being there, it makes the educational mission so much easier," he said.

In his biennial budget proposal, Gov. Jesse Ventura has recommended about 62 percent of the initiatives proposed by the university.

In addition, the governor has also proposed setting up a \$350 million endowment fund to be managed by the Minnesota Medical Foundation that would finance the U of M's Academic Health Center, which houses the medical school and other health professional programs.

The committee took no action on the matter.

Med school seeks funds

Medical education in Minnesota is in jeopardy if new funding sources are not created, according to Dr. Frank Cerra, senior vice president for health sciences at the University of Minnesota.

Cerra detailed the \$37 million funding request of the university's Academic Health Center at a Feb. 17 meeting of the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Funding for medical education has decreased since revenues slipped following the merger of the university's hospital and Fairview Health Systems two years ago. And faculty are

working 20 percent more to try and make up that revenue, which takes away from research time, Cerra said.

Those factors, combined with a 1997 federal cut in graduate medical education, have created a funding crunch for the university's medical education, which turns out two-thirds of the state's medical professionals.

"It's not really about the University of Minnesota; it's about doctors, nurses, and dentists in your neighborhood," Cerra said.

Cerra and his colleagues told lawmakers that without a revamped system of funding, medical research and education will diminish and ultimately hurt the state's economy.

"How does the system work when nobody wants to pay for education?" said U of M President Mark Yudof.

Several lawmakers offered possible fundraising strategies for the medical school, including raising tuition or asking health insurance companies to contribute educational funding.

Five sources make up the majority of the university's budget for medical education — federal and state funding or grants, student tuition, private practice revenue, and private donations. State funds make up about 17 percent of the Academic Health Center's budget.

Although the governor's proposed budget only allocates \$5 million of the center's \$37 million request, it also includes a proposal for a \$350 million endowment for medical education and research that would be managed by the Minnesota Medical Foundation at the university.

The investment income generated from the endowment, about \$39 million for the 2000-01 biennium, would then go to the Academic Health Center. The governor also proposes a 2009 sunset date for the endowment, upon which the program would be reviewed and the money could be returned to the state.

The governor has also earmarked \$100 million for a medical education and research costs trust fund that would provide support to hospitals that employ medical residents and students participating in research fellowships. It would not fund the U of M's medical school programs.

The committee took no action on the matter.



HOUSING

Housing for kids in need

A bill approved Feb. 18 by the House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee would help provide affordable housing for the increasing number of homeless children and families.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), sponsor of the bill (**HF10**), said a 1997 study found that women outnumbered men in homeless shelters for the first time, and that the number of children was higher than the number of men and women combined.

The bill would address what Pawlenty called the "changing face of homelessness," and the correlation between instability in a child's housing and his or her performance in school.

Specifically, the bill would enable organizations to apply for grants through the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program, which was established by the Legislature in 1993. That program provides grants to counties and nonprofit organizations for efforts to prevent homelessness.

Under Pawlenty's plan, a new project aimed at providing stability for homeless children would be added to the existing program. It would target children who live in homeless shelters or move frequently throughout the school year. The amount of funding has not yet been specified, but it is slated to be discussed by the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.

"This is not a new program. It adds an emphasis to an existing program," Pawlenty said.

While the program will not solve all of the problems of homelessness, it is designed to help break the cycle of homelessness by helping at-risk children achieve more success in school, he added.

The bill now moves to the Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.

Homeless shelters lack space

In November 1998, nearly 800 people were turned away from homeless shelters or transitional housing programs, according to a survey by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. And about one half of those people are children, the survey showed.

The quarterly survey reported the highest number of turnaways since May 1996, and the second highest number since the department began its survey in 1985.

Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls) is sponsoring **HF593**, a bill crafted in response to that increasing number of people turned away because housing facilities are short of room. The bill was considered Feb. 15 by the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee.

The bill would appropriate \$7.3 million over two years for transitional housing programs and \$2 million for the emergency services grant program.

Transitional housing programs provide up

to two years of housing for homeless individuals and families. Participants must pay 25 percent of their housing costs, and the rest is covered by local, state, or federal assistance.

Emergency services grants are used to cover shelters and other services for homeless people and are available to local governments or non-profit organizations. The Legislature appropriated \$300,000 in 1998 for the program, a year after it was created.

Gov. Jesse Ventura has not recommended any funding increases for those programs in his biennial budget. Under his recommendations, the transitional housing program would receive base level funding at \$3.3 million over two years, and emergency services would receive no funding.

"What we keep seeing is an increase in people being turned away from facilities," said Sue Watlov Phillips from the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless.

Phillips said the increase stems from a lack of available affordable housing and not enough jobs that pay a living wage. And without a funding boost, she said, more people will continue to be turned away.

"We know that this program works," said Phillips, who works for a transitional program. "I strongly urge you to support this program."

The committee will reconsider the bill later for inclusion in this year's omnibus finance bill.



HUMAN SERVICES

Helping the homeless

The number of homeless youths in Minnesota, particularly in rural areas, is rising faster than spending for programs to help them.

That's the reason Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover) is sponsoring a bill (**HF218**) that would augment funding for grants to groups that provide safe houses, transitional housing, or independent living assistance services to young people.

The bill was discussed Feb. 17 by the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Since 1994, children have comprised the largest portion of people living in homeless shelters in Minnesota, according to statistics offered by Laura LaCroix, policy advocate for Family and Children's Services of Minneapolis.

"Due to the lack of safe housing options, many youth seek shelter in such places as abandoned buildings, under bridges, stairwells, or couch-hopping," she testified.

She said that with additional funding, programs could be expanded into 35 more counties.

Some lawmakers said they want to ensure



RandiSu Tanem, left, talks about living at Evergreen House in Bemidji while she and her mother, Pam Jorstad, right, worked out their problems. The pair testified before the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Feb. 17 in support of a bill that would provide funding for youth housing programs like Evergreen House.

that reunifying families remains a prominent goal of agencies receiving funding.

LaCroix said every effort is made to do that, but when it fails, other “full continuum” programs are available.

That was good news for 19-year-old Shirriner Moore, a participant in the Project Solo program in Minneapolis. After the death of her mother, she had nowhere to turn and was at-risk for being homeless.

Moore told the committee that at Project Solo she learned valuable life skills and was encouraged to finish her education. Eventually, she succeeded in becoming independent to the point where she was able to bring her younger brother and sister to live with her.

She has also testified on the effectiveness of the program before the U.S. Congress.

Debra Moore-Thomas, who works for Project Solo, said the program serves 500 youths and has a waiting list.

The committee also heard from Bemidji resident Pam Jorstad and her daughter, RandiSu Tanem, who testified that a program called Evergreen House — funded through the agencies targeted in Tingelstad’s bill — was crucial in keeping her from being homeless.

Tanem said that she had found it impossible to live with her mother and sister and spent two weeks at the facility. Counseling offered through Evergreen House eventually allowed the family to reunite.

Several legislators said they wanted to be assured that programs funded in the bill weren’t duplicates of existing services. LaCroix said there are some similar programs, but only the ones funded through the Minnesota

Department of Human Services provide a housing component.

She said the average age of those seeking help is 17. Other programs, some funded through Early Childhood Family Education, are directed toward much younger children.

Tingelstad said approving the bill would allow the state to be proactive in dealing with the homeless youth situation, spending a small amount of money now to avoid paying more for more intensive state services in the future.

The bill could be considered later for inclusion in the omnibus health and human services finance bill.



INSURANCE

Insurance deals questioned

Companies that pay cash for a person’s structured settlement payment from an insurance firm would need court approval for any such transaction, under a bill discussed Feb. 16 by the House Commerce Committee.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), the bill’s sponsor, said some people who receive structured settlements — periodic payments from an insurance company instead of a lump sum — sell their rights to those payments without having all the information they need to make a good decision. The practice of buying and selling the rights to those payments, known as a “factoring transaction,” is not regulated, Haas said. And that allows companies to take advantage of people who are not accustomed to making complex financial decisions.

“Not all of these companies are bad,” he

said. “We’re just trying to clean it up so people get a fair shake and know their rights.”

Managing money can be especially difficult for people who receive insurance payments after suffering brain injuries, said David Brackett of Capital Planning Inc., who testified in support of the bill. Brackett said he has specialized in structured settlements since 1981, and he has seen many instances where people have sold their rights to future payments without understanding the consequences.

The bill (HF478) would require companies to disclose how the present value of the cash they are offering up front compares to the money the claimant is scheduled to receive over time.

That disclosure would include information on how much the claimant would spend on brokers’ commissions and all other costs and fees.

A transaction could be done only if the court determines it is necessary for the claimant to avoid an “imminent financial hardship” and that it would not cause undue hardship in the future because of the lack of payments. The bill also would require the claimant to receive independent professional advice on the transaction’s legal, tax, and financial implications.

Opponents of the bill say they do not object to regulations, but that some of the bill’s provisions are contradictory.

Robin Shapiro, of the National Association of Settlement Purchasers, questioned how a claimant who has an “imminent financial hardship” could afford to pay for professional advice.

Shapiro also said if disclosure is required by the company offering the factoring transaction, it should also be required of the insurance company that arranges the structured settlement.

The committee is expected to take action on the bill Feb. 23.



LAW

Corporate court reporters

A practice whereby freelance court reporters sign exclusive contracts with companies to provide legal depositions damages the appearance of impartiality, according to supporters of a bill that ban such arrangements.

The bill (HF346) was approved Feb. 17 by the House Civil Law Committee.

The contracts are used by large companies, such as insurance firms, that frequently need the services of court reporters. Under such deals, the company agrees to use the court reporter exclusively and the court reporter provides services at a reduced rate. The

practice is used as a way to reduce overall litigation costs.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), would make such contracts illegal and would give judges the authority to invalidate illegal depositions done under such contracts. Under the bill, court reporters could only be retained on a case-by-case basis.

Lori Sorenson, a court reporter who testified in support of the bill, said that a litigant would not want his case tried by a judge who is paid by the other litigant. Likewise, she said, court reporters should not be under contract with one of the litigants.

"It seems equally as ludicrous to put the other neutral participant on the payroll," she said.

Mike Sieben, an attorney and former state representative, also testified in support of the bill. He said that the notion of court reporters "cutting side deals" casts doubt on the impartiality of the reporter.

"It's so important in a deposition that we have a court reporter that is completely neutral and fair, and will take down testimony in an impartial way," he said.

But Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) said he feels the bill is inappropriate. He said that a state Supreme Court advisory committee is currently looking at the court rule which governs court reporters, and that the issue should be handled by the courts, not the Legislature.

"I vigorously support the separation of powers," he said.

The bill now goes to the House floor.



SAFETY

Fireworks bill stalls

A bill that would legalize the sale and possession of some fireworks fell one vote short of approval by the House Commerce Committee on Feb. 16. However, some committee members indicated they would support an amended version of the bill (HF233).

Members on both sides of the issue argued that they are after improved safety.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), sponsor of the proposal, said people already use fireworks in Minnesota. They can be purchased in Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Rukavina's bill would allow people age 18 or older to purchase some fireworks in Minnesota during the week of the Fourth of July, and they would receive written safety guidelines with their purchase.

Rukavina said that injuries occur at a higher rate in states where fireworks are banned. More than 40 percent of fireworks-related accidents



A bill that would make some fireworks legal during the first week of July was rejected Feb. 16 by members of the House Commerce Committee, but lawmakers said the proposal may resurface yet this session.

take place in the 10 states that ban all fireworks, but those 10 states account for only 21 percent of the country's population. And fireworks account for only a small percentage of fires compared to faulty electricity, arson, or playing with matches or lighters, Rukavina said.

Opponents of the bill were not convinced.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) said he narrowly missed a serious injury from a firecracker when he was a baby. Someone had thrown the firecracker from a Ferris wheel, and it landed on the side of the carriage he was in and bounced out. If it had bounced the other way and exploded in his face, he would most likely have been blinded, Ozment said.

"We've had limited injuries (from fireworks) because it is illegal, and because most people obey the law," Ozment said.

Dr. Gary Schwartz testified against the bill on behalf of the Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology and the National Association of State Fire Marshals. Those organizations encourage people to attend public fireworks displays instead of using personal fireworks, he said.

Of the 7,000 injuries related to fireworks that occur each year in the United States, 2,000 are eye injuries, he said. One third of those injuries cause permanent eye damage, and almost one in 20 injuries result in blindness or require surgery to remove a person's eye.

Schwartz said bottle rockets are the most dangerous of the common fireworks, but even sparklers, which burn at 1,800 degrees, have caused serious accidents.

Under the bill, bottle rockets, sparklers, and other novelty fireworks could be possessed and used from July 1 to July 7 each year.

The bill would also change the penalties for

violating related laws. Under current state law, the maximum penalty for possessing 35 pounds or more of fireworks is one year in jail and a \$3,000 fine. The maximum penalty for possessing less than 35 pounds of fireworks is 90 days in jail and a \$700 fine.

The bill would not change the penalty for possessing more than 35 pounds of fireworks, but the penalty for possessing less than 35 pounds would be a petty misdemeanor with a maximum fine of \$200.

Rukavina said the ban on personal fireworks also raises a question about personal freedom.

"We celebrate the Fourth of July because we got our freedom from England and from the tyranny of the king of England's heavy hand. How free are we if we can't celebrate our independence like 40 other states?" Rukavina asked.

Committee members voted 13-12 against the measure. The committee then passed a motion to allow it to be brought up again.

Training for firefighters

A bill that would establish statewide education and training for firefighters was approved Feb. 15 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Firefighters throughout the state are trained within individual fire departments. Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), sponsor of the bill, said the different types of training can lead to problems when more than one department responds to a call.

HF465 would establish a 15-member board to make recommendations on ways to

improve education and training for firefighters. The board would also establish qualifications for fire service training instructors and would receive money from the state to reimburse firefighters for the training.

The board's membership would include the state's commissioner of public safety, five members of the Minnesota Fire Department Association (four of whom would be volunteer firefighters), two members of the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association, and two members of Minnesota Professional Fire Fighters, a labor union. The remaining members would represent cities and townships.

Members of those and other groups testified in support of the bill. The makeup of the proposed board has been debated over the past three years, said Nyle Zikmund, fire chief of the Spring Lake Park, Blaine, Mounds View Fire Department. The main challenge has been to balance the interests of large and small fire departments, along with those of other affected groups such as the state fire marshal, Zikmund said.

The bill now moves to the House State Government Finance Committee.



SPORTS

No stickers on antique boats

The House passed a bill Feb. 15 that would give owners of antique boats more leeway in displaying their boat licenses. The vote was 125-0.

The bill (**HF137**) would affect boats that were built before July 1, 1959, and are used solely as collector's items. It would allow owners of restored historic boats to affix the license number and decals to a detachable device on the boat instead of to the boat itself.

Rep. Jim Rostberg (R-Isanti), sponsor of the bill, said it would allow owners of those boats to participate in parades or events without having to place stickers on the front of their boats and defacing the valuable crafts.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



TAXES

Higher bar for tax hikes

Some lawmakers would like to make it more difficult for the Legislature to raise taxes.

A bill (**HF5**) approved by the House Taxes Committee Feb. 12 would give voters the chance to decide if the state should require a three-fifths vote, rather than a simple majority, to pass a tax hike.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Tim Wilkin

Final word



Ramsey County Attorney Susan Gaertner testifies in favor of a bill that would allow prosecutors to have final rebuttal in criminal trials. The House Crime Prevention Committee discussed the bill Feb. 16 and is slated to hear final arguments on the matter Feb. 19.

(R-Eagan), would place on a ballot a constitutional amendment to require a super-majority for the Legislature to increase state sales or income tax, impose a new tax, or raise any property tax levy set by state law.

Wilkin told his colleagues on the taxes panel that the bill is needed for legislators to keep faith with those who elected them. Citizens clearly want less tax burden, he said.

Should the Legislature cut taxes this year, it also should move to assure those rates are not easily raised in the future, Wilkin said. And he pointed out the constitutional amendment would not prohibit enacting new taxes or raising existing taxes, but would only require a greater consensus.

Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) attempted to alter the bill in hopes of avoiding what he called "Californification" of Minnesota politics. After the passage of 1978's Proposition 13 — a wide-reaching tax reform measure that included a super-majority requirement — and other subsequent reforms, California has seen that giving power to "entrenched minorities" is not conducive to good government, Orfield argued.

Orfield's amendments would have protected revenues for schools, the elderly, and the environment.

"To give small groups the power to thwart basic institutions of public policy, I don't think that's a good system," he said. "Let the voters toss us out if they don't like what we're doing."

The bill moves to the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee. If it is eventually approved by the Legislature, the

proposed amendment would be on the ballot in 2000.

Cutting cabin taxes

Owners of cabins valued at more than \$75,000 may be in line for a property tax break.

The Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee on Feb. 15 looked at two proposals to provide such a tax cut.

Under the bills — **HF211**, sponsored by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), and **HF125**, sponsored by Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina) — seasonal residential recreational property not used for commercial purposes would fall one property tax class.

The lower class has a rate of 1.25 percent on the first \$75,000 of market value and 1.7 percent on the market value over \$75,000. That's down from 2.2 percent on excess market value in the higher class.

Abrams said the concept of ending special higher tax treatment for such property isn't new, but is part of an ongoing "a house is a house is a house" discussion in the Legislature.

Dick Wray, head of the Minnesota Seasonal Property Owners Coalition, said that although there have been class rate decreases over the years, the tax capacity for seasonal property has grown from \$84 million to \$110 million since 1994.

"Valuation is going into orbit," he said.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), who represents a district with a large number of cabins, was concerned that the proposal may have a negative impact in her district.

Under either bill, \$3.4 million would be added to the state's Homestead and Agricultural Credit Aid program to fill the gaps left by the changes.

The bills could be considered later for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Limiting local levies

Minnesota's cities and counties are loudly protesting a plan to extend general levy limits for two more years.

The limits, which are calculated through a three-part formula, are a ceiling above which local governments cannot levy without approval of voters. They were most recently enacted by the 1997 Legislature to protect voters as the state began considering comprehensive property tax reform.

Those reforms have not been accomplished, according to Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina), who's sponsoring a bill that would renew the caps, intended originally to end next year.

The bill (**HF303**) was debated Feb. 15 by the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee.

The levy limits affect all counties and cities with a population greater than 2,500.

Proponents say the bill is necessary to allow the Legislature time to consider all aspects of reform. Opponents say it's a punitive action designed to restrict local government.

Roseville Mayor Dan Wall said the limits were a legislative attempt to "defend taxpayers from city officials" and he called them bad public policy.

Del Haag, mayor of Buffalo and president of the League of Minnesota Cities, said the limits interfere with local accountability and are redundant. He noted that the Legislature had already enacted a "truth in taxation" policy — mandating public hearings on proposed levies — as a method of fostering taxpayer vigilance, and then added levy limits on top.

Others who testified expressed concern that the levy limits too often are being interpreted as a floor rather than a ceiling, although no one had figures showing how many governments had levied their maximum amount.

Erhardt said cities and counties also play a game of semantics at their annual truth in taxation hearings.

"If the levy goes up, it's the fault of the Legislature," he noted. "If the levy goes down, it's because they did an incredible job of holding down spending."

Penny Steele, a Hennepin County commissioner, was the only elected official to testify in favor of the bill.

While admitting the levy limits are not well understood and are an "imperfect tool," she

Northwest jobs



Ben Hirst, senior vice president of corporate affairs for Northwest Airlines, updates members of the House Transportation Policy Committee Feb. 18 on the effects of the airline's 1994 financing agreement with the state. Hirst said the airline has exceeded the job creation goals included in its deal with the state.

said that not having them would be tantamount to "adding yeast to bread dough."

The bill could be considered later for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Tax headache for retailers

A large number of Minnesota's retailers have grown to hate June.

They've done so since 1981, when the Legislature passed something called "accelerated payments," requiring certain businesses to submit at least 75 percent of their estimated June sales tax payments two business days before June 30. The balance of the June liability is due by Aug. 14. And if businesses don't estimate correctly, they can be penalized.

The practice was adopted in response to a state fiscal crisis. It was designed to allow the state to shift revenues forward from one fiscal year to another. The state fiscal year ends June 30.

But a bill sponsored by Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria) would end the accelerated payments. The bill (**HF355**) was discussed Feb. 16 by the House Taxes Committee.

Supporters said that now that the state is running a large budget surplus, it's time to halt the 18-year-old practice.

Passing the bill would simply be "a settling-up," said Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope).

Cassell said he understands the concept well because he was on the receiving end of another

attempt by the state to shift revenues. He served as a school superintendent when the Legislature enacted its property tax recognition shift, causing some schools cash flow problems and other headaches.

He noted that the Legislature has provided a remedy for schools, and he now hopes the same could be done for retailers.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the taxes panel, said he is in favor of ending the accelerated payments, but that it may be too expensive to slide to a full stop all in one year.

The bulk of the cost to the state would be a one-time hit of \$146 million in the 2000-01 biennium. Although no fewer dollars would be collected, the money would accrue to a different biennium.

Officials from Minnesota Merchants Association and Minnesota Grocers Association also spoke in favor of the repeal.

About 3,400 businesses that collect sales tax would be affected.

Rest noted that a plan to undo the accelerated payments is part of Gov. Jesse Ventura's proposed budget.

The bill could be considered later for inclusion in this year's omnibus tax bill.

Survivor seeks refund

Eden Prairie resident Murray Johnson is fighting to change a provision in tax law that he considers a "death penalty."

Johnson's saga began when his mother died in December 1997 and he was named personal representative for her estate. He filed her tax documents, including the form for a property tax refund due his mother.

But the refund was eventually denied because state law mandates that such payouts can only go to a surviving spouse or dependent.

Johnson said that amounted to a "death penalty, stealing from the dead."

"She was alive 363 days of 1997, and she paid property taxes," Johnson said. "She deserved that refund."

Miffed, Johnson wrote a letter decrying the revenue department's ruling and sent it to several newspapers. His plight drew notice from Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing), who asked Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) to offer a companion bill in the House aimed at changing the law regarding refunds.

Osskopp told the House Taxes Committee Feb. 16 that the law is unfair and should be changed to allow personal representatives to receive a deceased person's property tax refund. He is sponsoring the bill (**HF98**) that would do so.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue estimates that changing the law could cost the state about \$700,000 annually, the result of an estimated 2,000 additional claims — averaging \$350 each — by personal representatives of deceased persons.

But Osskopp said he finds it humorous when state departments use figures in such a manner.

"It's not the state's money in the first place," Osskopp said. "It belongs to the people, yet we treat it as a loss of revenue to the state."

As drafted, Osskopp's bill does not provide for retroactive refunds, so Johnson would not stand to recover any money unless the proposal were amended.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.



TRANSPORTATION

Mondale talks transit

Among his priorities as chair of the Metropolitan Council, Ted Mondale said transportation is high on his list.

Mondale, who was appointed to his new job by fellow 1998 gubernatorial candidate Gov. Jesse Ventura, visited the House Transportation Policy Committee Feb. 16.

"Now is the time that we should start making some decisions and implementation," Mondale said. "Transit has to be a larger part of our infrastructure."

His organization oversees planning for land use, water, waste, and transit in the seven-county metropolitan area. The council is in charge of the planning and development of light rail transit, a project that could become reality in 2003 if complete funding is raised.

Although he did not present a specific legislative agenda, Mondale said he is prepared to work with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to begin enhancing transportation options in the Twin Cities.

To lawmakers, he stressed taking action on transit plans. He said there has been hardly any implementation compared to the planning and discussion of light rail transit and other options.

To illustrate his point, he told a story about driving his father, former Vice President Walter Mondale, to the airport and watching him shrink down in his seat as they passed through the Hiawatha corridor in Minneapolis.

When Mondale asked what he was doing, his father said he could remember telling area residents in the 1960s that their homes were being condemned to make way for the expansion of the Hiawatha corridor, a project that didn't actually get underway for 30 years.

"The biggest mistake would be to debate this thing another 10 years," Mondale told committee members.

Lawmakers also drilled him about his positions on urban sprawl issues and his attitude toward rural Minnesota.

Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View) asked Mondale about the council's position regarding urban sprawl and expansion of transit, two issues that she said were in conflict with each other.

"People are going to live where they're going to live and we shouldn't make judgments," Mondale said, adding that his concern with urban sprawl is one of making sure the planning is done well.

Others hinted at a possible geographical expansion of the council's domain.

Mondale said he does not have any plans to add counties to the domain, but he said tensions between the council and outer counties would always be there and can be worked out reasonably.

Emissions bill advances

If the Twin Cities metro area keeps meeting federal air quality standards, the motor vehicle emissions inspection program would be repealed, under a bill approved Feb. 18 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Capitol celebration



Five-year-old Nancy Hoang of Brooklyn Park celebrates Tet, the Vietnamese new year, with her family during a cultural presentation in the Capitol rotunda Feb. 16. The event, sponsored by the Vietnamese Minnesotans Association, kicked off the Vietnamese Year of the Cat.

The bill (HF7) is sponsored by Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View) and has also been approved by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

The proposal originally called for the program to end July 1, 2000, but it was amended to accommodate some lawmakers' concerns about complying with federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) air standards. The EPA has the authority to take away federal highway funding if the emissions program is repealed while carbon monoxide levels are too high.

Under the new provisions of the bill, emissions tests will cease being mandatory on or after July 1, 2000, or when the EPA deems the metro area within its attainment levels.

Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) supported the bill from the beginning and said he was glad to see it win approval. He was part of a similar effort several years ago.

"We heard very similar arguments that we heard in '95," he said. "We just didn't have the votes."

Hackbarth said he is optimistic that the plan would pass on the House floor this year.

The bill now moves to the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* news magazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.

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

On the road . . .

Outstate legislators hustle to keep up at home and away

By Paul Wahl

Lawmakers who live in metro districts can hop in their cars and drive home when the gavel falls, but it's a different story for legislators who come from Minnesota's more far-flung districts.

For them, day's end often means returning to an apartment or motel room, extended calls home, and, sometimes, a little loneliness. Family, businesses, and friends are hours away. Visits are confined to whirlwind weekends, split between political obligations and family responsibilities.

Long-time and first-term representatives have found a variety of ways to deal with separation issues.

Rep. Henry Kalis (DFL-Walters) remembers well his first trip to the Legislature 25 years ago.

"I brought my wife and three children to St. Paul," he said.

He thought that would be a great way to preserve togetherness. But when he ran for reelection two years later, his family agreed to back his candidacy only if they wouldn't have to move to St. Paul for the session.

Echoing a common theme of male lawmakers, Kalis said his wife took on the bulk of the duties on their farm and raising their children while he was gone. For the first time in 24 years, his wife is living with him near the Capitol.

Sounding another common theme from rural legislators, Kalis' neighbors are helping tend the farm.

First-term Rep. Rod Skoe (DFL-Clearbrook) also gives a lot of credit to his neighbors for helping out on his wild rice and potato farm while he's in St. Paul.

For Skoe, family time means phone calls each evening to his wife, daughter, and son. He also tries to e-mail them regularly.

His weekends at home are often filled with farm duties on Saturday, church on Sunday, and then hitting the road for the trip back to St. Paul.

After one such hectic weekend, Skoe said that his wife said, "Next time, I think I'll come visit you."

Another first-year member, Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) has come up with a plan to ensure quality time with his family. Each Tuesday, his wife and two children pile into the car and come to St. Paul for family day.

Dorman is renting in a building with an indoor swimming pool that the family enjoys throughout the day. Dorman doesn't accept invitations to any receptions or functions on Tuesday evenings.



Rep. Dan Dorman gets ready to toss his 9-year-old son, Christopher, while 7-year-old Matthew waits his turn. Dorman's wife, Mary Jo, and his two sons make the drive from Albert Lea each Tuesday to spend a family day together while Dorman is in St. Paul for the session.

"Actually, we're spending more time together as a family than we did when we were all at home," said Dorman, who operates a small business in Albert Lea. He's hired a full-time manager to take care of the business while he's away.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) also has to hire extra help to cover his medical practice while he's at the Capitol. He and his wife are living in an apartment in St. Paul.

Their journey to their southwestern Minnesota home is a four-hour drive. It's only an hour by air for Mulder, who is a pilot, but the state doesn't reimburse him if he flies his own plane. However, he can fly to Marshall and take a charter flight from there.

Distance issues are equally tough on the female House members, who have one major disadvantage.

"Women legislators don't have wives," said Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson).

And she said that most rural female legislators are at the point in life when children are grown and family responsibilities are fewer.

"That appears to be the stage in which being a legislator fits for them, at least most of them," she said.

She said one of her unique challenges is keeping two sets of everything, including makeup, wardrobe, and even food. On weekends, she drives three hours home and launches into laundry, watering plants, buying groceries, and going to church, in addition to making political appearances.

Harder and her husband of 28 years keep in touch by phone. Sometimes, his work brings him to the Twin Cities, but between their busy schedules, they often only have time to talk on the phone.

"The only difference is it's not long-distance when he's here," Harder said.

For Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown) and Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), both single, the challenges are similar.

Hasskamp said her mother, who's in her 70s and still lives in her own home, depends on her for help in many ways.

"For instance, when I'm not there to shovel snow, she has to hire it done," Hasskamp said. "It's tough to be away because my mother is precious to me."

Hasskamp said she doesn't have to return to a sterile motel room in the evening because she's renting a bedroom from a friend in a home near the Capitol. She also has two sisters living in the area.

Trips home don't automatically mean opportunities to rest, so she schedules time for her favorite recreation, snowmobiling, and another preference, "sitting and looking out at the lake."

Murphy, who's serving her 23rd year in the House, said her annual excursions to St. Paul are enjoyable, but they don't get any easier.

She said that in her early days in the House, nothing was scheduled on Fridays or before 10 a.m. on Mondays, in order to allow rural legislators time to make the trip home and back comfortably. Once the balance in the House shifted to primarily city and suburban representatives, Murphy said that schedule changed.

She said weekends at home begin with shoveling her sidewalk and are often filled with mundane chores, such as washing clothes, and the obligatory public appearances.

Keeping up with friends is also difficult because "most of them don't care what happened in committee that day."

Murphy said the experience hasn't soured her zest for public service but she said, "It's a challenge. It's hard and sometimes lonely, too."



Holberg seizes opportunity to be part of the solution

By Grant Martin

Rep. Mary Liz Holberg, who operates a tree-trimming business with her husband, knew she was in for a tough summer when the



Rep.
Mary Liz Holberg

second major thunderstorm hit in late May 1998 — three days after she was endorsed by Republicans for the House race.

"We received about 500 calls the first two days after that storm, and, of course, we had more wind and hail storms in June,"

said Holberg (R-Lakeville). "It was just wickedly wild trying to keep the business up and running, get a campaign going, and attend to the needs of my family."

Holberg said the breaking point came in June when she got some bad news.

"I got a message on our machine saying that my husband was in the emergency room and that he had sliced the top of his arm with a chain saw," she said. "An hour and a half later, he was back on the job. And this is after a couple of weeks of 14- and 16-hour days."

Holberg said that they couldn't keep pushing themselves at that rate.

"It was at that point that I said, 'I'm out. No more of this. We have to go back to a more normal schedule. Everybody's tired. It's not worth it,'" she said.

From then on, Holberg made sure that her business only took jobs that could be reasonably handled.

Likewise, with her run for the House seat, Holberg said that she wanted to make sure that the campaign and the job of state representative wouldn't interfere with her family.

"Certainly, for me, my family always comes first," she said.

Holberg lives in Lakeville with her husband and two children. She also has a large extended family that lives in the district.

"We love to have family dinners at Grandma's on Sunday," she said.

Holberg's first experience in local government came when she challenged a development project near her home. She later served seven years on the Lakeville Planning Commission, and in 1995 she was elected to the Lakeville City Council.

Holberg said that her parents, who served as foster parents for 175 children over the years, taught her the importance of being active in the community.

"My parents always told us if you weren't a part of the solution, you were a part of the problem," she said. "You can't complain unless you're willing to do something about it. I have always been willing to complain, but I have, in turn, been willing to work to make things better."

In the 1998 campaign, Holberg ran against fellow Lakeville City Councilor Betty Sindt, an 18-year veteran of the council.

Holberg said that she and Sindt had worked closely together while serving on the council and on other local issues.

"She and I had what we called a ladies' agreement that we would stick to the issues in the campaign and not make it personal," she said. "We did that. Both of us received numerous positive comments from people in the community really respecting the fact that we did that."

Holberg said that she will focus on the issues that are important to her district.

"We have an area that is exploding in growth," she said. "And that affects every element of a person's life, from the constant road construction every summer to the overcrowding in the schools to bond referendums. It just goes on and on."

Particularly, she said that transportation funding is very important. It's an issue that she will watch closely, she said, even though she didn't get assigned to the Transportation Finance Committee.

"That's OK," she said. "You know how it is when you're the low person on the totem pole up here."

Holberg said that while she has been amazed at the variety of issues she's already encountered at the Legislature, she finds it somewhat frustrating because it's impossible to "dig into" every topic.

Holberg also said that she is excited about being a part of the new tripartisan government. She said that being a new member has been an advantage as far as that goes.

"I'm coming in with a chance to do things a little differently," she said. "I'm watching some of the more senior members struggle with that. I'm not saying that as a criticism, but there has to be a new way of doing business up here."

District 37B

1995 population: 43,097

Largest city: Lakeville

Counties: Dakota, Scott

Location: south metro

Top concern: "The major concern of my district is ensuring well-managed growth so that its effect on the community's quality of life is not detrimental. That encompasses transportation, building schools, and land-use issues."

— Rep. Mary Liz Holberg

House sets deadlines

The House passed a resolution Feb. 15 to formally adopt committee deadlines for the 1999 Legislative Session.

Each year the House and Senate set deadlines by which most bills must be heard in a committee and forwarded through the process. The deadlines weed out some of the thousands of bills introduced each year.

The first 1999 committee deadline will be **Friday, March 19**. That means to be considered further, a bill must pass out of

all necessary policy committees in its house of origin.

The second committee deadline will be **Wednesday, March 31**. By that date, all bills other than those containing appropriations will have to be passed out of all policy committees in the both the House and Senate. To meet the second deadline, bills will have to be acted upon before 4 p.m. March 31.

The third deadline will be **Friday,**

April 16. All omnibus appropriations bills will have to pass out of a finance committee by that date.

Of course, there are exceptions to the deadlines. The House Ways and Means, Taxes, and Rules and Legislative Administration committees are exempt, as are the Senate Finance, Taxes, and Rules and Administration committees. Also, a bill can be heard after the deadlines if the rules committee in either body allows it.

Lawmaker begins career with popular auto emissions bill

By Paul Wahl

First-term Rep. Barbara Haake (R-Mounds View) ran for a seat in the House for the first time in 1976, shortly after the Watergate scandal and the resignation of Richard Nixon.



Rep. Barbara Haake

The next time she ran, it was Bill Clinton who was under scrutiny for his actions as president.

"I only run in years when presidents are experiencing catastrophic difficulties," Haake joked.

The 58-year-old mother of three entered the race in District 52B after fellow Republican Richard Pellow retired from politics. Pellow and DFLer Geri Evans had traded places in the House seat several times. Pellow won the seat in 1988, 1990, and 1994, but Evans took it away from him in 1992 and 1996.

In 1998, Haake took on the incumbent, Evans, and a Reform Party candidate. Haake won by 800 votes over her nearest competitor.

For her, running for office was a natural progression from a long period of political involvement. Haake's interest in politics can be traced back to her childhood, when she learned on the knee of her grandmother, a devoted Republican Party activist whose political involvement began long before women's suffrage.

In 1970, a chapter of the League of Women Voters was started in Haake's community. Then a stay-at-home mother, Haake jumped at the chance to join. The group offered an opportunity to talk about something other than "baby bottles and diapers," she said.

Later, she joined the park and recreation commission in Mounds View and was then appointed to the city's planning commission. She spent nearly a decade on those two bodies and later served one-half term on the Mounds View City Council.

In 1994, she joined the Rice Creek Watershed District Board of Managers.

Her involvement with her local cable television committee in 1990 led to her debut as a television show host. She began as the host of a monthly production about activities and personalities in Mounds View, "A View from the Mound" and "A Conversation with the Mayor." She also has co-anchored the yearly election night coverage for CTV's entire northern Ramsey County suburban area. In the past two years, she has been co-host of another CTV show, "Car Stuff."

She continues her role in television today, hosting "Barb's Report from the Hill," which is videotaped in the Capitol or State Office Building each week and features a variety of legislative colleagues as guests.

It wasn't her work on "Car Stuff" that led to her first major piece of legislation, but the auto experience probably came in handy. Haake is sponsoring a well-publicized bill that would end the motor vehicle emissions inspection program in the metropolitan area.

"It is fun because it's a popular cause," Haake said.

She believes the House and Senate will pass the bill and Gov. Jesse Ventura will sign it.

Haake is working on several other pieces of legislation as a member of the House Transportation Policy Committee. She also serves on the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs, House Crime Prevention, and House Transportation Finance committees.

She will also chair a subcommittee that will examine issues relating to the Metropolitan Council.

For the past 11 years, Haake has owned her own insurance agency, helping employers provide employee benefits to their workers.

She finds the life of a legislator exciting, but occasionally frustrating. She said that because she's been self-employed or employed in self-directed positions for most of her life, the loss

of autonomy has been the most difficult of the adjustments she's had to make.

"You have no more control of your life," she said. "It's nice to paint a room because you start at one corner and end at another and say, 'I've accomplished something.' I can't get that feeling yet. Maybe it will come later on."

Weeks during the legislative session seem to pass as quickly as days do away from the Capitol, Haake said. She gets home around 10:30 p.m. most weekday evenings and often spends time on weekends catching up. She's often up by 4 a.m. to prepare for the day and usually arrives at her office early.

Although she's finding that keeping in communication with her constituents can be challenging, one of her main goals is to bring people into the equation in state government.

"I get back to my community and that's where the people are," Haake said. "Here you're insulated."

"Agencies and lobbyists have a lot of control over what happens here. It seems almost as if the citizens — my people — are a voice in the wilderness. Sometimes it's tough for them to be heard."

Although she doesn't plan to retire shortly, Haake has a major leisure adventure waiting. She owns a 65-foot boat with 1,800 square-feet of living space. Eventually, she wants to sail down the Mississippi River and travel to Florida each October and return in April.

"That's if I ever retire, which I don't see myself doing," she said.

District 52B

1995 population: 33,290

Largest city: New Brighton

County: Ramsey

Location: northwestern metro

Top concern: "I want to give the people a voice. If I can be a facilitator for my community and my people, then I will have accomplished something."

— Rep. Barb Haake

Frequently called numbers

(All numbers are area code 651.)

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol 296-0271

Voice mail/order bills 296-2343

Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate

110 Capitol 296-2887

Index, House

211 Capitol 296-6646

Information, Senate

231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House

175 State Office Building 296-2146

TTY*, Senate 296-0250

Toll free 1-888-234-1112

TTY*, House 296-9896

Toll free 1-800-657-3550

Bill Introductions

HF710-HF875

Tuesday, Feb. 16

HF710—Holsten (R)

Agriculture Policy

Farmed cervidae hunting on licensed shooting preserves authorized.

HF711—Clark, K. (DFL)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Coldwater Springs traditional cultural property preservation established in Hennepin County.

HF712—Clark, K. (DFL)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Native Americans; State Historical Society, State Archaeologists, Council of Indian Affairs, and State Historical Preservation Office memorialized to protect and preserve Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota traditional cultural property.

HF713—Clark, K. (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Businesses receiving public assistance requirement provisions expanded to include assistance to businesses for community development.

HF714—Larsen, P. (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Adolescent HIV and sexually transmitted disease infection prevention services grant program established, and money appropriated.

HF715—Peterson (DFL)

Agriculture Policy

Farmed cervidae hunting on licensed shooting preserves authorized.

HF716—Seifert, J. (R)

Commerce

Service and membership contract automatic renewal provisions restricted.

HF717—Seifert, J. (R)

Civil Law

Housing calendar consolidation program extended outside the second and fourth judicial districts.

HF718—Ozment (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Advanced practice registered nursing regulated.

HF719—Seifert, J. (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Tobacco; Congress memorialized to enact legislation prohibiting federal recoupment of state tobacco settlement funds.

HF720—Kielkucki (R)

K-12 Education Finance

School lunch aid and targeted breakfast grants modified; school lunch and food storage aid, school breakfast, and targeted breakfast grants provided; and money appropriated.

HF721—Tomassoni (DFL)

Commerce

Credit scoring; use of credit information for homeowners and auto insurance underwriting purposes prohibited.

HF722—Mares (R)

Education Policy

Employment and reemployment of school board personnel procedures modified to require majority approval.

HF723—McElroy (R)

Taxes

Employer provided transit benefits income tax credit created.

HF724—Gunther (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Extended employment program statewide, hourly reimbursement rates increased, welfare-to-work extended employment partnership program continued, and money appropriated.

HF725—Westerberg (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 12, Centennial, class size project established, and money appropriated.

HF726—Knobloch (R)

Capital Investment

Political subdivision capital project grant standards provided.

HF727—Davids (R)

Commerce

Real property loans, private mortgage insurance (PMI), and lending practices regulated; prepayment penalties prohibited; escrow account interest required; and mortgage originators and servicers net worth requirements repealed.

HF728—Haas (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Brooklyn Park economic development authority urban shopping district established and conditions provided.

HF729—Haas (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Brooklyn Park economic development authority authorized to establish, maintain, and operate a redevelopment account.

HF730—Rukavina (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

County acreage no net loss of private land policy provided.

HF731—Wolf (R)

Education Policy

Three additional days of student instruction mandate repealed.

HF732—Osskopp (R)

Crime Prevention

Offenders convicted of failure to appear after release required to pay incurred costs.

HF733—Osskopp (R)

Crime Prevention

Defendant restitution request challenge time period limited.

HF734—Osskopp (R)

Crime Prevention

Wrongfully obtaining public assistance crime clarified.

HF735—Osskopp (R)

Crime Prevention

Crime of adulteration expanded to include adulterations capable of causing death or bodily harm, and penalties increased.

HF736—Bakk (DFL)

Environment &

Natural Resources Policy

State lifetime park pass study required.

HF737—Munger (DFL)

Environment &

Natural Resources Policy

Northern leopard frog designated as the state amphibian and the Blanding's turtle designated as the state reptile.

HF738—Larsen, P. (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Medical education and research trust fund provisions modified to include psychologists and advisory committee expiration date extended.

HF739—Howes (R)

Transportation Finance

Truck safety public information pilot program grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF740—Gray (DFL)

Education Policy

Full-day kindergarten phase-in provided, first-grade preparedness program expanded, and money appropriated.

HF741—Knobloch (R)

Crime Prevention

Inmate bloodborne pathogen testing procedures created, safeguards provided, and penalties imposed.

HF742—Howes (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Right to practice forestry; local government authority limited and irrebuttal presumption created.

HF743—Gray (DFL)

Commerce

Residential real estate transactions regulated, closing agent county filing requirements provided, and disclosure to prospective purchasers required.

HF744—Haas (R)

Commerce

Motor vehicle retail installment sales regulated and contract uniformity prescribed.

HF745—Molnau (R)

Transportation Policy

Television placement in motor vehicles clarified.

HF746—Stang (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Health maintenance organization mental health provider geographic accessibility requirements modified.

HF747—McElroy (R)

Commerce

Mandatory dram shop liability insurance minimum coverage increased.

HF748—Trimble (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Ramsey County education and dispute resolution services for landlords and tenants pilot program established and evaluated, and money appropriated.

HF749—Biernat (DFL)

Education Policy
Charter school capital loans authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF750—Knoblach (R)

Crime Prevention
Prosecutors authorized to treat alleged juvenile misdemeanor offenders as delinquent children.

HF751—Trimble (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Ramsey County personnel process modified related to application and screening.

HF752—Tomassoni (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
School district supplemental revenue reduction provided.

HF753—Carruthers (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Minnesota Fair Labor Standards Act overtime exemption for truck drivers removed.

HF754—Tomassoni (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
Range association of municipalities and schools declining enrollment grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF755—Wenzel (DFL)

Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
Ethanol development fund balance retained and additional loan provided.

HF756—Westfall (R)

Health & Human Services Finance
Clay County nonprofit dental services grant provided and money appropriated.

HF757—Kalis (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Faribault and Blue Earth counties quad lakes restoration project appropriated money.

HF758—Kalis (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Blue Earth County; LeSueur River stream bank stabilization within St. Clair city limits provided and money appropriated.

HF759—Dorn (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
Pupil unit definition modified for the purpose of creating a declining pupil unit aid.

HF760—Dorn (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Small gasoline retailer removal project petroleum tank fund reimbursement extended.

HF761—Abrams (R)

Taxes
School district number required on state income tax returns.

HF762—Smith (R)

Ways & Means
State spending increases limited to consumer price index increases and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF763—Smith (R)

Crime Prevention
Theft crimes to include tenant issuance of dishonored check to landlord for rent.

HF764—Smith (R)

Civil Law
Grandparent visitation rights expanded, procedures specified, and mediation required.

HF765—Broecker (R)

Transportation Finance
Motorcycle safety fund expenditures specified.

HF766—Broecker (R)

Transportation Policy
Motorcycle display of a blue light as part of the rear brake light authorized.

HF767—Westrom (R)

Transportation Policy
Passenger automobile license plates issued for the life of the vehicle.

HF768—Ness (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Administrative rule periodic legislative review and repeal provided.

HF769—Ness (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Various broad delegations of rulemaking authority repealed.

HF770—Abeler (R)

Health & Human Services Policy
Essential community provider status application deadline removed.

HF771—Seifert, J. (R)

Commerce
Structured settlement agreements regulated.

HF772—McElroy (R)

Education Policy
Building space average age threshold reduced relating to school district alternative facilities bonding and levy program qualifications.

HF773—Westfall (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Fire department expense reimbursement provided for costs incurred extinguishing motor vehicle fires within highway or interstate rights-of-way.

HF774—Wenzel (DFL)

State Government Finance
Camp Ripley Minnesota Military Museum operation, renovation, and maintenance funded; and money appropriated.

HF775—Carruthers (DFL)

Crime Prevention
Hospitals required to report personnel assaults, hospital violence work group established, and increased penalties provided.

HF776—Kalis (DFL)

Taxes
State-paid agricultural property tax credit provided.

HF777—Rest (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Political subdivision created corporations expiration delayed and task force established.

HF778—Lindner (R)

Commerce
Money order defined and unclaimed property dormancy charge authorized.

HF779—Finseth (R)

Agriculture Policy
Farmer-lender mediation act sunset repealed and mediation program transferred to the Minnesota Extension Service.

HF780—Seagren (R)

Education Policy
Professional teaching permit created.

HF781—Seagren (R)

K-12 Education Finance
Staff and student cooperative education program opportunities expanded, and money appropriated.

HF782—Biernat (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
School district basic skills intervention program funding created and money appropriated.

HF783—Biernat (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis, technology grant provided, graduation standards implementation revenue funding increased for staff development, and money appropriated.

HF784—Biernat (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
Charter school students, nonpublic students, and students subject to hazardous conditions transportation funding increased; and money appropriated.

HF785—Biernat (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
School district basic skills revenue enhanced, English language learner funding extended, compensatory revenue cap removed, free and reduced price meal eligibility under-reporting adjusted, grant program created, and money appropriated.

HF786—Reuter (R)

K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District Nos. 829, Waseca, and 2835, Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton, Lake Elysian environmental learning grant program provided; and money appropriated.

HF787—Van Dellen (R)

Taxes
Medical expenses income tax credit allowed and health insurance deduction for self-employed persons repealed.

HF788—Dawkins (DFL)

Taxes
City crime reduction aid established based on "Part I crime index."

HF789—Goodno (R)

Health & Human Services Finance
Annual health care provider rate adjustments provided for the purpose of medical assistance, and inflation index modified.

HF790—Kuisle (R)

Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle security interest release within five days required.

HF791—Clark, K. (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Tax expenditure statements required prior to legislative committee hearings, local and state business subsidies regulated, study required, and money appropriated.

HF792—Chaudhary (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Rental housing application disclosure requirements and penalties provided, and penalties prescribed for providing false information on rental applications.

HF793—Seifert, J. (R)
Commerce
Lien and right of detainer created for reasonable charges for a rented replacement motor vehicle retained for one being serviced.

HF794—Hackbarth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Natural resources department account interest disposition specified and unrefunded gasoline tax computation provisions modified.

HF795—Finseth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Red River basin board water management grant provided and money appropriated.

HF796—Bakk (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Counties provided increased natural resources land payments in lieu of taxes.

HF797—Finseth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Small city wetland replacement cost-share program created and money appropriated.

Thursday, Feb. 18

HF798—Anderson, B. (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Injured employees civil remedies provided in cases of employer safety violations.

HF799—Tingelstad (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Education facilities funding provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF800—Olson (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Health care providers and health plan companies uniform charges required.

HF801—Knoblach (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minnesota partnership for action against tobacco not considered a state agency, and report required.

HF802—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Unlicensed child care provider permanent expansion provided.

HF803—Reuter (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Lawful gambling minimum age raised.

HF804—Erickson (R)
Education Policy
Licensure-specific teaching skills examination rules effective date extended.

HF805—Leighton (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Municipal liability provisions expanded to include municipal power agencies.

HF806—Ness (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Advertising in connection with the lottery prohibited.

HF807—Howes (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Rural hospital improvement grant program expanded, medical assistance coverage of telemedicine conferences and critical access hospital outpatient fee cost-based system provided, uniform billing established, and money appropriated.

HF808—Ness (R)
Agriculture Policy
Bovine paratuberculosis diagnosis data classification provided, board of animal health executive secretary name changed to executive director, and sale of cattle limitations repealed.

HF809—Skoglund (DFL)
Taxes
Tree trimming and stump removal services sales tax exemption provided.

HF810—Marko (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Archery bow transportation requirements modified.

HF811—Wolf (R)
Transportation Finance
Scott County state-aid highway No. 27 preliminary engineering and environmental studies funded, and money appropriated.

HF812—Wolf (R)
Commerce
Legislative electric energy task force house chairs modified.

HF813—Hausman (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Unicameral Legislature provided and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF814—Kalis (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Teachers retirement and first-class city teacher retirement fund associations prior military service credit purchase authorized.

HF815—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Material supplier filing of sales tax returns and tax remittance provided.

HF816—Peterson (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Feedlot and manure management advisory committee composition modified.

HF817—Wagenius (DFL)
Civil Law
Relative ex parte temporary child custody provisions expanded.

HF818—Nornes (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Residential mental health facility upgrades established and money appropriated.

HF819—Ness (R)
Education Policy
Adult English as a second language program requirements modified.

HF820—Seagren (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Charter schools; referendum revenue and integration revenue provided, building lease aid increased, leased facilities real estate taxes eliminated, start-up funding payment schedule established, and money appropriated.

HF821—Reuter (R)
Civil Law
National origin discrimination by businesses prohibited.

HF822—Wagenius (DFL)
Education Policy
Parents' right to know act adopted related to pest management, and money appropriated.

HF823—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School district transportation reserved revenue accounts authorized.

HF824—Biernat (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School district compensatory revenue allocation flexibility continued.

HF825—Kielkucki (R)
Education Policy
Graduation rule; student knowledge in personal and family financial management and investment required.

HF826—Johnson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School year minimum instructional days report provided and money appropriated.

HF827—Rest (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Virtual school district created and money appropriated.

HF828—Carlson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School enrichment partnership program expanded to include academic booster clubs, and money appropriated.

HF829—Mahoney (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Ramsey County group residential facility for women supplementary service rates authorized.

HF830—Lieder (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle sales tax proceeds dedicated to roads and public transit, registration tax rate reduced, depreciation schedule modified, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF831—Solberg (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Surface transportation fund established, motor vehicle registration tax rate reduced, excise tax proceeds dedicated to transportation, money appropriated, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF832—Anderson, B. (R)
Transportation Policy
Personal-use passenger automobile flat registration tax imposed, sales tax allocated to the highway user tax distribution fund, and technical changes provided.

HF833—Mullery (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Criminal trial final argument rebuttal and surrebuttal limited.

HF834—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Adult mental illness crisis housing assistance program created and money appropriated.

HF835—Bakk (DFL)
Taxes
Babbitt municipal building renovation materials and supplies sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF836—Goodno (R)**Civil Law**

Business corporations regulated and uniform partnership act conforming changes provided.

HF837—Davids (R)**Commerce**

Insurance companies, agents, and coverages regulated and technical changes provided.

HF838—Harder (R)**Agriculture &****Rural Development Finance**

Soybean diseases and genetics additional research provided, and money appropriated.

HF839—Pawlenty (R)**Crime Prevention**

Defense of dwelling clarified related to use of deadly force, and duty to retreat in self-defense situations limited.

HF840—Wenzel (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Garrison; local contributions for tax increment financing district authorized.

HF841—Opatz (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Central Minnesota regional parks and trails plan created in Stearns, Benton, and Sherburne counties.

HF842—Fuller (R)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Cross-country ski pass provisions modified.

HF843—Anderson, B. (R)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Sherburne County authorized to convey tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF844—Boudreau (R)**Crime Prevention**

Permits to carry firearms required to be issued only to responsible, competent adults.

HF845—Mares (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Higher education faculty and other state employee retirement and related benefits modified.

HF846—Koskinen (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Eyeglasses and hearing aid health insurance coverage required.

HF847—Sykora (R)**Family & Early Childhood****Education Finance**

First call Minnesota; statewide family and community services information and referral system established, and money appropriated.

HF848—Paymar (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Prior incarceration credit provided for offenders sentenced to the Camp Ripley work program.

HF849—Haake (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Minor and intermediate use airports defined for metro expansion and upgrade purposes, and reliever airport sound abatement council established.

HF850—Swenson (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Regional development commission planning grants provided and money appropriated.

HF851—Entenza (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Partial-birth abortion; intact dilation and extraction prohibited.

HF852—Anderson, I. (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Itasca County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF853—Rostberg (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Fire sprinklers required in newly constructed state-owned buildings, fire suppression system review and inspection plan responsibilities clarified, and approval requirements provided.

HF854—Chaudhary (DFL)**Taxes**

Local government paid aid base to cities increased.

HF855—Ozment (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district maximum crime-related costs levy amount increased and proceeds use modified.

HF856—Seifert, J. (R)**Transportation Finance**

Washington County drivers' license examination station constructed and money appropriated.

HF857—Greenfield (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Seat belt use failure violation provided primary offense designation.

HF858—Workman (R)**Transportation Policy**

Motorcycle helmet use evidence admissibility prohibited in cases involving the operation a motor vehicle.

HF859—Seagren (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

A Chance to Grow/New Visions; Minnesota learning resource center program start-up costs funded and money appropriated.

HF860—Boudreau (R)**Health and Human Services Policy**

Board of dentistry hygienist membership increased.

HF861—Rhodes (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Lobbyist registration, conflicts of interest, and campaign finance provisions clarified; and invalid provisions repealed.

HF862—Holberg (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

County board ordinance violation civil penalty procedures established, and fine certification to auditors as a special tax against the land authorized.

HF863—Tingelstad (R)**Civil Law**

Putative fathers' adoption registry, communication and contact agreements, and postadoption report requirements and procedures modified.

HF864—Howes (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Hubbard County sheriff part-time peace officer positions authorized.

HF865—Bakk (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Combined firearm and archery antlered deer license created, and the taking of one by each method authorized.

HF866—Bakk (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Blaze orange requirement exemption provided to trappers.

HF867—Hackbarth (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Home ownership counseling services provided for persons with disabilities and money appropriated.

HF868—Hackbarth (R)**Crime Prevention**

Crimes constituting theft modified to include situations involving rental personal property or equipment.

HF869—Mares (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Deferred retirement annuity calculation method modified for certain higher education faculty.

HF870—Haas (R)**Commerce**

Small employer alternative health insurance benefit plan provided and pilot project authorized.

HF871—Sykora (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Charter school districts provided.

HF872—Holsten (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Policy**

Building and construction contacts regulated, and environmental liability indemnification enforceability provided.

HF873—Mulder (R)**Education Policy**

CLEARCorps; lead hazard reduction project grant provided and money appropriated.

HF874—Trimble (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Policy**

NeighborLink; St. Paul Urban League community job counseling, retention, and mentoring program appropriated money.

HF875—Bakk (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Small business government contract bid preference limited to two years.

Correction

Committee assignments for Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington) were listed incorrectly in the Feb. 12 issue of *Session Weekly*. She serves on the following House committees: Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy; Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs; Taxes; and the Property Tax Division of the Taxes Committee.

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

For information updates, call

House Calls at (651) 296-9283.

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MONDAY, Feb. 22

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF861 (Rhodes) Clarifying and simplifying the law related to lobbyist registration, conflicts of interest, and campaign finance; eliminating invalid provisions.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Disability Board budget presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Labor and Industry budget presentation.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF765 (Broecker) Providing for maximum percentage of the motorcycle safety fund that may be spent for certain activities. Bob Illingworth, Minnesota Motorcycle Riders Association.

Presentations by John Williams, House Research, and John Walz, House Fiscal Analysis Department.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF53 (Biernat) Uniform child custody jurisdiction and enforcement act adopted. HF293 (Daggett) Notary commission recording fees reduced.

HF534 (Hackbarth) Municipal tort liability exclusion provided for special wildlife hunting or trapping season losses.

HF741 (Knobloch) Providing procedures for testing the blood of inmates for blood-borne pathogens; providing procedural safeguards; imposing penalties.

HF448 (Seifert, J.) Intrusion upon seclusion, appropriation, and publication of private facts actions two-year statute of limitations established.

HF518 (Seifert, J.) Uniform correction or clarification of defamation act adopted.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency budget overview continued.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HF343 (Hilty) Department of Trade and Economic Development technology corridor planning and feasibility review required, and Pine Technical College technology center federal funding accepted.

HF492 (Dorn) Mankato State University authorized to construct the Taylor Center multipurpose facility.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's K-12 Education Finance budget.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF508 (Van Dellen) Unimproved real estate bordering public waters property tax class rate reduction provided.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: State and federal funding overview by Cynthia Coronado Templin, House Fiscal Analysis Department.

Department of Children, Families and Learning performance report review.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF294 (Broecker) Extraordinary local disaster expense aid provided and money appropriated.

HF453 (Haake) Minneapolis required to enroll trades and electrical workers, stagehands, production technicians, and apprentices in the deferred compensation plan.

HF777 (Rest) Delaying the expiration of corporations created by political subdivisions; establishing a task force to develop legislation

relating to establishment of corporations by political subdivisions.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

TUESDAY, Feb. 23

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF302 (Davids) Ambulance services authorized to participate in shared service purchasing under the uniform municipal contracting law.

HF463 (Davids) Ambulance services and first responders review provided.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF595 (Holsten) Petrofund reimbursement reductions standard of proof provided, above ground storage tank upgrade or closure reimbursed, and contaminated land cleanup regulated.

HF420 (Haas) Brooklyn Park; housing improvement area established.

Final affordable housing presentations.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Supreme Court budget presentation.

HF542 (Bishop) Number of district court judges increased.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF528 (Westrom) Fiberglass and steel underground fuel storage tank specifications required.

HF571 (Westrom) Trunk highway contract documents required to express measurements in the English system only, and commissioner prohibited from requiring otherwise for county contracts.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Budget presentations by state treasurer's office and Campaign Finance & Public Disclosure Board.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF158 (Stanek) Credit for time served

intent clarified, presumption in favor of consecutive sentences created, specific findings required for concurrent sentences, and sentencing guidelines conforming changes required.

HF734 (Osskopp) Clarifies the crime of wrongfully obtaining public assistance.

HF735 (Osskopp) Expanding the scope of the crime of adultery to include adulterations capable of causing death or bodily harm; increasing penalties for certain acts of adultery.

HF665 (Wenzel) Marijuana; possession or sale of small amounts provided increased criminal penalties.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF473 (Harder) High school diploma warranty coverage exception provided for students refusing to repeat a grade.

HF403 (Ness) Uniform minimum school year length established.

Student achievement levels report, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

HF320 (Opatz) State expectations for schools defined related to student achievement.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF505 (Swenson) Sporting license subagents authorized to retain a sales commission.

HF444 (Stang) Sauk River Watershed District administrative funds levy authorized.

HF795 (Finseth) Appropriating money for water management in the Red River basin.

HF55 (Tomassoni) Trained force of firefighters maintained by the commissioner of natural resources, and public employee definition expanded.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF50 (Dempsey) Goodhue County levy limit adjustment authorized for certain payments in lieu of tax.

HF72 (Rukavina) Biwabik community pavilion construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF86 (Rest) Pollution control and solar energy equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF168 (Mulder) Smoking cessation devices sales tax exemption provided.

HF472 (Harder) Windom Multipurpose Center construction materials and supplies sales and use tax exemption provided.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Proposal for an urban agricultural high school.

Programs for the agriculture education leadership council.

Training new dairy herders.

International dairy training.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: HF726 (Knobloch) Providing standards for state assistance to capital improvement projects of political subdivisions.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF478 (Haas) Structured settlement payment rights protected related to tort or workers' compensation claims.

HF837 (Davids) Regulating insurers, agents, and coverages; modifying reporting requirements; regulating the rehabilitation and liquidation of insurers; modifying certain notice and disclosure provisions.

2 p.m.

Adult Basic Education Workgroup/ FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

400N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Discussion and workgroup recommendations continued.

2:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Elections & Rules/ GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Marty Seifert

Agenda: To be announced.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF54 (Finseth) Personal watercraft surcharge removed.

HF426 (Rukavina) BWCA and Superior National Forest; President and Congress memorialized to expedite state and federal land exchange for the purpose of enabling proper discharge of each government's management duties.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF345 (Bradley) Home and community-based waived services for persons with mental retardation waiting list eliminated, unspent resources reallocated, county partnerships required, reserve account authorized, and money appropriated.

HF670 (Goodno) Medical assistance eligibility expanded to include employed persons with disabilities.

3:45 p.m.

Child Care Workgroup/ FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

400N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Child care issues discussion continued.

4 p.m.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

House TAXES/ Senate TAXES

15 State Capitol

Chrs. Rep. Ron Abrams,

Sen. Douglas J. Johnson

Agenda: HF1 (Abrams) One-time individual income tax rebate provided, and money appropriated.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 24

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF484 (Paulsen) Initiative and referendum implementation act adopted, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Department of Health budget presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Trade and Economic Development budget presentation.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Department of Transportation budget presentation continued, Barbara Sundquist, Finance and Administration Division; Paul Jensen, buildings engineer; Dick Stehr, Metro Division engineer.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF391 (Seifert, J.) Punitive damages limited in cases involving Food and Drug Administration approved products or devices.

HF624 (Stanek) Dishonored checks; theft and related crimes penalty uniformity provided, civil penalties increased, and pretrial diversion program created.

HF73 (Hilty) Year 2000; local government units mutual aid authority clarified, health department required to collect and disseminate information regarding possible problems and solutions, immunity provided, and money appropriated. HF592 (Larsen, P.) Municipal utilities customer data classification provided.

HF650 (Hackbarth) Shooting range servitudes provided and operator liability limited.

HF717 (Seifert, J.) Extending the housing calendar consolidation program to districts outside of the second and fourth judicial districts. HF59 (Bakk) Snowmobile trail grants-in-aid provisions modified to include maintenance of Voyageurs National Park trails.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL

RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Minnesota State Colleges and Universities budget presentation by Laura King.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF720 (Kielkucki) Modifying school lunch aid and targeted breakfast grants; appropriating money for school lunch and food storage aid, school breakfast, and targeted breakfast grants.

HF222 (Olson) Independent School District No. 882, Monticello, fund transfer authorized.

HF260 (Kielkucki) Independent School District No. 2687, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted, reorganization operating debt levy calculation date clarified.

HF194 (Juhnke) Independent School District No. 347, Willmar, magnet school authorized, and money appropriated.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF557 (Tunheim) Relative homestead treatment extended to include property occupied by the owner's niece or nephew.

HF418 (Hasskamp) Temporary and seasonal resorts property tax classification requirements modified.

HF517 (Skoe) Proposed property tax notification date modified.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF710 (Holsten) Permitting the hunting of farmed cervidae on licensed shooting preserves.

HF715 (Peterson) Permitting the hunting of farmed cervidae on licensed shooting preserves.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Early childhood programs.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF338 (Larsen, P.) Emergency management grant program created and rulemaking authorized.

HF525 (Westerberg) Anoka County; city administration of dangerous dog registration system provided.

HF849 (Haake) Defining minor use and intermediate use of airports for certain purposes; establishing a reliever airport sound abatement council.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: HF48 (Wolf) Performance-based gas purchasing plans sunset abolished.

HF358 (Wolf) Coin-operated and public pay telephones deregulated, and telecommunication provider anticompetitive activity administrative penalties assessed.

HF359 (Wolf) Public Utilities Commission subcommittees established and commissioners designated, petitions deemed approved unless set aside for affirmative action, investigation and contingency revolving fund created, and money appropriated.

2:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Health Care Directives/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Lynda Boudreau

Agenda: Occupational licensing presentation by Legislative Auditor.

THURSDAY, Feb. 25

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: (Note: the following bills will be author-only presentations.)

HF206 (Entenza) American sign language/English interpreters and transliterators required to be certified and registered, criminal and civil penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF342 (Rostberg) Board of licensed professional mental health counseling established, counselor licensing required, penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF376 (Haas) Medical practice act; administration and prescription of anesthetics specified as the practice of medicine, and restriction exemptions defined.

HF408 (Goodno) Practice of pharmacy definition modified and patient counseling defined.

HF476 (Juhnke) Ambulance services and first responder standards modified; emergency medical technicians, medical response units, and emergency medical technician instructor certification and training program approval required; and penalties imposed.

HF568 (Clark, K.) General and health care interpreter voluntary registration programs established, spoken language interpreter pilot training program developed, and money appropriated.

HF718 (Ozment) Regulating advanced practice registered nursing.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF584 (Dawkins) Low-income housing income tax credit provided.

HF724 (Gunther) Increasing the statewide, hourly reimbursement rates for the extended employment program; appropriating money for the continuation of the welfare-to-work extended employment partnership program.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Supreme Court budget presentation continued (if necessary).

HF112 (Bishop) Fraudulent use of another's personal identity provided felony penalties, and civil forfeiture of property authorized.

HF570 (Clark, K.) Intensive case management services provided for prostituted individuals and money appropriated.

HF683 (Clark, K.) Restorative justice program grants and training funded, and money appropriated.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman,

Agenda: To be announced.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Budget presentations by the Racing Commission, Lawful Gambling Control Board, and Minnesota State Lottery.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF536 (Broecker) Carisoprodol schedule IV controlled substance listing effective date delayed.

HF12 (Seifert, J.) Three strikes; mandatory life sentence imposed for persons convicted of a third violent felony offense.

HF135 (Bishop) Repeat assault offenders with prior delinquency adjudications provided enhanced penalties.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF320 (Opatz) State expectations for schools defined related to student achievement.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF96 (Kuisle) Environmental assessment worksheet signature requirements modified.

HFXXXX (Hackbarth) Report from Outdoor Recreation Task Force on snowmobile stud use.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF267 (Westerberg) Income tax brackets and alternative minimum tax exemption amount modified to reduce marriage penalties. HF703 (Van Dellen) Single factor sales apportionment adopted related to corporate franchise tax.

HF393 (Finseth) Lawful gambling tax rates reduced.

HF507 (Daggett) Lawful gambling, pull-tabs, tip-boards, and combined receipts tax rates reduced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Dairy industry.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: HF438 (Swenson) Independent School District No. 2887, McLeod, previous grant provision modified.
Higher Education Asset Preservation Renewal Account presentation, University of Minnesota representatives.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF288 (Rostberg) Pollution Control Agency Mississippi River emergency spill response equipment and training provided, and money appropriated.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

FRIDAY, Feb. 26

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF441 (Knoblach) Campaign finance provisions modified.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Department of Health budget presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Trade and Economic Development budget presentation continued.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HFXXXX (Stanek) Integrated information systems.

HF263 (Gerlach) Counterfeited intellectual property manufacturing, distribution, selling, or possession criminal penalties imposed; and forfeiture provided.

HF652 (Westerberg) Disorderly conduct law application clarified to include acts committed in the presence of peace officers or public safety personnel.

HFXXXX (Westerberg) Hidden automobile drug compartments.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget presentation continued.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Minnesota State Colleges and Universities budget presentation continued, Laura King.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF725 (Westerberg) Establishing a class size project in Independent School District No. 12, Centennial; appropriating money.

HF455 (Biernat) Secondary students public transportation grants provided to school districts and money appropriated.

HF349 (Pelowski) Independent School District No. 861, Winona, Jefferson elementary school full-day kindergarten program grant authorized, and money appropriated.

HF131 (Harder) Independent School District No. 330, Heron Lake-Okabena, provided Southwest Star Concept School grant extension. HF326 (Winter) Independent School District No. 330, Heron Lake-Okabena, Southwest Star concept school grant clarified, and money appropriated.

HF327 (Winter) Independent School District No. 330, Heron Lake-Okabena, grant authorized, and money appropriated.

If you will be visiting the Capitol in the near future, call the Capitol Historic Site Program at (651) 296-2881 to schedule a tour.

No suspects in Capitol vandalism

Capitol Security officials are still searching for a suspect in a Feb. 11 case of vandalism at the Capitol.

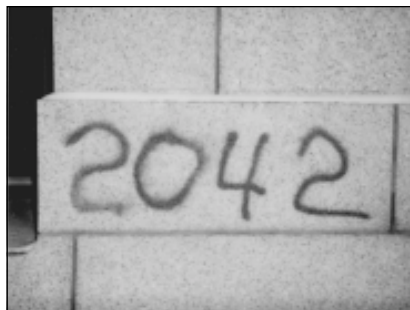
Sometime between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. on that Thursday evening, the number "2042" was spray-painted in bright red on the east, west, and south sides of the Capitol building.

Security officials discovered the graffiti in 16 spots shortly after 10 p.m. and were at a loss for suspects.

No one appeared on videotapes from security cameras, and so far, there are no witnesses.

But State Trooper M. Strassburg-Peltz said the number led them to a possible suspect, who denied having any involvement with the incident. That person is not affiliated with the Capitol.

"We were hoping that our lead would



Graffiti like the markings shown here was found in 16 places on the Capitol.

pan out," Strassburg-Peltz said. She noted that the offense would be difficult to prove.

Lt. Alesia Metry said the security department received many calls from people theorizing about what 2042 means.

Among the possibilities: It's the same

number of a Marine platoon, it's the year meteors will strike the Earth, and it is also the equivalent to 1999 in the Buddhist calendar.

Security personnel originally thought 2042 might refer to a House or Senate file number, but bill numbers have not progressed that far this year, and both HF2042 and SF2042 from the 1998 session were ruled out as noncontroversial.

Officials tried to have the paint removed over the weekend, but the first company hired was unable to take it off. A second company was successful and the building was clean by Feb. 15.

"If people saw anything, we would sure appreciate if they would come down," Metry said.

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48 Betzold, Don DFL	306 Cap.	2556	29 Murphy, Steve DFL	301 Cap.	4264
64 Cohen, Richard J. DFL	317 Cap.	5931	25 Neuville, Thomas M. R	123 SOB	1279
28 Day, Dick R	147 SOB	9457	52 Novak, Steven G. DFL	322 Cap.	4334
20 Dille, Steve R	103 SOB	4131	43 Oliver, Edward C. R	121 SOB	4837
14 Fischbach, Michelle L. R	149 SOB	2084	34 Olson, Gen R	119 SOB	1282
62 Flynn, Carol DFL	120 Cap.	4274	19 Ourada, Mark R	145 SOB	5981
49 Foley, Leo DFL	G-9 Cap.	4154	65 Pappas, Sandra L. DFL	120 Cap.	1802
23 Frederickson, Dennis R. R	139 SOB	8138	37 Pariseau, Pat R	109 SOB	5252
50 Hanson, Paula E. DFL	328 Cap.	3219	27 Piper, Pat DFL	G-9 Cap.	9248
58 Higgins, Linda I. DFL	227 Cap.	9246	59 Pogemiller, Lawrence J. DFL	235 Cap.	7809
24 Hottinger, John C. DFL	120 Cap.	6153	57 Price, Leonard R. DFL	235 Cap.	297-8060
5 Janezich, Jerry R. DFL	328 Cap.	8017	63 Ranum, Jane B. DFL	306 Cap.	297-8061
40 Johnson, Dave DFL	111 Cap.	9261	45 Robertson, Martha R. R	125 SOB	4314
15 Johnson, Dean E. R	117SOB	3826	35 Robling, Claire A. R	151 SOB	4123
6 Johnson, Douglas J. DFL	205 Cap.	8881	53 Runbeck, Linda R	107 SOB	1253
18 Johnson, Janet B. DFL	G-9 Cap.	5419	11 Sams, Dallas C. DFL	328 Cap.	297-8063
46 Junge, Ember R. DFL	205 Cap.	2889	12 Samuelson, Don DFL	124 Cap.	4875
44 Kelley, Steve DFL	321 Cap.	297-8065	31 Scheevel, Kenric J. R	129 SOB	3903
67 Kelly, Randy C. DFL	323 Cap.	5285	47 Scheid, Linda DFL	317 Cap.	8869
30 Kiscaden, Sheila M. R	135 SOB	4848	7 Solon, Sam G. DFL	303 Cap.	4188
16 Kleis, Dave R	143 SOB	6455	60 Spear, Allan H. DFL	120 Cap.	4191
36 Knutson, David L. R	133 SOB	4120	17 Stevens, Dan R	105 SOB	8075
51 Krentz, Jane DFL	235 Cap.	7061	1 Stumpf, LeRoy A. DFL	G-24 Cap.	8660
56 Laidig, Gary W. R	141 SOB	4351	4 Ten Eyck, David J. DFL	G-24F Cap.	4913
9 Langseth, Keith DFL	122 Cap.	3205	42 Terwilliger, Roy R	115 SOB	6238
10 Larson, Cal R	153 SOB	5655	22 Vickerman, Jim DFL	226 Cap.	5650
21 Lesewski, Arlene J. R	131 SOB	4125	38 Wiener, Deanna L. DFL	303 Cap.	297-8073
3 Lessard, Bob DFL	111 Cap.	4136	55 Wiger, Charles W. DFL	325 Cap.	6820
33 Limmer, Warren R	127 SOB	2159			

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Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Regulating occupations in Minnesota

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Complaints filed against those attorneys, fiscal year 1998	973
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Professional karate referees licensed by board, August 1998	1
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Year Minnesota began licensing professional weather modifiers	1977
Weather modifier licenses issued since then	0

Source: *Occupational Regulation: A Program Evaluation Report*, January 1999,
Office of the Legislative Auditor.

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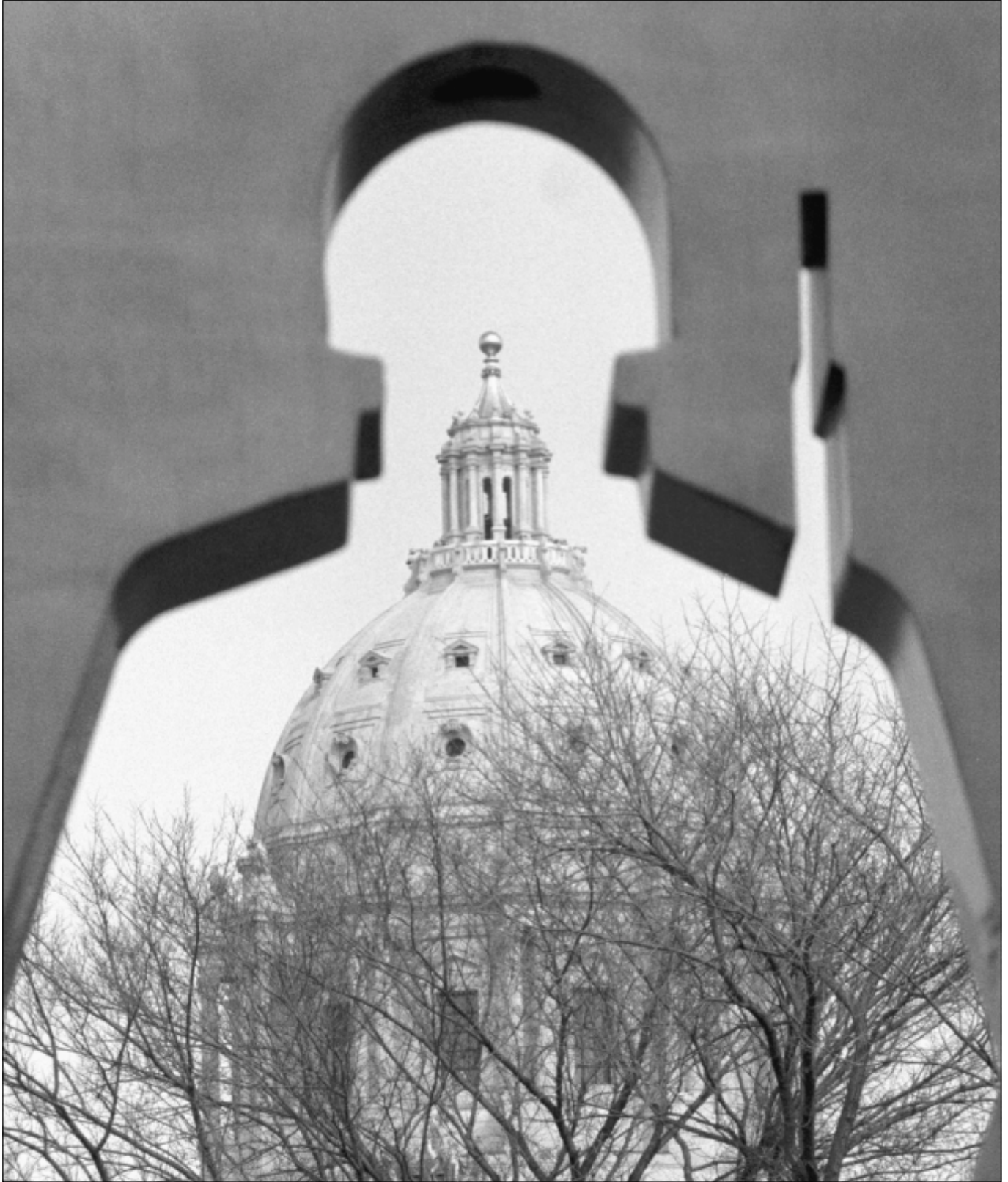
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SESSION WEEKLY

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SESSION WEEKLY

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Reflections

There is something to be said for the adage "history repeats itself."

So far, 1148 House bills have been filed since opening day of the 81st Legislature. This time 10 years ago, close to the same number were in the hopper.

Of this year's just-introduced bills, many bear similarities to others filed within the past decade. Some would require major changes in existing laws or repeal them altogether, while others seek a refinement in state statute.

Some examples are proposals dealing with ethanol development and promotion, elk breeding, firearm usage, school breakfasts, and even the anointing of a reptile — the Blanding's turtle — to join ranks as a state symbol.

And some bills that don't pass in one session may get reintroduced during the next biennium. Three proposals that crop up repeatedly seek to enact initiative and referendum, place term limits on public offices, or make the Legislature unicameral (one body).

But the Capitol isn't the only place where history repeats itself. In downtown St. Paul on Feb. 20, for example, the whistle of the ill-fated Titanic was blown for the first time since the ship sank during its maiden voyage in 1912. The whistle appears in an exhibit with other artifacts rescued from the ocean depths.

This past week, the Legislature introduced some innovative concepts and also tweaked a few old bills to make them new again. Later, outside and high above the Capitol dome, two celestial planets also repeated history. Not since 1900 have the planets Venus and Jupiter aligned themselves so closely. This conjunction of planets was even closer together some 2,000 years ago, and is said to be the Christmas star seen then over Bethlehem.

On the national political scene, history will repeat itself if, as expected, a person named George Bush campaigns for U.S. president, and another president's relative becomes a New York resident to run for the U.S. Senate from that state.

Government aside, within the past year, movies about World War II returned and were nominated for Academy Awards. Broadway featured revivals including "Twelfth Night" and the musicals "Oklahoma" and "Cabaret." A new and sleeker Volkswagen Beetle cruises the highways, and the old Rolling Stones are once again on tour!

Although musical trends often repeat themselves, noteworthy this year is the comeback of dancing to swing music now played by Big Bad Voodoo Daddy or listening to the singer from Squirrel Nut Zippers who sounds so hauntingly like the late great Billie Holiday.

And even though lawmakers this year are seeing proposals for funding items like windmills that generate electricity instead of pumping water, some things never change. Taxes, rebates, and education issues are still the hot topics in the Legislature. As history continues to repeat itself, everything old seems new again.

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: The Korean War Veterans Memorial, located on the southern Capitol grounds, frames the Capitol's dome.

—Photo by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

Initiative and Referendum . . .

Plan would let voters have lawmaking powers

By Jon Fure

Some see it as giving power to the people, others see it as a distortion of representative democracy, and nobody disputes that it is a politically charged and controversial issue.

The power of initiative and referendum would give citizens direct authority to place on the ballot proposed changes in state law or in the Minnesota Constitution.

Under current law, only the Legislature can change laws or put a constitutional amendment question on the ballot, but a bill under consideration this year could give that right and others to Minnesota voters through a petition process.

Of course, such a change would require that an amendment to the constitution be approved by voters.

In three previous elections — 1913, 1915, and 1980 — Minnesota voters have failed to amend the constitution to allow for initiative and referendum. Each time, “yes” votes outnumbered “no” votes among the people who voted on the ballot question, but each measure failed because those who did not vote on the question counted as “no” votes.

This year’s proposal (**HF484**) would place a constitutional amendment on the ballot for the 2000 general election that would allow people to enact an initiative law, repeal an existing law, or put constitutional amendment questions on future ballots by filing a petition.

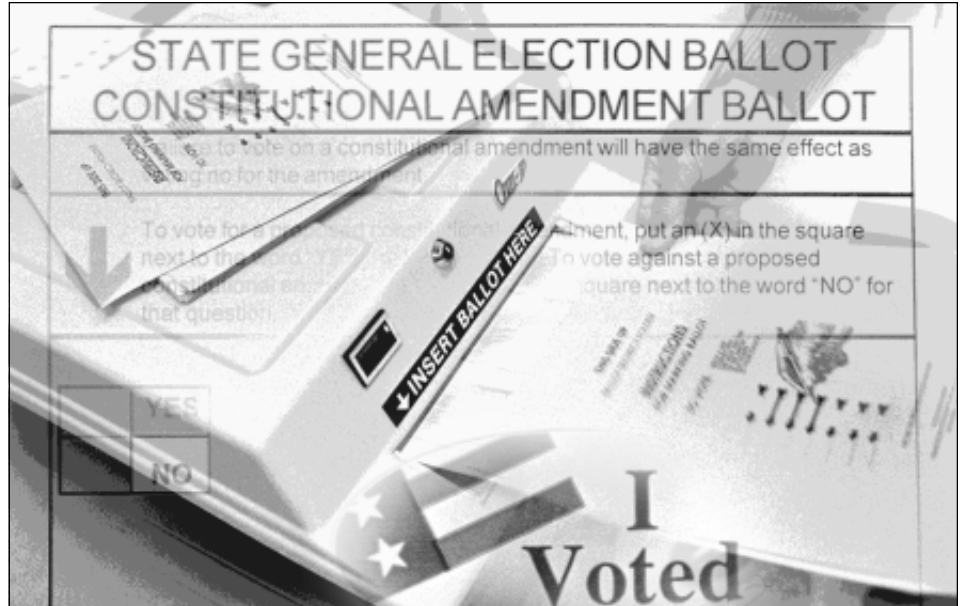
Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie), the bill’s sponsor, said other states have similar initiative and referendum laws, and he said those laws promote higher voter turnout and increased accountability of lawmakers.

The bill was approved Feb. 24 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Under Paulsen’s plan, an initiative would go on the ballot if a petition is signed by 5 percent of the number of voters who voted for governor in the previous election in three-quarters of the state’s congressional districts. And a constitutional amendment question would go on the ballot if a petition is signed by 8 percent of those voters.

The requirement regarding congressional districts is designed to make it difficult for an initiative to be placed on the ballot without support from different areas in the state.

Voter turnout is 5 percent to 7 percent



A bill advancing in the House calls for voters to decide on a constitutional amendment that would allow initiative and referendum in Minnesota.

Photo illustration by Tom Olmscheid

higher in states that have initiative and referendum, Paulsen said. And lawmakers are held more accountable because the laws allow voters to approve measures that have popular support but are unpopular with lawmakers, such as term-limit restrictions.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) said he once lived in California and that initiative and referendum proposals in that state are heavily influenced by organizations that have the most money.

“The concept sounds wonderful, but I view this as a special interest bill,” he said.

But Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie) said many good laws have been passed through initiatives and referendums, including women’s suffrage and minimum wage laws.

“I look at it as empowering people,” he said.

One common argument against initiative and referendum laws is that many measures are too complex to be simply stated on an election ballot and voted on without the extensive information, deliberation, and debate that help legislators make decisions.

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) said the cost of communicating ideas through mass media creates a distinct advantage to well-funded causes.

Similar concerns were expressed by Jane McWilliams, who testified against the bill on behalf of the League of Women Voters. The

organization studied the initiative and referendum issue about 15 years ago, she said, and nothing has happened since then to change the league’s position.

“(The League of Women Voters) believes that consideration and enactment of complex public policy is most appropriately done in the legislative arena,” she said.

McWilliams also said the league has concerns about the possibility of undue influence by groups that have a lot of money.

But well-funded causes already influence the Legislature, said Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City). Contributions to the party caucuses may influence decisions made by lawmakers, Osskopp said.

Osskopp also said it seems ironic that the League of Women Voters doesn’t support initiative and referendum laws, considering that Susan B. Anthony traveled the country and gathered signatures that led to women being given the right to vote.

McWilliams said she had not considered that argument, but that she considers that giving women the right to vote is more basic law than those the Legislature deals with today.

Dane Waters, president and founder of the Initiative & Referendum Institute, said some form of initiative or referendum is available in 27 states. The main variations in those laws are

in the percentage of voters required to sign a petition, the requirements concerning what parts of the state those people must live in, and the amount of time allowed for gathering signatures.

The amount of money spent on campaigns for initiative or referendum also varies. Waters said one important question to ask is why it is necessary to spend so much money on the campaigns.

"The more difficult the process (to get something on the ballot), the more you limit it to those interests that have a lot of money," Waters said.

The process as proposed in Paulsen's bill seemed reasonable to several people who testified in support of the bill. Cedric Scofield, chair of the Reform Party's government affairs committee, said his party doesn't support the issue blindly, but it does support people's right to petition their government.

"This is a tool for good public policy," he said. "It's just a matter of getting it right."

Marc Asch, of the government watchdog group Common Cause, said his organization does not have a formal position, but that he believes campaign finance laws that apply to political candidates should also apply to ballot initiatives or referendums.

He said he has considerable experience gathering signatures as a volunteer, and the same challenges apply whether the cause is well-funded or not.

"You have to be able to deal with a lot of rejection," he said.

Steven Anderson, spokesman for another watchdog group called Citizens Lobby, said he has tried to encourage support for this type of legislation for about four years, but until now he has not seen a proposal receive a committee hearing.

He said he has consistently heard the same arguments against initiative and referendum laws, and he feels this bill addresses those arguments.

The bill now moves to the House Crime Prevention Committee.

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Failed hopes for a capital across the river



legislator from St. Paul.

Even harder to believe, the plan failed because Minneapolis representatives voted against it.

The brief debate surfaced in 1857 while Minnesota was still a territory on its way to statehood. St. Paul served as the territorial capital, and the city of Minneapolis consisted of two small towns, St. Anthony and Minneapolis, on opposite sides of St. Anthony Falls.

In 1849, the Territorial Legislature was charged by the U. S. Congress to designate a capital for the new state. Eight years later, when the Legislature finally got around to the task, St. Peter emerged as the most popular site.

In February 1857, a bill to move the capital from St. Paul to St. Peter passed the Council, the territorial version of the state Senate. The bill was then sent to the House for consideration.

Territorial Gov. Willis Gorman, who had actively campaigned for the St. Peter site, vowed to sign the bill after it was approved by the House.

But Rep. William Pitt Murray and others in the St. Paul House delegation didn't want to see their city lose the capital. On Feb. 17, 1857, sensing his cause was lost, Murray offered an amendment to the bill that would have deleted "St. Peter" and added "Nicollet Island, between Minneapolis and St. Anthony."

Murray probably made the effort in good faith, figuring that if St. Paul couldn't have the capital, it should at least remain in the neighborhood.

Maybe he thought it would be nice to have a grand Minnesota capitol building overlooking roaring St. Anthony Falls.

Whatever the reason, the amendment was rejected on a 19-18 vote. All five St. Paul representatives supported the amendment. The Minneapolis delegation, however, couldn't maintain a united front, and four

members voted against the amendment.

If those Minneapolis lawmakers had supported it, the bill would have gone back to the Council with the Nicollet Island amendment.

The original St. Peter bill passed the Council by only one vote, with two Minneapolis members voting for the bill. If the amended bill had gone back to the Council, it probably would have passed. And

Minneapolis would have been Minnesota's capital city.

These votes soon caught the eye of Minneapolitans, who at

a local meeting passed a resolution censuring their elected officials for voting against the amendment and for the St. Peter bill.

While the combined efforts of the Minneapolis and St. Paul delegations could not kill the plan to move the capital, the actions of Council member Joe Rolette did.

As chair of the Council's enrollment committee, Rolette was given the approved bill on Feb. 27 and decided to play a prank on the supporters of the St. Peter plan.

Rolette dropped the bill off at a bank, changed rooms at his hotel, and told the manager to tell everyone he had left town. When word got back to him of all the excitement he was causing, he decided to do some real damage. He remained in hiding — with the bill — until after the Council had adjourned, effectively killing the plan.

Gorman signed a copy of the bill that was forwarded to him, but a judge later ruled that bill to be invalid. Rolette, the hero of St. Paul, was given a torchlight parade through the city.

There were no parades in Minneapolis.

A second attempt to move the capital to Minneapolis occurred in 1881, the year the St. Paul statehouse burned to the ground. Following the disaster several Minneapolis lawmakers proposed building the new capitol building in the city's Loring Park.

But the plan fizzled out. Some historians speculate that the proposal failed because it didn't have the support of then-Gov. John Pillsbury. Pillsbury was from Minneapolis.

Photo from *Twin Cities/A Pictorial History*; Lucile M. Kane and Alan Ominsky; 1983.



Territorial lawmakers briefly considered Nicollet Island in Minneapolis, pictured here in 1857, as a site for Minnesota's capital.

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Urban ag school proposed

Ask a Twin Cities teen-ager where milk comes from and you're likely to hear the reply, "from a carton."

And because many of the state's young people live in urban areas, that lack of apparent interest in farming has some educators concerned for the future of Minnesota's agriculture industry.

Their concern has initiated an interest in an urban agricultural high school near the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus and the state fairgrounds in Falcon Heights.

Supporters laid out an informal request Feb. 23 for \$350,000 before the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee to study all facets of the idea.

A bill that would provide funding for the planning phase of the school has been drafted but has yet to be introduced.

Dr. Roland L. Peterson, director of the Division of Agricultural Education at the U of M, said a visit to a similar school in Chicago convinced him there should be one in Minnesota.

"What I saw blew me away," he told lawmakers.

Peterson said he sees firsthand that there's a shortage of workers to fill spots in agricultural areas of business, education, and production.

"Rural Minnesota can't continue to provide all the workers for agriculture," he said.

Pat Plonski, executive director of the Minnesota Agricultural Education Leadership Council, said there are already 18 urban areas in the country that have similar schools. He said there is virtually no opportunity for the roughly 38,000 students in grades seven through twelve in Minneapolis and St. Paul to participate in agricultural education.

"This needs to change if Minnesota is to continue in its role as one of the greatest and most diversified agricultural states in this nation," Plonski said.

Supporters are eyeing the long-time headquarters of Harvest States Cooperative at the corner of Snelling and Larpentour avenues in Falcon Heights as the potential site for the school. The location is immediately adjacent to the fairgrounds and is just east of the



Dr. Roland L. Peterson, director of the Division of Agricultural Education at the University of Minnesota, speaks in favor of a proposal to fund an urban agriculture high school on the state fairgrounds in Falcon Heights.

U of M's St. Paul campus, which is home to the university's agriculture-related programs.

Plonski said organizers are looking at proposals to establish either a charter school or a magnet school with its own autonomous board. The institution would also have an advisory board, consisting of farmers and others interested in agriculture.

Part of the grant money would be used to conduct a market study to determine exactly how many students would be interested in attending the school.

However, Plonski said that if Chicago is a good indicator, the challenge will be finding slots in the school for all the students who wish to attend.

The school would also contain a museum dedicated to documenting the history of Harvest States, the history of the cooperative movement in Minnesota, and the history of agriculture in general.

The committee may consider a bill on the matter later this session.



BONDING

New scrutiny for local requests

A proposal to send local bonding requests to the Minnesota Department of Finance before they come before the Legislature won initial approval Feb. 23 in the House Capital Investment Committee.

Under the bill (HF726), the department would review each request and submit its recommendations to the Legislature for consideration in the bonding bill.

Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), sponsor of the bill, said that his proposal would give the Legislature a tool to better evaluate the local bonding requests.

"It is a concern of mine that we are passing appropriations for these local governments without adequately weighing all the facts," he said.

The bill outlines a set of nine criteria that the finance department should use in evaluating each proposal. Those include consider whether each project:

- has additional local, private, and user financing;
- helps fulfill an important state mission;
- is of regional or statewide importance;
- will not require additional state funding for operation;
- does not expand the state's role into a new policy area;
- does not create serious inequities among local jurisdictions;
- has a credible plan for ongoing maintenance and funding throughout the life of the project;
- does not compete with other local facilities; and
- has resolutions of support from all governing bodies immediately affected by the project.

While the bill would encourage local governments to submit their requests to the department, it also states that neither the Legislature nor the governor would be bound by the recommendations of the department and that legislators and the governor could introduce projects for consideration that have not been reviewed by the department.

Knoblach's bill, which would apply to requests for the 2000 bonding bill, would require local governments to submit their proposals to the finance department by June 1, 1999.

David Strom, from the Taxpayers League of Minnesota, testified in support of the bill. He said that last year's \$1 billion bonding law shows that funding for local projects is out of control.

"This is a process that is badly in need of reform," he said.

Andy Kirn, from the Citizens for Fiscal Responsibility, also testified in support of the bill. He said that the people of Minnesota voted against "politics as usual" in the 1998 elections.

"Nothing represents politics as usual in this state more than the process for determining bonding proposals," he said.

But some legislators expressed concern that Knoblach's bill would take power away from the Legislature.

Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls) said this bill would move power from the legislative branch to the executive branch. He said the proposal would put so-called "politics as usual" in the hands of bureaucrats who are not accountable to voters.

Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown) said she is also concerned about the bill. She said it amounts to the committee giving up its power.

"I just don't think we're ready for this yet," she said. "I think we should keep the power in the elected officials on this committee."

The bill now goes to the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee.

Pawlenty said it is only fair that prosecutors who have the heavy burden of proving the case be allowed to go last. He said that Minnesota is the only criminal system in the nation that allows the defense to go last.

"We should not have a Minnesota-unique style of justice when it comes to criminal justice," he said.

Prosecutors said that current law allowing a response to the defense's argument is awkward for both prosecutors and judges.

Paul Scoggins, assistant county attorney for Hennepin County, said that when prosecutors can only address misstatements of fact or law, juries might assume that the prosecutor agrees with the rest of the defense attorney's arguments.

He also said that it sends a signal to the jury that something is not routine, and that reflects badly on the prosecutor.

"All of a sudden the prosecutor is popping back up like a bad piece of cork," he said.

John Stanoch, former Hennepin County judge and current lawyer with the attorney general's office, said judges fear that giving prosecutors a response to the defense's arguments opens up a greater possibility that the case can be appealed.

"You are very hesitant in the ninth inning to say, 'I'm going to give you a chance to respond to the rebuttal,'" he said.

Laurie Beyer-Kropuenske, acting director of the Minnesota Center for Crime Victim Services, also testified in support of the bill. She said that sometimes the last thing that victims' families hear in the courtroom are disparaging remarks from the defense about the victim.

She said that while the entire trial is about searching for the truth, final arguments are sometimes very different.

"Sometimes, it is just slinging the mud to see how much of it sticks," she said.

State Public Defender John Stuart testified against the bill. He said that defense attorneys don't attack victims because that reflects badly on their clients, and that Minnesota juries are smart enough not to reward that behavior.

"They're not going to give the advantage to a client of a lawyer who does that," he said.

Stuart said Minnesota established its criminal justice process 124 years ago, and that it has worked well since then.

"Nothing that I've seen or heard has convinced me that this was a mistake," he said.

William McGee, chief public defender for Hennepin County, also spoke against the bill. He said that the defense attorney should go last because his or her client risks "the ultimate loss of his liberty." He said the existing system is working well.

"As my father always said, and as we've all heard before, if it ain't broke, don't fix it," he said.

Pawlenty's bill now goes to the House floor.

Concealed handgun debate

Do more permissive concealed handgun laws reduce crime?

Two nationally recognized researchers presented their views on that issue to lawmakers before a joint meeting of the House and Senate Crime Prevention committees Feb. 21.

Professor John Lott of the University of Chicago and Professor Jens Ludwig of Georgetown University have both done extensive research on the issue. And they have come to very different conclusions.

Lott studied county crime data from all 50 states between 1977 and 1992. He found that more permissive concealed handgun laws deter violent crime such as assault, murder, and rape.

Specifically, Lott found that on average states that passed the permissive laws saw an 8.5 percent reduction in murders, a 5 percent reduction in rapes, and a 7 percent reduction in aggravated assaults.

"The passage of concealed handgun laws saves many more lives than it loses," he told lawmakers.

Lott, however, found increases in crimes where the offender does not confront the victim, such as auto theft. And he found that violent crime rates increased in border areas of states that enacted permissive laws.

He said that these results show that the laws force criminals to alter their behavior away from violent acts in areas that have passed these laws.

Lott said that in every state that considered these laws opponents argued that people carrying concealed handguns would misuse the weapons. He said that that almost never happens.

"The people who are willing to go through the permitting process are almost always law-abiding citizens," he said.

Lott said that his study is the most comprehensive study that has been done on this issue so far. He said follow-up studies have confirmed his results.

"Nobody has found significant evidence of a cost associated with these laws, and most have found a benefit," he said.

Ludwig studied murder rates in one state between 1982 and 1991. He found that no relationship exists between the concealed handgun laws and the murder rate.

He disagreed with Lott's findings about these laws.



CRIME

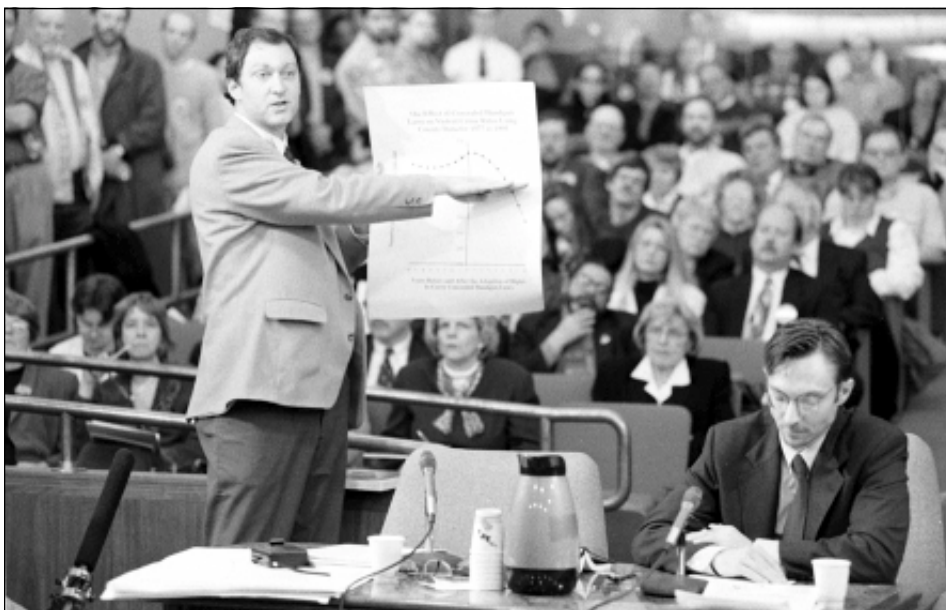
Last word for prosecutors

Following two days of arguments by prosecutors and public defenders, a bill that would give prosecutors the last word in criminal courts appears to be headed to trial on the House floor.

Under current law, the prosecutor goes first in final arguments and is followed by the defense attorney. The law allows the judge to give the prosecutor a response to the defense's final arguments only to address misstatements of fact or law, or if the defense's argument is prejudicial or inflammatory.

The bill (HF197), sponsored by Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), would guarantee the prosecutors a right to respond following the defense's final arguments. The response could only address issues brought up by the defense's argument.

The bill was approved Feb. 20 by the House Crime Prevention Committee, following testimony that day and on Feb. 16.



John Lott, professor of economics at the University of Chicago, uses a graph to illustrate the merits of permissive concealed handgun laws. Jens Ludwig, seated, assistant professor of public policy at Georgetown University, took the other side of the debate during a Feb. 20 hearing on the matter.

"We can't be sure that they cause crime rates to go down," he said. "And they're at least as likely to go up."

Ludwig said that these laws may have negative consequences.

"It is important to realize that there are other possibilities, that the passage of these laws may create an undesirable change in the behavior of criminals," he said.

For example, criminals may be more likely to use deadly force when committing crimes to make sure that they don't have to deal with an armed victim, he said.

certain elementary schools where more than 33 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. The program began in 1994 as a pilot project in six elementary schools and was expanded in 1997 to include 41 schools throughout the state.

Oak Grove Elementary School in Bloomington has participated in the program

since 1994, and Principal Sherre Walsted told lawmakers she has seen results including increased attendance, higher test scores, and fewer discipline problems.

"Having a full stomach makes all the difference in kids and how they learn," she said.

She noted that although schools need to qualify for the program by having one-third of their students eligible for the free or reduced-price lunches, family economics aren't the only reason children miss breakfast.

"Tight morning schedules can mean kids are either skipping breakfast or making their own," she said. "And on their own, they'll probably reach for the sugar, which only lasts an hour. At school they're getting protein, fats, everything they need."

A third provision in Kielkucki's bill aims to ensure that all students have access to a healthy breakfast by extending current state funding for school breakfast programs. Although the targeted breakfast program is only available to certain elementary schools, Kielkucki said all public schools would benefit from breakfast funding, which enables schools to offer inexpensive, nutritious meals to all students.

Lawmakers agreed that breakfast is an essential meal for children. Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park) said she considers breakfast funding a "no-brainer."

"It's the cheapest way to increase learning and raise test scores," she said.

But Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville) questioned the need for state funding.

"I don't think anybody questions the value of a good breakfast for children," he said. "The question comes in what the role the government should play in feeding everyone's children."

The bill would provide \$11.6 million for school lunches in fiscal year 2000, and nearly \$12 million for lunches in 2001. It would also provide \$3.7 million for targeted breakfast grants and \$456,000 in school breakfast funding for each year of the 2000-01 biennium.

The committee took no action on the bill but may include it in this year's omnibus K-12 finance bill.

Districts facing tuition bills

Beginning this May, school districts whose students end up having to take remedial courses in reading, writing, or math during their freshman year of college can be charged tuition by the post-secondary institution.

But a bill sponsored by Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson) would change that.

The House Education Policy committee approved the bill (HF473) Feb. 23.

Harder's proposal bill would repeal a 1997



Al Bushman, a third-grade teacher at Lincoln Center Elementary School in South St. Paul, vouches for the importance of breakfast for schoolchildren during testimony on a bill that would increase funding for school food programs.



EDUCATION

Schools need lunch money

A bill that would increase the state's share of school lunch funding and extend school breakfast programs was considered Feb. 24 by the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie), would increase state funding for lunches from 6.5 cents to 10 cents per lunch.

The state has paid school districts at the rate of 6.5 cents per lunch since 1991, but school officials say that amount doesn't go nearly as far today as it did eight years ago. Kielkucki said districts are having to dip into their general fund money to keep up with rising food and labor costs.

Kielkucki's bill (HF720) would also provide funding to extend the state's current targeted breakfast program. That program provides free breakfasts for all students at

law that established the policy. The law was intended as diploma warranty coverage for high school graduates.

But Harder said some of her constituents made her aware of certain examples in which the law could conceivably penalize a school district that acted in good faith.

For instance, students can refuse to repeat a grade even if a school district recommends they do so. Under the law, the district would have to pay tuition for any remedial instruction such a student might need in college.

In addition, a district would be charged for remedial college courses for students who moved into the district near the end of their high school careers.

Bob Meeks, a lobbyist for the Minnesota School Board Association, told committee members the law sends the wrong message to students and school districts.

"This whole thing just deserves a lot more consideration than it received (in 1997)," he said.

HF473 moves to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

School standards bill stalls

A plan to set statewide expectation levels for school districts met a setback Feb. 25 in the House Education Policy Committee.

Rep. Joe Opatz (DFL-St. Cloud) withdrew his bill (**HF320**) after two days of debate revealed that lawmakers want more time to consider the issue.

Setting statewide standards for school districts has been a subject of contentious deliberations at the Capitol for many years. Last year, Opatz sponsored a similar bill that proposed state monitoring of schools and laid out a plan for the state to take over failing schools. That measure failed after encountering opposition from teachers, school districts, and lawmakers.

This year, however, Opatz's bill contains no plans for state takeovers. His bill simply proposes a measuring system based on standardized test scores.

It would also recognize factors that could cause schools to tend to have low overall scores. Those factors include having high percentages of students on free or reduced-price lunch programs, special education students, or students who participate in English-as-a-second-language programs. Those schools would be allowed extra time to bring up low scores.

Officials from Education Minnesota — the state's major teachers union — told the committee they do not support the plan because the dust has not yet settled on the state's Graduation Standards.

But others testified in support of the bill, saying a system of accountability needs to be in place so that schools having trouble can have the opportunity to improve and help students who fall behind.

"Your kids and mine are hanging in the balance," said Yusef Mgeni, president of the Urban Coalition. "We don't have the luxury of failure."

Although the bill is not currently under consideration, the issue may be revived before lawmakers put together this year's omnibus K-12 education bill.



ELECTIONS

Allowing 18-year-olds to run

Minnesotans would be able to decide if 18-year-olds could run for public office, under a bill approved Feb. 23 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee's Subcommittee on Elections and Rules.

The bill (**HF122**), sponsored by Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), would put the question on the ballot in the 2000 general election.

Current state law requires Minnesotans to be 21 or older to seek any state or local office except governor. Gubernatorial candidates must be age 25 or older.

The bill would not change the age requirement for governor, but it would reduce the minimum age for candidates for other constitutional offices and for legislative, municipal, and school board openings.

Some lawmakers questioned whether an 18-year-old should be allowed to run for school board. Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie) said he believes an 18-year-old high school student serving on a school board could be a "huge conflict of interest." A student would conceivably be participating in decisions such as discipline policies for fellow students, hiring and firing of teachers, and salary negotiations.

But Rukavina said voters would be able to decide if a situation presents such a conflict. He added that the first elected office he held was as a school board member in Virginia when he was 21.

Minimum age requirements for holding public office vary in other states. In 17 states, 18-year-olds can run for legislative seats. Twenty-five states have no minimum age requirement for attorney general or secretary of state races.

"I see this as an excellent way of engaging this great group of voters," said Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope).

The bill now moves to the full Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee.



ENVIRONMENT

Boundary Waters controversy

A resolution that would ask President Clinton and Congress to intervene in the ongoing battle between Minnesota and the federal government over land rights in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness

Education rally



High school students from Red Wing, along with parents and community members, rally in the Capitol rotunda Feb. 24 to press for increased K-12 education funding.

(BWCAW) is one step closer to landing on desks in Washington, D.C.

The BWCAW consists of just more than 1 million acres of federally protected land within the Superior National Forest in north-eastern Minnesota. Most of the land is owned by the federal government and managed by the U.S. Forest Service, but the state still owns roughly 100,000 acres of land within the wilderness preserve.

The House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee approved a resolution Feb. 23 that would request a federal law authorizing an exchange of state-owned land within the BWCAW for federal land outside the preserve but within the Superior National Forest.

The proposal (HF426), sponsored by Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), notes that Minnesota is unable to earn any money from leases, sales, or natural resource management of the state-owned land within the BWCAW because access is restricted.

"We are locked out of 100,000 acres," said Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook). "The federal government has essentially stolen this land from us."

Recently, the state of Utah successfully negotiated a similar land-for-land and cash exchange with the federal government, Rukavina told the committee.

Patty Burke, legislative director for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, said her agency supports the intent of the resolution. The problem, Burke said, is getting the U.S. Forest Service and the federal government to the negotiating table.

"We are looking for a congressional solution because the forest service has no reason to negotiate," Rukavina said.

The resolution is headed for a vote on the House floor.



GAME & FISH

Shooting deer in a barrel?

A bill permitting the taking of farmed deer and elk on licensed shooting preserves was approved Feb. 24 by the House Agriculture Policy Committee.

Farmed cervidae — a family of animals including deer, elk, and others — were granted status as agricultural products in 1993. The bill (HF710) would expand permitted uses of the farmed animals to include stocking them on licensed shooting preserves.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), the bill's sponsor, said he was not a supporter of the idea when it was first broached because it seemed to be a hunting issue. However, he

Student voters



Katie Cowhey, a sophomore at Prior Lake Senior High School, votes in a mock election on a bill that would limit the rights of 16- and 17-year-olds to refuse chemical dependency treatment. Cowhey participated in the Minnesota Youth Legislative Summit on Feb. 25.

said he now sees it as a value-added practice for farmers who raise elk and deer.

"How an animal ends up in your freezer shouldn't matter," Holsten told the committee.

The bill would allow the establishment of 10 preserves ranging from 240 to 960 acres. All wild deer would have to be removed from an area before a preserve would be created.

The measure would also establish a season for harvesting animals, from Aug. 15 to March 31. No hunting license would be required in the preserves, but weapons used would have to comply with those authorized to take wild deer and elk in the same region.

Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison), who is sponsoring an identical bill (HF715), said he supports the idea because he has constituents who raise elk who have had to refuse people the opportunity to hunt because the law does not allow it.

He said the preserves would be ideal for the elderly, people who have never shot an elk, or disabled hunters.

Several speakers fired rounds at Holsten's bill.

"It's like shooting fish in a barrel," said Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), who also had questions about whether the license fees proposed for the preserves would be enough to cover the Department of Agriculture's costs.

Other concerns were raised over the perception the preserves would create.

To clarify that what is being proposed is not technically hunting, Rep. Leslie Schumacher (DFL-Princeton) offered, and the committee accepted, an amendment to strike any mention of "hunt" or "hunting" from the bill.

That wasn't enough to stop opposition from Tom Meyers, representing Minnesota Conservation Federation.

"It will still be perceived as hunting by the nonhunting public," Meyers said. "It shouldn't matter, but it does. The animal rights people are going to attack this, and the hunters will take the flak."

Holsten's bill moves to the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.



HEALTH

Encouraging organ donation

Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and Norma Bradow of Fergus Falls have formed a close bond in recent months. Because of the gift of a liver from Bradow's late husband, Luther is alive today.

The two appeared together Feb. 19 before the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee. On the agenda was a bill (HF127), which is sponsored by Luther, to appropriate \$2 million over the next biennium to begin the proposed "Minnesota donor decision campaign."

The campaign would include research and public opinion surveys to assess attitudes toward organ, tissue, and eye donations and to evaluate public awareness efforts. It would also include advertising and public education programs aimed at raising awareness about organ donation and encouraging people to become donors.

The largest portion of the proposed funding



Rep. Darlene Luther, *right*, consoles Norma Bradow, Fergus Falls, who tells lawmakers how her husband, Gary, felt it important to be able to donate his organs. Luther said it was Gary's liver that saved her life when she had a liver transplant in 1998. Bradow testified before a House committee Feb. 19 in favor of a bill that would fund a campaign to boost organ donation.

— about \$800,000 — would be spent on media activities, including television and radio commercials.

Luther told the committee there is a critical shortage of donors and that across the country 10 people die each day waiting for transplants.

More than 1,300 Minnesotans currently await a lifesaving organ transplant. The waiting list grows 12 to 15 percent annually, but the number of donors remains essentially unchanged.

Susan Gunderson, executive director of LifeSource, a regional organ donation coordination organization, said most Minnesotans support organ donation, but they simply don't know how to assure that they become donors.

Under the bill, LifeSource is the lone entity that would qualify for the one-time state funding.

Gunderson said she's most excited about creating a mobile classroom that would tour the state and provide accurate information on organ donation in an interactive format.

"There's a lot of misinformation out there," Gunderson said, noting that even the medical profession isn't well-versed on the topic.

She said one of the keys to assuring that your organs are donated is to tell your family when you're healthy so your wishes are well-known.

In emotional testimony, Bradow told the committee how she and her husband had discussed the matter in the 1970s, never thinking the opportunity to be an organ donor would arise as soon as it did.

Gary Bradow was a victim of a stroke in 1998 at age 56. His wife said he had been extremely healthy until then, making him an ideal candidate for organ donation.

The committee took no action on the matter but will consider the bill for inclusion in this year's omnibus health and human services funding bill.

Bed rail bill passed

The House passed a bill Feb. 23 that would give nursing home patients and their families greater input on whether side rails can legally be used on beds in nursing facilities. The vote was 132-0.

"This is a bill about grandpas and grandmas, moms and dads and loved ones," said the bill's sponsor, Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester). "It's about real seniors suffering real fear."

In 1998, the Minnesota Department of Health began fining nursing homes that they believed were improperly using restraints. A federal law severely restricts the legal use of bed rails and other restraints.

Proponents of limiting rail use said patients could injure or even kill themselves if they became entangled in the restraints, and the state health department began requiring a physician's prescription to use rails.

Soon many nursing homes stopped using bed rails, but family members complained that they were more concerned for the safety of patients without rails.

Bradley's bill (HF40) would include a patient's physical safety as a medical condition sufficient to warrant a prescription for bed rails.

The bill moves to the Senate.

Alternative medicine plan

If your physician offers you herbal medicine, he or she can be accused of practicing outside "acceptable and prevailing" conventional standards of care.

And if an unlicensed herbalist offers you herbal medicine, he or she can be prosecuted for "practicing medicine without a license."

So just how do you get herbal medicine, if that's your preferred method of treatment? It's not easy in Minnesota.

A bill (HF537) debated by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Feb. 25 would change that.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), would allow complementary and alternative health care to be practiced if a patient is informed about the benefits and potential harm from the treatment. The bill also contains examples of forms which patients would be required to read and sign.

The bill covers such practices as homeopathy, naturopathy, massage therapy and body work, holistic and integrative therapies, and culturally traditional healing practices, among others.

Another section of the bill would address consumer complaints against licensed and unlicensed practitioners, but would not change criminal laws for fraud or for personal injury civil actions.

In some cases, Boudreau said, legal actions have been taken against unlicensed providers of alternative medical services, even though there was no consumer harmed and the recipient of the care was pleased.

Boudreau told the committee her proposal was not a licensing initiative, but more of a deregulatory approach.

"It updates the law so it is in sync with present health care reality," she added.

Studies show 70 percent of all Americans and 47 percent of all physicians are using at least one form of complementary or alternative methods for their personal health care.

The bill is slated to come before a Health Care Directive Subcommittee of the full health and human services policy committee.

Changes for ambulance services

Two bills designed to address the changing face of ambulance services in Minnesota were approved Feb. 23 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

The first bill (HF302) would allow ambulance services to participate in shared service purchasing arrangements for supplies, materials, and equipment.

The second (HF463) would place ambu-

lance providers under peer review protection.

Both bills are sponsored by Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston).

Davids told the committee that ambulance services need more flexibility in approaching purchases, particularly of expensive items such as vehicles. He said pending changes in the way federal programs reimburse ambulance services may leave services with less money.

Existing law requires government-owned ambulance services to take bids on equipment purchases over \$25,000. **HF302** would allow co-ops to purchase ambulances, the most costly expenditure an ambulance provider faces.

Davids said one small ambulance service buying one new vehicle every five years doesn't have as much bargaining power as a group of services purchasing a fleet.

Davids said **HF463** aims to shield ambulance providers in certain legal situations.

Without peer review protection, he said, any in-house discussion of how cases were handled is public record and subject to discovery, should a legal challenge arise.

O.J. Doyle, an emergency medical services consultant from Apple Valley, said the lack of protection has made ambulance service medical directors — required to be physicians — skittish about the liability issue.

He said many of them are volunteers and the ambulance services cannot exist without them.

Both bills move to the House floor.

Caring for spouses

The House passed a bill (**HF60**) Feb. 23 that would allow certain qualified medical professionals to be paid to care for their spouses. The vote was 129-3.

The measure would apply only to licensed nurses employed by Medicare-certified home health agencies. Those eligible could be paid to care for a disabled spouse who receives government-financed home health care.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), sponsor of the bill, said that under existing law payment is not possible in certain instances, and that has caused a hardship for a family in his district.

The bill moves to the Senate.

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.



HIGHER EDUCATION

Taylor-funded plan approved

The House Higher Education Finance Committee approved a bill Feb. 22 that would authorize construction of the Taylor Center, a privately-funded building on the campus of Minnesota State University, Mankato.

The bill (**HF492**) is sponsored by Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato).

Because the campus is part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, and therefore a state entity, the Legislature is required to approve the new building's construction.

Formerly known as Mankato State University, the school raised \$16.5 million in private donations to pay for the center. It is named in honor of alumnus Glen Taylor, chief executive officer and chair of the Taylor Corporation and owner of the Minnesota Timberwolves basketball team.

Taylor donated \$9.2 million toward the project, which consists of a 5,000-seat arena, athletic programs and facilities, and a student welcome center.

Minnesota State University President Richard Rush estimated that the center's construction will take about 18 months and should be completed by the end of 2000 or early 2001.

Rush said the Taylor Center will serve as a new entrance to campus because it will link a major road with the campus.

"We think it will be a showcase not only for MSU, but also for the entire region," Rush said.

HF492 moves to the House Capital Investment Committee.

Lawmakers seek hard numbers

Officials from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (MnSCU) got off to a somewhat rocky start with legislators during a budget presentation before the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

A team of MnSCU officials, led by Chancellor Morrie Anderson, appeared before the committee Feb. 24 to detail a request for a \$230.6 million increase over the system's biennial budget.

Anderson said the proposal targets several key areas for improvement, including student success, technology training, faculty salaries, and partnerships linking students and workforce development in high-demand industries.

The 53-campus system consists of 36 state universities, community colleges, and technical colleges. MnSCU graduates comprise about

20 percent of Minnesota's workforce, and the schools offer more than 3,500 educational programs.

Much of the presentation focused on the institution's goals and past accomplishments, which some lawmakers said are difficult to link directly with the budget issues.

Many legislators said they wanted a more in-depth presentation listing dollar amounts along with campus and administrative costs.

Rep. Gene Pelowski (DFL-Winona) grilled Anderson on which specific programs would benefit from state money, but said he was not receiving satisfactory answers.

"Behind that screen, there's nothing," he said. "Today from MnSCU, we have had no substantive answer to any question we've asked."

Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), the committee chair, also showed her frustration.

"We are trying to look at numbers," she said. "And you have given us the reasons for and the overall picture of what you're trying to do. Now, please attach it to some numbers."

In his biennial budget, Gov. Jesse Ventura has recommended funding \$121.3 million of MnSCU's request, or about 53 percent.

MnSCU officials will return to the committee Feb. 26 to continue their budget presentation.



HUMAN SERVICES

Waiting lists for services

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) knows first-hand the challenges faced by those with developmental disabilities and their caregivers.

He told the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Feb. 23 that he has a brother who is developmentally disabled. For years, the brother lived with his parents, but as his parents grew older, the arrangement needed to be changed.

Bradley said when it came time to find a new place for his brother to live, he encountered a roadblock that thousands are facing across the state — a waiting list caused by a critical shortage of funds to provide support services.

Bradley is sponsoring a bill (**HF345**), which was approved by the committee, that would infuse state money into programs to provide services such as in-home support services, respite care, housing modifications, residential services, employment services, and cash grants.

Those services are often called "waivered" services because they are provided outside of traditional programs funded by the federal government. About 4,700 Minnesotans are believed to be waiting for help.



Dorothy Ecklund of Moorhead speaks in support of a bill that would provide more state money to help people with developmental disabilities. Ecklund testified Feb. 23 before the House Health & Human Services Policy Committee.

The list developed over the past several decades as the state concentrated on downsizing regional treatment centers, according to Robert Brick, executive director of Arc Minnesota, an advocacy group for people with developmental disabilities.

Brick told the committee that it is now time to concentrate on those families who have sacrificed and cared for loved ones at home.

He said that when funding is not available for developmentally disabled individuals to receive services, counties are often forced to use family foster care, funded by local property taxes.

The committee also heard testimony from parents who said they waited as long as 14 years to find homes for their disabled children. Parents also expressed concerns about what would happen as they age and become less able to provide care themselves.

Cindy Johnson of St. Paul said her daughter, Jenna, has been on a waiting list for 11 years.

"I was told unless our family had a crisis, such that we throw Jenna out so she becomes homeless, or I died, there was little hope of getting a waiver to meet her needs," Johnson testified. "I refuse to do either of these options."

Johnson has not been able to work for many years, thereby sacrificing her shot at a retirement income, Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul) pointed out.

While no one on the committee disputed the need to fund the programs addressed in the bill, concerns over how much money would

be needed and how it could be used to leverage federal dollars were expressed.

Bradley's bill would phase in funding over two biennia, and he suggested \$30 million would be needed.

However, officials from the Minnesota Department of Human Services have said the cost would be closer to \$140 million and pointed out that only a small portion is covered in Gov. Jesse Ventura's proposed budget.

Further discussion of financial details of the bill are expected when it reaches its next stop, the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Certifying interpreters

If you're deaf or can't speak or understand English, having confidence in the person interpreting for you is essential.

Assuring the competence of those interpreters is the aim of two bills considered Feb. 25 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

The first bill (**HF206**) would require certification and registration for those who provide American Sign Language interpretation. Sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), the proposal would establish standards and encourage the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System to establish programs to help train interpreters.

The bill would also provide \$75,000 to establish mentorship programs to assist new graduates of interpreter training programs in obtaining certification.

Entenza said incapable interpreters cause hardships for the hearing impaired, and in some instances, problems with interpreters can put the deaf or hearing impaired at risk.

The second bill (**HF568**) would provide for voluntary licensing of spoken language interpreters.

Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls), who is sponsoring the proposal, said many new immigrants coming to Minnesota require social services and access to other programs to help them succeed. Interpretation services are often taken where and when they can be found with little regard to quality.

Clark pointed out that the courts require certification for spoken language interpreters and said it would be a good idea to begin with a voluntary program for other endeavors. Making it voluntary would help begin the assessment process to determine the languages, level of skill, and level of education that should be required for interpreters.

The bill would also establish a pilot training program for interpreters to be operated by the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota

State Colleges and Universities. Special emphasis in the area of medical interpreting would be offered.

Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) said that in one recent week Hennepin County Medical Center reported needing translations for 50 different languages.

Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie) said even in rural Minnesota the quest for interpreters had reached feverish pitch. She said her community has established a task force to help find interpreters.

Another report referenced by Clark reveals that as many as 200,000 Minnesotans do not speak English well enough to communicate in a medical emergency.

Both bills are slated to receive a second hearing before a Health Care Directive Subcommittee of the full policy committee.



INSURANCE

Regulating payment deals

People who receive structured settlement payments from an insurance company would be guaranteed legal and financial advice before selling the rights to those payments under a bill approved Feb. 23 by the House Commerce Committee.

The bill (**HF478**) would require companies that buy a person's rights to payments due as a result of a personal injury or workers' compensation claim to disclose detailed financial information about the transaction. Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), sponsor of the bill, said those transactions, known as "factoring transactions," are not currently regulated.

Under the bill, the company buying the rights to the payments would have to disclose how the present value of the cash compares to the money the claimant is scheduled to receive over time.

The transaction could be done only if the court determines it to be necessary for the claimant to avoid an "imminent financial hardship" and it would not cause undue financial hardship in the future.

The bill would require a factoring transaction to be approved by a court, and all of the interested parties would have to approve.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) said if the insurance company is considered an "interested party," then the bill seems to allow the insurance company to veto any factoring transaction.

Haas said the court would have the final authority, not the insurance company. But the insurance company's role would be to make sure all of the interested parties are notified. Beneficiaries of the structured settlement are

not limited to the claimant, Haas said. Children, a former spouse, or an estate could all be involved, he said.

The bill now moves to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.



LAW

House passes malpractice bill

A bill that seeks to give victims of medical malpractice their day in court was approved Feb. 23 by the full House. The vote was 130-2.

Current law requires that lawsuits dealing with medical malpractice must be initiated within two years of the occurrence of the malpractice. The bill (HF56) would extend the time allowed to file a medical malpractice case, allowing up to four years for a victim to take legal action.

"This bill is about real people," said Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins). "It's about people who needed the law to change so they could see some justice. It's about truth and fairness."

Bill sponsor Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth) said his plan would not make it easier for a plaintiff to win a medical malpractice suit. It would simply give people a reasonable amount of time to discover that malpractice has occurred and to file a case, he said.

Initially, Van Dellen's bill would have set the deadline to file a case at two years from the discovery of the malpractice, not from the occurrence of the malpractice as with the current law. The bill would have placed a six-year limit from the occurrence of the malpractice.

But when the bill was first discussed by the House Civil Law Committee in early February, Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) offered, and the committee accepted, a compromise amendment that would simply extend the current two-year limit to four years.

Several medical organizations that initially opposed the bill said that they could live with the compromise.

Bishop said Van Dellen's bill would be "a major advance in law for medical malpractice."

Last year, two bills to extend the malpractice deadline were approved by the House Judiciary Committee, but both stalled before reaching the House floor. Van Dellen and Folliard were at the forefront of last year's efforts.

Van Dellen's bill now waits for action by the Senate.

Y2K bill advances

A bill that aims to stomp on problems stemming from the so-called Y2K bug was approved Feb. 24 by the House Civil Law Committee.

The bill (HF73) provides several measures to address potential problems that may arise when computers make the switch from 1999 to 2000.

Before approving the bill, the committee added an amendment that seeks to address the possible effects the Y2K bug may have on the state's courts.

The amendment, offered by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), would create a special panel of district court judges to hear all Y2K court cases, and it would place limits on how those cases could proceed.

Bishop said that the courts should be given an opportunity to respond to the large number of cases that may result from the Y2K problem.

Initially, Bishop's amendment would have allowed courts to award only damages stemming from economic loss. Plaintiffs would not have been allowed to collect punitive damages.

But Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center) said that those provisions made Bishop's amendment a "whopper," and that the amendment would have greatly expanded the original bill.

Responding to Carruthers concerns, Bishop removed those sections from his amendment.

"I don't want to have any whopper problems in this amendment," he said.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland), would protect some types of Y2K information from civil liability and would authorize the governor to declare a state of emergency based on problems associated with the glitch.

The measure would also allow cities to incur debt for spending to address year 2000 problems without voter approval, and it would appropriate money for a local government Y2K loan fund.

The Y2K bug is a problem that may occur in many computers that were not programmed to handle the switch to the year 2000. Many older programs use only the last two digits to track the year, and at the end of 1999, those programs will roll to 00. That means some computers will think it's 1900, which could cause major technical malfunctions and create troubles in industries such as airline travel, banking, and utilities.

The bill, initially rejected Feb. 8 by the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee, was later resurrected by that committee and approved Feb. 18.

It now goes to the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Funds for storm recovery

When a natural disaster strikes a community, help often pours in from everywhere. Other cities send crews, other agencies help out where they can, and volunteers assist with cleanup.

But eventually someone has to pay the bill. If a federal disaster has been declared, most of the costs are reimbursed from the federal government. But if there's no federal disaster declaration, a storm or similar event can be devastating to city or county coffers.

Easing that burden is the aim of a bill (HF294) approved Feb. 22 by the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee.

The proposal calls for the establishment of a state aid fund to which cities could apply for help once unreimbursed costs exceed 5 percent of their gross tax levy.

Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights), who is sponsoring the bill, said many Minnesota cities experienced damage from storms during the summer of 1998. And while much of the damage was paid for through federal reimbursement, the point was made clear that the state doesn't have a streamlined method for lending assistance.

"It's a safety net for cities," said Broecker, former city councilor in Vadnais Heights.

Shoreview Mayor Sandy Martin said a tornado that swept through her community brought with it a \$600,000 cleanup bill. Had the city been forced to bear the entire cost, it would have had to raise its tax levy an additional 7 percent, a figure she said would have been devastating to the community.

In Shoreview, expenditures for straight-time personnel costs and a reforestation program were not covered by the federal government. The city lost nearly 5,000 trees.

"This would be a way for the state to be more proactive in assisting with disasters," Martin told the committee.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) questioned the need for such a program, noting that when catastrophes have occurred in the past, the legislature has been more than willing to help.

Bill proponents told Rukavina that not all disasters happen when the Legislature is meeting. If a disaster occurs in September, for instance, a political subdivision is often forced

to wait until the following spring for reimbursement.

Broecker's bill would provide \$10 million to establish the aid program.

The bill moves to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.



SPORTS

Reprieve for stud users

The House gave final passage to a bill Feb. 25 that would repeal the upcoming statewide ban on metal traction devices, or studs, for snowmobiles. The vote was 105-23.

The House had passed an earlier version of the bill (HF6) Jan. 21, but the measure had since been amended by the Senate to include graduated fines for snowmobilers caught using studs on state-owned paved trails.

Stud use would remain illegal on paved trails. It was damage by illegal studs to those trails that prompted the 1998 law banning studs on all public lands as of July 1, 1999.

HF6 would repeal that law, which also requires snowmobilers to buy a \$50 sticker to use studs until the ban takes effect.

Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), sponsor of the bill, said the special fee and pending ban have caused parts of the state to suffer from lost tourism revenue, and his plan would help bring some tourism dollars back to the state.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) urged colleagues on the House floor to vote against the bill because, she said, cost estimates for stud damage to paved trails continue to increase.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources had estimated the total damage to state, county, and local trails at \$3 million. But Hausman said Minnesota counties have estimated the damage is more than \$7 million.

"To pass the repeal today without dealing with this huge amount of damage would be a mistake," she said.

Hackbarth is also sponsoring a separate bill (HF928) that would address the issue of repairing the paved trails. A special task force met and provided recommendations that formed the basis of that measure. The House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee debated that bill Feb. 25, but did not vote on it. The panel is slated to further consider the measure.

HF6 now goes to the governor.

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

Capitol time



Ashley Davis, left, and Kiara Teris leave the Capitol rotunda arm-in-arm Feb. 22. The girls, part of a group from the Pratt Community Center in Minneapolis, participated in the Women Come to the Capitol Day, where they got a closer look at the operation of state government.

Bill would repeal PWC fee

The debate over personal watercraft is making waves for the third time in as many years.

A bill that would repeal the three-year, \$50 surcharge on personal watercraft that was authorized by the 1998 Legislature was approved Feb. 23 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Proceeds from the surcharge are to be divided between the state and counties for law enforcement and education efforts.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) estimated that with 27,000 registered personal watercraft in Minnesota, the surcharge would generate \$450,000 annually.

The bill (HF54) is sponsored by Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus), who has been a vocal opponent of restrictions on personal watercraft and snowmobile use.

Finseth said he supports a repeal because personal watercraft accident rates have dropped, even though the programs the surcharge is meant to support are not yet in place.

"Things go in cycles, just like they did with snowmobiles back in the '70s," he said. "I think we're headed in the right direction."

Education and enforcement efforts would not suffer if the surcharge were repealed, DNR Boat and Water Safety Coordinator Kim Elverum told the committee.

Currently, personal watercraft owners must pay the \$50 surcharge in addition to a \$12 registration fee, Elverum explained.

"So they are being discriminated against

because they have to register twice," said Rep. Bob Westfall (R-Rothsay).

Gov. Jesse Ventura, who owns a handful of the machines, strongly supports the repeal. Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), who sponsored last year's personal watercraft legislation, expressed disappointment that a governor who advocates personal responsibility at every turn would want to see the cost of personal watercraft enforcement shifted to all other boaters and local property taxpayers.

"We need to have the enforcement for the people of Minnesota who enjoy simple peace and quiet on their lakes," said Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul). "There are far more of them than one governor."

Hasskamp also argued that with all of the media attention directed toward personal watercraft issues last year, the so-called "bad operators" knew law enforcement efforts would be beefed up and that in turn led to an improvement in behavior.

"I am fearing what is going to happen on our waters this summer," Hasskamp said. "A repeal sends the wrong public message to the worst operators."

The bill moves to the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

If you will be visiting the Capitol in the near future, call the Capitol Historic Site Program at (651) 296-2881 to schedule a tour.



TAXES

Super-majority bill passes

How difficult should it be for the Legislature to raise taxes?

The House answered that question Feb. 25, voting 81 to 49 after three hours of debate to pass a bill (HF5) that would propose a constitutional amendment to require a three-fifths vote (rather than a simple majority) to pass tax hikes.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan), would let voters decide if they want the super-majority requirement for the Legislature to pass an increase in existing tax or to impose a new tax.

The proposed amendment would also ask voters to accept a three-fifths requirement for raising certain state-imposed fees and surcharges.

Wilkin said the measure was designed to protect taxpayers. He noted that 11 states require an even stronger "super-majority." In Minnesota, it would likely mean that raising taxes would require bipartisan or tripartisan support.

"Government has an obligation to properly and adequately fund necessary programs, but there comes a point where government itself has to be reigned in," said Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan). "We need to draw the line and say, 'no more.'"

Although the final vote reflected strong support from Wilkins' fellow Republicans, not all of them were in favor.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) said he didn't like the bill and the "trap it puts us in."

Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) invoked the founding fathers in arguing that majorities should control the power to tax.

"We shouldn't do the lazy, sloppy, gimmicky way of taxing," Orfield said. "We shouldn't have government by well-financed minorities."

The bill goes to the Senate.

Eliminating the marriage penalty

One plus one equals two. Correct?

Yes, but not if you're referring to Minnesota's income tax.

In the case of the tax code, one individual marrying another results in a higher tax liability than two individuals living together outside of marriage.

Bridging that gap — often referred to as the "marriage penalty" — is the intent of a bill sponsored by Rep. Andrew Westerberg (R-Blaine).

Westerberg told the House Taxes Committee Feb. 25 that he believes families are the building blocks of society and deserve a fair shake when it comes to taxes.

His bill (HF267) would increase the width of the income tax brackets for married joint filers to twice the brackets for single filers.

Under current law, two single taxpayers who marry will pay higher Minnesota income taxes than they would have paid as two single filers.

That means a single woman and a single man earning \$20,000 each will pay combined income tax of \$2,510. A married couple earning \$40,000 would pay \$2,695.

Although the bill sounds like a simple fix, it's not, according to Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), who has sponsored legislation to undo the marriage penalty in previous sessions.

He said no matter what action is taken, someone is going to be treated unfairly. However, he noted that that is no reason for government to be relaying the message that marriage is a bad thing.

"We shouldn't be penalizing married people," Knoblach added.

Committee chair Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) said while the bill would not eliminate the penalty entirely for all filers, it is a good first step. He suggested that only a flat-tax structure would remove the penalty in one stroke of the pen.

Abrams said one-earner families would actually get a bonus under the proposal, which he believes would properly recognize the contribution of stay-at-home spouses.

Some lawmakers questioned if the bill wouldn't lead to a "singles penalty."

Westerberg said his bill would not raise taxes on singles "a dime," but he admitted that in some instances, there could be disadvantages for singles.

Tom Prichard, president of the Minnesota Family Council, called the marriage penalty "totally inappropriate" and said that his group represents the 660,000 families that would pay less tax were this bill passed.

"Frankly, families are due some tax relief," he added.

Westerberg's bill carries a \$330 million price tag over the next biennium, a figure Abrams said would require considerable stretching to fit within targets that will eventually be established for the committee.

The bill may be considered later for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Resorts seek tax change

A bill that would allow Minnesota's resorts to stay open for more days and still qualify for a reduced property tax rate faced tough sledding before the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee Feb. 24.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), the proposal's sponsor, said her plan would give resorts one more "tool to succeed." She said raising the number of occupancy days from 250 to 275 would allow resort owners to benefit from their investment in improved facilities and better marketing.

She pointed out that resorters are doing a better job of selling off-peak and winter season packages; however, if they exceed the specified number of occupancy days, their tax rate jumps from resort to commercial, a three-fold hike for some property owners.

Several committee members expressed concerns that the bill would give an unfair advantage to some lodging businesses and questioned where the definition of "seasonal" would be obsolete, given the increased number of days of operation requested in the bill.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) said he supports a longer operating span for small operations, but not for larger ones. He questioned why the state should favor resorts over motels.

Hasskamp said that resorts are unique because they are located on lakefront property.

"If they can't survive, they'll sell and divide the property and it will be lost," Hasskamp said. "Once the resorts are gone, they're not coming back."

Dutch Cragun, owner of a well-known resort on Gull Lake, told the committee the steep increases in valuation for shoreline property is further evidence of the need to help the resorts stay in business.

He said resorts are similar to family farms and require a great deal of investment. The number of resorts has fallen from a high of 4,000 in the mid-60s to 1,200 today, the bulk of which are tiny "ma and pa" operations.

Cragun noted that if a year with ideal conditions should come for state resorts, many would be able to exceed the 250-day requirement but would be punished for their good fortune.

Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack), a co-sponsor of the bill, said if the resorts are open longer, more benefits accrue to the state.

"Thousands of tourists buy gas, groceries, and entertainment, to the benefit of the people of the county," Howes said.

The committee took no action on the bill, but lawmakers may reconsider it for inclusion in this year's omnibus tax bill.

Taxed to smoke and to quit

The state is preparing to spend a great deal of money to convince people to quit smoking. Yet, if smokers decide to quit and purchase a nicotine patch or nicotine gum, they pay sales tax.

Some lawmakers find that incongruous.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) is sponsoring a bill (**HF168**) that would stub out the sales tax for items to be used exclusively to assist individuals to refrain from smoking tobacco.

Mulder told the House Taxes Committee Feb. 23 that the bill would not extend protection to everything touted as a smoking cure, such as copper bracelets. But several committee members questioned whether the distinction was drawn carefully enough in the bill.

Rep. William Kuisle (R-Rochester) said he envisions a lot of "voodoo products" coming to market as a result of the state's influx of tobacco settlement money.

Mulder said he is also concerned by that prospect, but noted that to be sold legitimately for smoking cessation, products would have to be approved by the U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). FDA approval, he said, would qualify items for his proposed exemption.

Studies by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 20 percent of Minnesota adults smoke tobacco. Other studies indicate that about a third of the smoking population attempts to quit each year.

The bill would carry a price tag of \$1.3 million for the coming biennium.

The committee took no action on the bill, but may consider it later for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Earth-friendly tax bill

What color should Minnesota's tax code be?

Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope) believes it should be green. That's why she is sponsoring a bill (**HF86**) that would exempt the purchase of pollution control equipment and solar energy systems from state sales tax.

Rest told the House Taxes Committee Feb. 23 that while the state encourages the use of solar energy with one hand, it taxes those who purchase solar energy equipment with the other.

And although the state and federal government mandate that industries purchase pollution control devices, the state punishes businesses for complying by charging sales tax.

Rest said her proposal represented a "greening" of Minnesota tax policy.

The bill would add pollution control equipment to the definition of capital equipment in state statute. Most purchasers of capital equipment may file for a tax refund.

Solar energy systems would be exempted categorically, independent of the capital equipment program, making the savings available at the time of purchase. Purchases by electric utilities would not be included.

To be exempt under the bill, a solar system would have to be used in a commercial or industrial application and generate a certain minimum amount of energy.

The committee took no action, but may reconsider the proposal for inclusion in its omnibus tax bill.



TRANSPORTATION

Bill allows minivan TVs

Minnesota consumers who want to purchase Oldsmobile Silhouette minivans would have the state's permission, under a bill approved Feb. 23 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

The bill (**HF745**) would clarify the state's restrictions on the installation of television sets in motor vehicles.

The Silhouette comes equipped with a television. The van cannot be sold in Minnesota because the mounting of the screen is not completely behind the driver, although the driver of the van is still unable to see the screen.

Sherry Munyon, director of government affairs for the Minnesota Automobile Dealers Association, said Minnesota is the only state in the country where the van cannot be sold.

Current law states that televisions can be mounted only from the back of the driver's seat and beyond. The bill would change the law to allow screens to be mounted in any place except where the driver can see the screen.

"I think the intent of the law still holds firm," said Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska), the bill's sponsor.

Exceptions to current law include television or video equipment used in law enforcement vehicles.

The bill moves to the House floor.

Speeding release of titles

A bill that would close a legal loophole that can cause car dealerships to run afoul of the law was approved Feb. 25 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

The bill (**HF790**), sponsored by Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester), would decrease the

amount of time banks are allowed to release a title after a car is paid off to seven days. Under current law, banks have 15 days to do so.

However, car dealers have only 10 days to transfer titles to buyers after a vehicle is sold. This can present a problem when dealers need to obtain titles from a bank. If the bank takes longer than 10 days, the dealer's deadline has not been met and they break the law.

Sherry Munyon, director of government affairs for the Minnesota Automobile Dealers Association, said dealerships are starting to be warned by law enforcement officials for their violations.

"We do have a concern because they're out of compliance by no fault of their own," Munyon said.

The bill originally proposed a five-day limit for banks, but was changed after a request for more time from bankers.

Jenny Engh, director of government relations for the Minnesota Bankers Association, said banks need time to verify information on titles and to make sure checks clear.

HF790 moves to the House Commerce Committee.

Metric system unnecessary

Even though the United States stated its intent to convert to the metric system of measurement in 1969, the implementation has not been on a fast track.

In the last three decades, a few federal mandates were created to get the country inching in the direction of the metric system, but exceptions have been made for the highway industry.

A bill approved by the House Transportation Policy Committee Feb. 25 would grant the Minnesota Department of Transportation some of those exceptions for highway construction projects.

The department started converting to the metric system in 1992, and by 1999 most state projects will be under the metric system. However, Congress has made the conversion optional for highway construction.

The bill (**HF571**) would allow the department to instead use the English system of measurement strictly for highway construction projects, therefore making it easier for local governments and private contractors to do business with the state.

If the bill becomes law, all projects initiated on or after July 1 would be required to use the English system.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake), moves to the House Transportation Finance Committee.

Memorial honors Minnesotans who fought in Korea

By Sarah Hallonquist

Of the 94,000 Minnesota men and women who fought in the Korean War, 738 died and 154 are still considered missing.

Last September, those Minnesotans received a tribute with the dedication of the Minnesota Korean War Veterans Memorial on the Capitol lawn.

The names of the dead are inscribed on seven granite walls, and a sculpture depicts a lone soldier walking toward a silhouette of another soldier who represents those missing in action.

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when communist North Korea invaded South Korea in an attempt to reunite the country. The armistice was signed July 27, 1953, and Congress officially ended U.S. involvement in Korea on Jan. 31, 1955.

The war is often referred to as the Korean Conflict because Congress never actually declared war against North Korea. And it is often called the "Forgotten War" because it seldom receives much media attention.

But more than 54,000 Americans died in the Korean War, compared with 58,000 who died in the Vietnam War, which lasted five years longer.

In 1995, a national Korean War memorial was completed in Washington, D.C. Part of that structure, which is a field of soldiers and memorial walls, is made of granite from the Cold Spring Granite Co. in Minnesota.

The national monument spurred the Minnesota effort, and the 1995 Legislature appropriated \$300,000 for the project.

Construction on the memorial began in April 1998, after a two-year fund-raising



At the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the Capitol grounds, a lone soldier stands looking through a silhouette of a fellow soldier. The silhouette represents the 154 Minnesotans who are still considered missing in action from the war.

effort by the Minnesota Korean Veterans Chapter 1 from Roseville. The group had the task of raising \$300,000 to match the state's contribution to the project.

Meanwhile, the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board held a design contest. Arthur Norby's "Body and Soul" won the board's approval from five other submissions in late 1996. Four thousand people attended the Sept. 13, 1998, dedication ceremony.

Although there isn't an official list, many legislators past and present served during the Korean War.

Sens. Bill Belanger (R-Bloomington), Leo Foley (DFL-Coon Rapids), and Sam Solon (DFL-Duluth) are Korean War veterans.

Former Rep. Joe Begich from Eveleth, who served in the House from 1974 to 1992, also fought in Korea, and was ordered there the same time as Belanger. Rep. Kathy Tingelstad's (R-Andover) father, who passed away in January, also was a Korean War veteran.

Belanger spent a year in Korea, and remembers a lengthy battle in November 1950 with the Chinese army in the Chosin Reservoir.

However, Belanger was sent home in July 1951 because he was in a reserve unit. Because war hadn't been declared, reserves technically shouldn't have been there, he said.

"I don't think we were there legally," Belanger said.

Belanger was not involved in the planning of the memorial, but he did correct the list of deceased veterans by adding a name of someone he knew. He visited the memorial a few days after the dedication ceremony.

"I thought it was good," Belanger said, adding that he believes Minnesota's memorial is more authentic than the one in Washington.



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Lawmakers urged to let biotechnology drive growth

By Sarah Hallonquist



Minnesota should find more ways to accommodate the biotechnology industry in the coming years, veteran journalist Jackson Bain told an audience of about 100 lawmakers and staff Feb. 24.

Bain's speech, "Biotechnology in Minnesota — The Promise and the Challenge," was the last in this year's Capitol Forum Series, a program of lectures held at the Minnesota History Center.

Bain spoke about the issues surrounding biotechnology, an industry in which biological processes are engineered to create products such as medicines, foods, and textiles.

Biologically engineered products can range from Dolly, the famous cloned sheep, to specially designed seeds for farmers or even the finish on the denim used to make blue jeans.

Bain said that biotechnology is a rapidly growing industry, and while its gains may not be easily predictable, current products suggest it has a promising future.

"My strong recommendation is that you look at how you can attract more of it," Bain said.

Creating development-friendly environments, strengthening technical education, and supporting the biotechnology efforts already in place throughout the state are some of the ways Bain suggested policy-makers could invite more industry to Minnesota.

"If you do all of these things we're talking about, you may be creating biotechnology's next generation of products and services," he said.

Bain said Minnesota has some of the toughest controls on agricultural biotechnology testing, but it also has one of the highest numbers of testing areas in the country.

The industry's firms are often small companies that need a lot of start-up capital, and it can take up to 10 years for some of those companies to make significant profits from their patents. Even so, Bain said, biotechnology is worth investing in because of its inevitable success.

Currently, there are 114 companies in Minnesota that deal with some form of biotechnology. Thirty-five of those businesses are related to medicine and health care, and the rest are agricultural companies.

"With your resources in Minnesota, this is an economic sector that has a huge impact for the state," Bain said.



Jackson Bain, a former NBC journalist, impresses on lawmakers the importance of supporting the growing industry of biotechnology. Bain spoke as part of this year's Capitol Forum Series.

He used the example of a business in San Mateo, Calif., that left the area because of high real estate prices, strict tax and regulatory policies, and poor educational training facilities. Business leaders also reported that the area's lawmakers did not understand the needs of the biotechnology industry, which made it difficult for firms to deal with government.

"There's a lot of forecasting that has to be done by you," Bain told legislators. "You have to understand what they're doing."

Economics aside, however, biotechnology evokes both hope and fear, Bain said.

To illustrate his point, he told a story of a 16-year-old boy, John, who was dying of diabetes and had rejected two types of insulin before a doctor suggested a newly engineered form of insulin that had recently been approved by the federal government.

The boy's father agreed to travel the uncharted territory and use the new insulin. Today, John — Bain's son — is 31 years old.

But just as biotechnology does a lot of good, Bain said it has negative consequences, too.

Ethical quandaries, such as the race to map the human gene structure, create new debates on patenting biological information about humans. And those ethical dilemmas will continue as long as science keeps up its pace.

After his speech, legislators asked Bain questions on topics ranging from industrial hemp to biologically engineered farming products.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) asked why it seemed that medical advancements in biotechnology had progressed faster than agricultural ones.

Bain said that could be because food is a more familiar commodity that might not present as much of a perceived need for some people as medical technology does. He reminded the audience that people would not even drink pasteurized milk when it was first produced.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) said biotechnology clearly has an impact for agriculture.


"The one message is that we are in a technology age and change will be at a faster pace," Ness said.

Ness is chair of the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee. He said that as a legislator, he has an opportunity to make sure that necessary technological changes go smoothly.

Bain is a former reporter for NBC News and has won two Emmy Awards for producing television documentaries. He began covering biotechnology issues in 1977 at the First National Conference on Genetic Engineering. He now heads his own communications firm, Bain and Associates, of which the Biotechnology Industry Organization is a client.

While predicting technological advancements is not always a science, Bain's message to legislators about biotechnology was to pay attention and understand.

"All you can do is draw lessons from what you see and apply them to the future," Bain said.

Further investigation of the policy dilemmas of biotechnology will be the focus of next year's Capitol Forum Series. The series are sponsored by the McKnight Foundation and Minnesota Technology, Inc. 

Where to find information

House Index Department

211 State Capitol (651) 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 committee, topic, author, file number, and other categories. The office can also give you the current status of legislation.

Business owner aims to make Minnesota competitive

By Jon Fure

Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) says he feels lucky because serving in the House has turned his avocation into his vocation.



Rep. Dan Dorman

"Having something you take an interest in — politics has always been kind of a hobby for me — and all of a sudden you're doing it as a job, is like a dream come true," he said.

Part of Dorman's interest in politics comes from his other job, as owner of Hanson Tire Service in Albert Lea, which is just north of the Iowa border. Minnesota's higher taxes make it difficult for many businesses in southern Minnesota to compete with those in Iowa, South Dakota, or Wisconsin, he said.

"Part of my business is selling farm tires, and I'm not competitive five miles south of my business," he said.

Some businesses have adapted by relocating or establishing additional offices in neighboring states, thereby taking jobs away from Minnesota, Dorman said.

Dorman has worked toward solutions to those problems as a member of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce board. He said he has met with his local legislators many times in recent years to present ideas on economic development issues such as workers' compensation reform and commercial/industrial property tax reform.

That experience is especially helpful now that he sits on the other side of the desk,

Dorman said. One of his goals as a new House member is to support legislation to improve Minnesota's business climate.

Most of Dorman's efforts so far have been focused on reducing taxes. He's sponsoring a bill (HF2) that would reduce income taxes, restructure property taxes, and phase out the health care provider tax. Dorman said he is optimistic that the bill will become law, and that it will be the largest state tax cut in Minnesota's history.

As sponsor of that bill, Dorman said he's worked closely with House staff to determine the projected financial impacts of proposed tax cuts.

"If you want to take an across-the-board half-percent increase in every classification, they develop a computer report that would tell you the financial impacts in the future," he said. "You have to ask whether the state can afford to do that."

Getting the bill into its final form has involved repeating that process under different scenarios and deciding how each tax classification would change. Dorman said he has had input from other House members, staff, and lobbyists, and he has been reading detailed budget information and fiscal notes from the Department of Revenue.

Dorman also said he is the only freshman with a coach — former House member Bob Haukoos, also of Albert Lea, who is now the official doorman for the House chamber.

Dorman represents District 27A, which covers Freeborn County. He describes the district as economically and culturally diverse. Instead of a dominant employer or industry, it

has many small businesses and family farms.

"There is no 5,000-pound gorilla, so we kind of have to fend for ourselves to create jobs," he said. "We haven't enjoyed the economic boom that other parts of the state have experienced."

That could change in the near future, Dorman said, as an ethanol plant is in the planning stages for that area. Not only would the plant create new jobs, it would enhance the state's agriculture industry, he said.

Dorman hopes to help secure funding for that project and for plans to clean up pollution in Albert Lea Lake, which he believes would bring more tourism into the district.

He serves on the House Agriculture Policy, Jobs and Economic Development Policy, and Taxes committees as well as on the Property Tax Division of the Taxes Committee.

He said the day-to-day challenges of his new job haven't diminished the thrill of serving in the House.

"I'm still very proud every time I drive down the highway and see a sign that says Freeborn County," he said. "It's a lot of responsibility."

District 27A

1995 population: 32,759

Largest city: Albert Lea

County: Freeborn

Location: southern Minnesota

Top concern: "Hard working families in Minnesota deserve lower taxation. The more money we put back in their hands, the better off we will be as a state."

— Rep. Dan Dorman

Frequently called numbers

(Area code 651)

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol 296-0271

Voice mail/order bills 296-2343

Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate

110 Capitol 296-2887

Index, House

211 Capitol 296-6646

Information, Senate

231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House

175 State Office Building 296-2146

Committee Hotline, Senate 296-8088

Committee Hotline, House 296-9283

Sergeant at Arms, Senate

Senate Chamber 296-7159/6-1119

Sergeant at Arms, House

45 State Office Building 296-4860

Legislative Reference Library

645 State Office Building 296-3398

Revisor of Statutes

700 State Office Building 296-2868

Governor's Office

130 Capitol 296-3391

Attorney General's Office

102 Capitol 296-6196

Secretary of State's Office

180 State Office Building 296-9208

Capitol Security

B-4 Capitol 296-6741

Emergency

..... 296-2100

TTY, Senate 296-0250

Toll free 1-888-234-1112

TTY, House 296-9896

Toll free 1-800-657-3550

Wilkin working to deliver on tax-cutting initiatives

By Sarah Hallonquist

One election night thrill for the Wilkin family didn't have anything to do with politics.

While Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan), 33, was closing in on winning the District 38A House seat, his wife, Eileen, gave birth to Rebecca, the couple's second child. Their son, John, is 21 months old.



Rep. Tim Wilkin

"We didn't even get to go to our own election night party," Wilkin said.

Wilkin and his wife are used to mixing life's celebrations with politics, however. The couple started out by getting married during his unsuccessful 1996 bid for the state Senate against incumbent Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan). In fact, the Wilkins had begun their courtship during his extensive early preparation for that race, which he lost by only 1,247 votes.

"If that had worked out, all three legislators [from District 38] would have been named Tim," he said.

At that time, Reps. Tim Commers and Tim Pawlenty, also Republicans from Eagan, held the district's seats in the House.

Although he lost that race, Wilkin said his door-knocking for the Senate campaign paid off two years later.

"That really laid a lot of groundwork that helped out this campaign," he said.

The lifelong Republican is no stranger to political campaigns, having stumped for George Bush and Dan Quayle in 1992 as statewide chair of the Minnesota Young Republicans. In a 1993 special election, he passed out campaign fliers for Rep. Jim Rhodes

(R-St. Louis Park), who began his fourth term this year.

He also chaired the House campaign for his predecessor, Commers, in 1994. Commers stepped down in 1998 after serving three terms.

In addition, Wilkin served four years on the Dakota County Planning Commission and was vice chair of that group in 1997. That experience gave him a good flavor for how suburban and rural communities work with each other on property and development issues. He said he favors local planning that is supported by the residents and not dictated by the Metropolitan Council.

"I don't think the Legislature should be ceding authority to the Metropolitan Council," he said.

Wilkin was a member of the Burnsville Eagan Cable Commission, but stepped down because he said he thinks cable now has a number of effective competitors, compared to its previous monopoly position.

"I don't believe in extending bureaucracies beyond their useful life," he said.

That philosophy has followed him into the House, where his goals include paring down what he sees as a state government that's too big. He said he would like to see the government's ability to regulate be limited.

To fulfill his campaign promises, Wilkin is sponsoring a bill (HF5) that seeks a constitutional amendment to require a three-fifths majority in the Legislature to raise taxes. If the bill passes, voters would have to approve the proposed amendment in order to put the measure into practice.

"It doesn't prevent taxes from going up," Wilkin said. "It supports consensus."

He is also a co-sponsor of a bill that would

eliminate the motor-vehicle emissions inspection program. Emissions tests, he said, cause cynicism and tend to undermine other environmental regulations.

Another cause for Wilkin is repealing the health care provider tax used to fund the MinnesotaCare subsidized health insurance program. Wilkin said the tax only adds to the high cost of health care.

"I don't think we should be taxing sick people," he said.

Wilkin came to Minnesota straight out of college in the summer of 1988 to be an auditor for Norwest Banks. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Iowa State University, where he majored in finance. He met Eileen, a former piano teacher, in 1995.

The Freeport, Ill., native now works as an insurance underwriter for Northland Insurance Company in Mendota Heights. Outside of work and politics, he spends the majority of his time with his family. He said he's not planning an extended career in the House. He'd like to serve no more than four or five terms, and then return to the private sector.

But for right now, the soft-spoken Wilkin said he's "lovin' it" in the Legislature.

District 38A

1995 population: 37,400

Largest city: Eagan

County: Dakota

Location: Southeast metro

Top concern: "Reducing taxes and spending, while improving educational performance, are the issues of greatest concern to my district."

— Rep. Tim Wilkin

Minnesota State Agencies

(Area code 651)

Agriculture 297-2200
Commerce 296-4026
Corrections 642-0200
Children, Families
and Learning 582-8200
Economic Security 296-3644
Employee Relations 297-1184
Job Information 296-2616
Finance 296-5900
Health 215-5803

Human Rights 296-5663
Toll Free 1-800-657-3704
Human Services 296-6117
Labor and Industry 296-6107
Military Affairs 282-4662
Natural Resources 296-6157
Public Safety 296-6642
Driver and Vehicle Services 296-6911
Fire Marshal 215-0500
Alcohol and Gambling
Enforcement Division 296-6159
State Patrol 297-3935

Pollution Control Agency 296-6300
Public Service 296-5120
Revenue
Taxpayer Assistance 296-3781
Toll Free 1-800-652-9094
Trade and
Economic Development 297-1291
Office of Tourism 296-5029
Transportation 296-3000
Veterans Affairs 296-2562
State Information 296-6013

Bill Introductions

HF876-HF1148

Tuesday, Feb. 23

HF876—Mariani (DFL) **Family & Early Childhood** **Education Finance**

African immigrant and refugee community child care development grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF877—Wolf (R) **Jobs & Economic** **Development Policy**

Unemployment; reemployment insurance procedure modifications and technical changes provided to conform with federal requirements.

HF878—Bishop (R) **Ways & Means**

State governmental operations supplemental funding provided and money appropriated.

HF879—Knoblach (R) **Local Government &** **Metropolitan Affairs**

Local units of government regulatory relief provided.

HF880—Mulder (R) **Family & Early Childhood** **Education Finance**

Child care and early childhood education programs consolidation plan developed.

HF881—Dawkins (DFL) **Education Policy**

Ramsey County; after-school enrichment program role clarified.

HF882—Tomassoni (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

School district retired employee health benefits levy extended.

HF883—Nornes (R) **Family & Early Childhood** **Education Finance**

Chemical abuse prevention matching grants provided to community collaborative projects and money appropriated.

HF884—Tuma (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

Learn and earn graduation achievement program funding continued, and money appropriated.

HF885—Mares (R) **Governmental Operations &** **Veterans Affairs Policy**

Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS), Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA), and Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) provisions modified; and service credit pilot program established.

HF886—Erhardt (R) **Taxes**

State agency libraries sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF887—Gunther (R) **Taxes**

Electric generation peaking facilities property tax exemption provided.

HF888—Erickson (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

Multicounty, multitype library systems and basic system support grants funded; and money appropriated.

HF889—Van Dellen (R) **Commerce**

Noncommercial telephone solicitation prohibited at certain times of the day.

HF890—Abrams (R) **Taxes**

Income tax rates and marriage penalty reduced; sales, cigarettes, and liquor accelerated tax liability repealed; motor vehicle registration tax modified; agricultural assistance provided; and money appropriated.

HF891—Biernat (DFL) **Transportation Policy**

Photographic evidence used for enforcement of traffic signal violations pilot project authorized and money appropriated.

HF892—Stanek (R) **Crime Prevention**

CODEFOR; Hennepin County or Minneapolis coordinated criminal justice strategies demonstration grant program established; and money appropriated.

HF893—Dorman (R) **Agriculture Policy**

Agricultural warehouse provisions modified and clarified.

HF894—Tingelstad (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

School district facilities management funding authorized, local matches required, and money appropriated.

HF895—Tingelstad (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

School district facilities maintenance management and housekeeping procedure created.

HF896—Larsen, P. (R) **Local Government &** **Metropolitan Affairs**

County, city, and town ordinances terminating lawful land uses by amortization prohibited.

HF897—Stanek (R) **Crime Prevention**

Firearm carry permit application procedure modified, permit issuance authority granted to county sheriffs, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF898—Leppik (R) **Taxes**

Outpatient surgical center sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF899—Dawkins (DFL) **State Government Finance**

Spanish-American War corrective historical information plaque commissioned and displayed in the state Capitol; and money appropriated.

HF900—Rest (DFL) **Taxes**

Working family income tax credit percentages modified.

HF901—Huntley (DFL) **Jobs & Economic** **Development Policy**

Western Lake Superior sanitary sewer district funding for water and sewer service extension to the Fond du Lac area provided, and money appropriated.

HF902—Winter (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

General education formula allowance inflationary increase provided; special education, interactive television program, bus purchase levy, and graduation rule implementation funded; declining pupil aid created, and additional days repealed.

HF903—Winter (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 175, Westbrook, high school student entrepreneurship program appropriated money.

HF904—Folliard (DFL) **Transportation Policy**

Highway traffic noise barrier account established, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF905—Westerberg (R) **Crime Prevention**

Concealing or transporting contraband via motor vehicles with special compartments provided criminal penalties, and vehicle forfeiture authorized.

HF906—Jennings (DFL) **Commerce**

Uninsured motorist recovery of non-economic detriment damages limited.

HF907—Cassell (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

School administrators recruitment program established and money appropriated.

HF908—Dawkins (DFL) **Local Government &** **Metropolitan Affairs**

County recorders authorized to require minimum deposits.

HF909—Paymar (DFL) **Transportation Policy**

Additional billboards along roads and highways prohibition expanded, and maintenance restricted.

HF910—Finseth (R) **Health & Human Services Finance**

Rural mental health services grants provided and money appropriated.

HF911—Sykora (R) **Education Policy**

School district and public school entity wage payment method clarified.

HF912—Jennings (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Medical assistance reimbursement geographic groups redefined, nursing facility rate increase negotiations authorized, and money appropriated.

HF913—Stanek (R) **Judiciary Finance**

Local law enforcement agencies provided grants for high crime area overtime officer assignments and money appropriated.

HF914—Krinkie (R) **Governmental Operations &** **Veterans Affairs Policy**

Charitable organization annual reports required to include government agency funding information.

HF915—Jennings (DFL) **Health & Human Services Finance**

Pine County; nursing home bed moratorium exception provided.

HF916—Rifenberg (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Houston County; nursing facility rate spend-up limit exemption created.

HF917—Knoblach (R) **Environment &** **Natural Resources Finance**

Water quality cost-benefit model developed and money appropriated.

HF918—Kielkucki (R) **Jobs & Economic** **Development Finance**

Taconite mining grant program appropriated money.

HF919—Kuisle (R)**Transportation Policy**

Right of first refusal extended to railroad right-of-way property leaseholders and interest notice required.

HF920—Koskinen (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

MinnesotaCare program single adults and households with no children eligibility extended, health care coverage requirement exemption created, senior citizen drug program funded, and money appropriated.

HF921—Jaros (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Duluth; Aerial Lift Bridge repair and restoration provided, and money appropriated.

HF922—Solberg (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Itasca County private sale of tax-forfeited land bordering public water authorized.

HF923—Seifert, J. (R)**Education Policy**

School and libraries providing Internet access required to restrict harmful material from minors, and school district Internet use policies adopted.

HF924—Luther (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) block grant excess funds transferred to the child care block grant program.

HF925—Vandevor (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Washington County sale of tax-forfeited land bordering public water authorized.

HF926—Chaudhary (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Fridley historical museum refurbishment grant provided and money appropriated.

HF927—Folliard (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Voter address records updated.

HF928—Hackbarth (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Snowmobile metal traction device use on paved public trails prohibited, sticker required, and money appropriated.

HF929—Carlson (DFL)**Education Policy**

School district calendar flexibility provided for construction projects.

HF930—Pelowski (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Winona County Historical Society technology upgrade grant provided and money appropriated.

HF931—Larsen, P. (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Local units of government cooperation and combination tax plan provided.

HF932—Holsten (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Fishery administrative costs and wall-eye stocking improvements funded, and money appropriated.

HF933—Holberg (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Legislative and congressional districts coordinated.

HF934—Greenfield (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Hennepin County; nursing facility medical assistance reimbursement modified.

HF935—Olson (R)**Education Policy**

School bus lap and shoulder belts authorized, student training and local funds match required, levy allowed, and money appropriated.

HF936—Clark, K. (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Medical marijuana act adopted and criminal penalties imposed.

HF937—Tunheim (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Economically disadvantaged area small business state procurement preference awards increase authorized.

HF938—Dawkins (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Nonmetered parking space posted time limit exception provided to vehicles of disabled persons.

HF939—Workman (R)**Transportation Policy**

Trunk highway fund expenditures, traffic fines, and forfeited bail allocated; union contractor preference prohibited; prevailing wage rate modified; and transportation project delivery task force created.

HF940—Kubly (DFL)**Taxes**

Agricultural homestead first-tier property tax valuation limit increased, and state aid increased.

HF941—Kubly (DFL)**Taxes**

Agricultural property homestead treatment extended.

HF942—Mariani (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) lifetime benefit limit exception provided for families with incapacitated persons, work participation support program established, and money appropriated.

HF943—Jennings (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) additional income exclusion provided.

HF944—Mariani (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) sanctions modified.

HF945—Huntley (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) employment and training provisions modified, and money appropriated.

HF946—Jennings (DFL)**Commerce**

Financial institutions required to debit checks in sequence by number.

HF947—Howes (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Occupational therapist and assistant licensing requirements established.

HF948—Huntley (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

St. Louis County; statewide adolescent compulsive gambling prevention and education project grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF949—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Midwifery practice and licensure requirements clarified.

HF950—Daggett (R)**Commerce**

Telephone sales calls regulated, remedies provided, and money appropriated.

HF951—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Area agencies on aging provided funding for support and planning services, and money appropriated.

HF952—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Health care providers authorized to designate credential verification entities.

HF953—Gleason (DFL)**Education Policy**

Nonresident truant student termination from the enrollment options program provided.

HF954—Buesgens (R)**Education Policy**

Substitute teacher licenses provided and probationary period consecutive year provisions modified.

HF955—McCollum (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Ramsey and Washington counties regional trail development around Silver Lake funded, and money appropriated.

HF956—McCollum (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

DWI; three-time offender felony penalties imposed.

HF957—McCollum (DFL)**Taxes**

Lawful gambling tax rates reduced.

HF958—Greenfield (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Employers authorized to provide workers' compensation benefits through health insurance, nursing facility 24-hour coverage contracts authorized, and money appropriated.

HF959—Goodno (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Supplemental aid recipients with special needs provisions modified.

HF960—Seagren (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Human services commissioner authorized to sell surplus state land to the Bloomington housing and redevelopment authority.

HF961—Pawlenty (R)**Family & Early Childhood Education Finance**

Ramsey action program grant provided for the family asset program and money appropriated.

HF962—Winter (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Murray County; nursing facility medical assistance reimbursement modified.

HF963—Knobloch (R)**Civil Law**

Firefighter previous employment background investigations authorized, disclosure requirements and immunity provided, and civil and criminal penalties imposed.

HF964—Bishop (R)**Civil Law**

Y2K; contract and product liability damages limited, time of trial specified, and district court panel referral provided.

HF965—Boudreau (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Minnesota state colleges and universities (MNSCU) student hepatitis B immunization required.

HF966—Rhodes (R)**Family & Early Childhood Education Finance**

Perspectives, Inc. transitional housing services funded and money appropriated.

HF967—Seifert, M. (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Centers of independent living appropriated money.

HF968—Tingelstad (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Plumbers required to give bond to the state and provisions modified.

HF969—Mulder (R)
Commerce
Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience, and Interior Design abolished.

HF970—Daggett (R)
Taxes
Undyed kerosene and racing gasoline tax refund authorized.

HF971—Mulder (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Rock County; private conveyance of surplus state land authorized.

HF972—McCollum (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Employee invention agreements regulated.

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HF973—Tomassoni (DFL)
Education Policy
Lola and Rudy Perpich Minnesota Center for Arts Education name changed to Perpich Center for Arts Education.

HF974—Workman (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Advantage Minnesota grant provided and money appropriated.

HF975—Ness (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Prevailing wage calculation formula provided.

HF976—Ness (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Labor and industry commissioner and data services organizations cooperation required in prevailing wage determinations.

HF977—Tunheim (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Corporate farm land ownership restrictions modified.

HF978—Harder (R)
Agriculture Policy
Agricultural water quality and quantity management initiative funded, and money appropriated.

HF979—Lindner (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Landlords authorized to apportion utility payments among units.

HF980—Pugh (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle emissions inspection program repealed.

HF981—Holsten (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Deer, bear, elk, and moose tag requirements modified.

HF982—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Board of Psychology enforcement provisions modified and psychological test security provided.

HF983—Entenza (DFL)
Commerce
St. Paul authorized to issue an on-sale liquor license to the Fitzgerald Theatre.

HF984—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Psychologist licensing provisions modified.

HF985—Workman (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Chanhassen tax increment financing district extended and requirements modified.

HF986—Vandevor (R)
Commerce
Chisago Lakes township detached banking facility authorized.

HF987—Davids (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Intergovernmental advisory council for technology established, Intergovernmental Information Systems Advisory Council abolished, funds transferred, and money appropriated.

HF988—Jennings (DFL)
Commerce
Public utility commissioners advisory selection process created and ex parte communication regulated.

HF989—Mullery (DFL)
Civil Law
Uniform probate code provisions, and conservator and guardian nomination provisions modified.

HF990—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Health care purchasing alliances development grants provided to local organizations and money appropriated.

HF991—Peterson (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Corporate farm land ownership restricted and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF992—Luther (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Minnesota utilization review act modified, and practice of medicine definition expanded to include certain mental health and substance abuse determinations.

HF993—Boudreau (R)
Commerce
Electrician and plumber licensure requirements exemption provided for volunteers.

HF994—Skoe (DFL)
Taxes
Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF995—Skoe (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Upper Red Lake business loan program created for businesses affected by the decline of walleye fishing and money appropriated.

HF996—Juhnke (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Minnesota donor decision campaign funding provided for organ, eye, and tissue donation initiatives; and money appropriated.

HF997—Osskopp (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Public school employee health care plan study provided and money appropriated.

HF998—Nornes (R)
Crime Prevention
Camp Ripley work program eligible offender sentencing discretion provided and judges greater use of local correctional resources authorized.

HF999—Entenza (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Geographic education excellence grant program established and money appropriated.

HF1000—Nornes (R)
Taxes
Local units of government authorized to forgive deferred property tax payment interest and penalties, and payment schedule required.

HF1001—Peterson (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Commodity checkoff fee refund additional options provided.

HF1002—Workman (R)
Commerce
Sign contractor voluntary registration provided.

HF1003—McElroy (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Legislative Audit Commission and auditor powers and duties prescribed, and technical changes provided.

HF1004—Goodno (R)
Crime Prevention
DWI; maximum allowable blood alcohol level lowered for hunting, handling explosives, criminal vehicular operation, and operating a motor vehicle, recreational vehicle, or watercraft.

HF1005—Goodno (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Job skills partnership board duties expanded, health care and human services worker training and retention program established, short-term health care and human services course offering required, and money appropriated.

HF1006—Milbert (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Inver Grove Heights tax increment financing district duration extended and tax increment use specified.

HF1007—Lindner (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 728, Elk River, year-round school/extended week or day grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1008—Huntley (DFL)
Commerce
Roth IRA exemption from court ordered garnishment, attachment, or levy provided.

HF1009—Broecker (R)
Taxes
Green acres property tax treatment extended to certain dissected agricultural property.

HF1010—Tuma (R)
Education Policy
Behavioral intervention continuing education credits required for K-12 teachers renewing their licenses.

HF1011—Abrams (R)
Taxes
Utility property tax class rate modified.

HF1012—Abrams (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Redistricting commission created to recommend legislative and congressional district boundaries, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF1013—Holsten (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Dark house and fish house licensure requirement exemption provided to occupied shelters left on the ice less than a day.

HF1014—Lindner (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Dayton wastewater infrastructure program grant provided, bond issuance authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1015—Abrams (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Election redistricting provided and money appropriated.

HF1016—Rifenberg (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 300, La Cresent-Hokah, city-county-school district administration and community education facility planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1017—Howes (R)**Family & Early Childhood Education Finance**

American Indian youth prevention program grants established and money appropriated.

**HF1018—Jennings (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Commission on culture and recreation established; arts, professional sports, and University of Minnesota facilities construction and rehabilitation grants provided; bond issuance authorized; and money appropriated.

**HF1019—Bakk (DFL)
Higher Education Finance**

Vermillion Community College and Elys school district joint secondary and higher education environmental studies magnet school feasibility studied, and money appropriated.

**HF1020—Knoblach (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Census; Congress memorialized to ensure the 2000 decennial census is conducted in a fair and legal manner.

**HF1021—Erhardt (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Environment and natural resources appropriations bill.

**HF1022—Abrams (R)
Health & Human Services Policy**

Health maintenance organizations regulatory authority transferred to commissioner of commerce.

**HF1023—Haas (R)
Health & Human Services Policy**

Employer-subsidized health coverage program established.

**HF1024—Abrams (R)
Taxes**

Tax-exempt bond allocation eligibility, scoring system, income and purchase price limits, and reservation of authority provided.

HF1025—Murphy (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Carlton County nursing facility moratorium project deadline extended, medical assistance reimbursement rates modified, and money appropriated.

HF1026—Lindner (R)**Civil Law**

Housing discrimination status with regard to public assistance definition modified related to Section 8 certificates.

**HF1027—Molnau (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Waconia Ridgeview Medical Center employee privatization pension benefit accommodation provided.

HF1028—Leppik (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Rule 80; Golden Valley nursing facility medical assistance reimbursement rate modified for residential rehabilitation services.

**HF1029—Bakk (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Underwater video camera use for the purpose of taking fish prohibited.

**HF1030—Seifert, M. (R)
Health & Human Services Finance**

Canby nursing facility property related per diem rate increased.

**HF1031—Broecker (R)
Crime Prevention**

County or municipal attorney authorized to prosecute domestic assault misdemeanors in Ramsey County, domestic assault and child abuse protection unit funded, and money appropriated.

**HF1032—Rest (DFL)
Judiciary Finance**

Northwest community law enforcement project in Hennepin County funded and money appropriated.

**HF1033—Stanek (R)
Crime Prevention**

Peace Officer Standards and Training Board (POST) new part-time peace officer license issuance prohibited, training course completion required for license renewal, agency employment caps provided, and money appropriated.

**HF1034—Abrams (R)
Health & Human Services Policy**

Health care liability act adopted, health care plan coverage and treatment classification regulated, and remedies provided.

**HF1035—Larsen, P. (R)
Civil Law**

Temporary restraining summons required to include alternative dispute resolution process notice.

HF1036—Seifert, M. (R)**Agriculture & Rural Development Finance**

Agricultural education expansion feasibility studied by Southwest State University and money appropriated.

**HF1037—Holberg (R)
Civil Law**

Revisor's bill correcting erroneous, ambiguous, and omitted text and obsolete references; and making miscellaneous technical corrections.

HF1038—Boudreau (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Employment and training data classification provisions modified.

HF1039—Rostberg (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

State health care program language interpreter services coverage provided.

HF1040—Trimble (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Minnesota Technology, Inc.; Minnesota council for quality grant provided, and money appropriated.

**HF1041—Gleason (DFL)
Commerce**

ATM; electronic financial terminal surcharges regulated.

HF1042—Finseth (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Red Lake County authorized to privately sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

**HF1043—Haake (R)
Crime Prevention**

DNA; sex offenders required to give biological specimens for analysis upon arrival at a correctional facility.

**HF1044—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Cass County authorized to privately sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF1045—Stang (R)**Taxes**

Social security individual state income tax exemption provided.

**HF1046—Workman (R)
Transportation Policy**

Commercial motor vehicle operator out-of-service order violator civil penalties and disqualifications imposed, and penalty proceeds allocated.

HF1047—Wejcman (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Anorexia; medical assistance coverage of anorexics authorized.

HF1048—Westerberg (R)**Crime Prevention**

Sex offender release notification expanded to include additional county attorneys.

HF1049—Ozment (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

County administrative penalty order issuance authority sunset repealed.

HF1050—Gunther (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Rural policy and development center base funding continued, and money appropriated.

HF1051—Gunther (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Employment and training program information collected by the commissioner of economic security.

HF1052—Molnau (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Agricultural crop security interests regulated and collateral treatment modified.

**HF1053—Opatz (DFL)
Transportation Policy**

Disability parking regulatory provisions modified, certain vehicle registration fee credits abolished, and local ordinances regulating long-term parking authorized.

**HF1054—Rostberg (R)
Crime Prevention**

Local correctional fee collection provided.

**HF1055—Van Dellen (R)
Crime Prevention**

Methamphetamine crime provisions expanded, booby trap criminal penalties imposed, child neglect and endangerment conviction provisions clarified and consecutive sentencing authorized, and money appropriated.

**HF1056—Dawkins (DFL)
Civil Law**

Child support determination to include mother's lost wages as reasonable expenses of pregnancy and confinement.

**HF1057—Bakk (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Voluntary service credit purchase in the Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) and first-class city teachers retirement fund authorized.

**HF1058—Reuter (R)
Education Policy**

Business, trade, and correspondence schools legislative review required; and training firms operation authorized.

HF1059—Dorman (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Public defense employee prior service credit purchase in the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) authorized.

HF1060—Osskopp (R)
Crime Prevention
Second-degree murder scope expanded to include repeat criminal vehicular homicide offenders.

HF1061—Boudreau (R)
Taxes
Income tax credit provided to employers providing hepatitis A immunizations to employees.

HF1062—Mulder (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Lewis and Clark rural water system joint powers board grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1063—Paymar (DFL)
Taxes
Senior citizen's property tax deferral program maximum allowable household income increased.

HF1064—Hackbarth (R)
Taxes
Manufactured home parks property tax class rate modified, and homestead and agricultural credit aid adjustment provided.

HF1065—Mulder (R)
Transportation Policy
New Life Treatment Center directional signs erected along Pipestone County state-aid highway No. 18.

HF1066—Seifert, M. (R)
Commerce
Township mutual insurance company territories of operation regulated.

HF1067—Fuller (R)
Crime Prevention
Orders for protection service short form notification authorized, domestic assault crime sentences modified, cash bail increased, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF1068—Skoglund (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Juvenile out-of-home placement requirements and work groups established, and rule required.

HF1069—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Koochiching County authorized to exercise power of eminent domain for trust fund land acquisition.

HF1070—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Resident lifetime game and fish licenses provided, trust fund established, fees imposed, and report required.

HF1071—Rifenberg (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Persons with developmental disabilities crisis intervention project carryforward authorized.

HF1072—Dawkins (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Army school; President and Congress memorialized to close the United States Army School of the Americas located at Fort Benning, Georgia.

HF1073—Dawkins (DFL)
Commerce
Fire safety sprinkler installation in existing high-rise buildings required.

HF1074—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Volunteer firefighter relief association service pension maximums increased.

HF1075—Murphy (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Volunteer firefighter deferred service pension provisions modified.

HF1076—Rifenberg (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Volunteer firefighter supplemental retirement benefit maximum increased.

HF1077—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minneapolis employees retirement fund death-while-active survivor, and disability and long-service survivor provisions clarified and modified.

HF1078—Hasskamp (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Economic development authority multi-year revenue bond levy pledges authorized.

HF1079—Paulsen (R)
Commerce
Tour boat liquor license season extended.

HF1080—Boudreau (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Rice County correctional employees public employees police and fire plan coverage ratified.

HF1081—Skoglund (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Possessing and disseminating pornographic work depicting minors criminal penalties provided, and computer-generated or altered images included in pornographic work definition.

HF1082—Clark, K. (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Native American women re-entry pilot grant program established and money appropriated.

HF1083—Swenson (R)
Agriculture Policy
Crop or revenue insurance assistance, and feedlot manure processing and odor control technology development assistance provided; and money appropriated.

HF1084—Davids (R)
Agriculture Policy
Crop owners compensated for crop damage and destruction caused by deer, and money appropriated.

HF1085—Davids (R)
Agriculture Policy
Land owners and occupiers authorized to take one deer causing damage per year.

HF1086—Reuter (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
800 Megahertz radio purchase authority cancelled.

HF1087—Harder (R)
Taxes
Farmer income averaging authorized for income tax purposes.

HF1088—Westfall (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
University of Minnesota crop disease research funding provided and money appropriated.

HF1089—Rifenberg (R)
Taxes
Agricultural property debt service and referendum levy property tax credit provided, and money appropriated.

HF1090—Bishop (R)
Crime Prevention
Probation officer caseload reduction program grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1091—Westrom (R)
Agriculture Policy
Minnesota Marketplace grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1092—Holsten (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Lottery ticket in-lieu tax deposit in the game and fish fund provided.

HF1093—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Koochiching County tax-forfeited land conveyance authorized.

HF1094—McElroy (R)
Commerce
Intangible property definition provided relating to unclaimed property.

HF1095—Tingelstad (R)
Transportation Policy
Authorized newspaper delivery vehicles allowed to operate on left half of roadway under certain circumstances.

HF1096—Seifert, M. (R)
Higher Education Finance
Assigned family responsibility definition modified relating to student grants-in-aid, and grant stipends prorated for part-time students.

HF1097—Kuisle (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Municipal bid minimum dollar amount increased for public bid solicitation.

HF1098—Van Dellen (R)
Civil Law
Uniform statutory rule against perpetuities amended relating to trusts.

HF1099—Kuisle (R)
Taxes
Vehicles used by interstate carriers exempted from sales tax.

HF1100—Sykora (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Micro-enterprise technical assistance requirements modified, and money appropriated.

HF1101—Mulder (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Owner notification required for drainage surveys, and petition signature requirement increased.

HF1102—Haas (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Certain hospitals and clinics authorized to bill county for services provided to a resident.

HF1103—Goodno (R)
Higher Education Finance
Moorhead State University capital improvements provided, bond issuance authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1104—Pugh (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Special School District No. 6, South St. Paul, full-day kindergarten program grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1105—Larsen, P. (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Sexually transmitted infections prevention and treatment grants, and HIV and substance use prevention grants created; HIV case management medical assistance coverage provided; and money appropriated.

HF1106—Larsen, P. (R)**Commerce**

Insurance underwriters limited in use of health information secured as part of HIV vaccine research.

HF1107—Entenza (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

HIV education training sites provided, and money appropriated.

HF1108—Gunter (R)**Commerce**

Lending limits on forward contracts sale of grain provided.

HF1109—Munger (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Fishing guide license required on St. Louis river estuary.

HF1110—Munger (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Game fish health and residues research program implemented and extended to include lakes and rivers and toxic loadings to Lake Superior, and money appropriated.

HF1111—McGuire (DFL)**Taxes**

Alternative property tax refund formula based on percentage of household income provided.

HF1112—Biernat (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Juvenile court jurisdiction over habitual truants extended to age 18.

HF1113—McGuire (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Drivers' license issuance refusal prohibited for licensees or applicants wearing bioptic lenses.

HF1114—Tomassoni (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 707, Nett Lake, provided grants for insurance premiums, unemployment compensation, maintenance costs, and a media specialist.

HF1115—Haas (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Charity care equity fund established providing health care services to certain low-income or uninsured persons, and money appropriated.

HF1116—Huntley (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

City of Duluth appropriated money for a family practice residency program for northeastern Minnesota.

HF1117—Seagren (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

K-12 education bill providing funding for general education, special programs, lifework development, facilities and technology, education excellence, nutrition, libraries, prevention, and lifelong learning.

HF1118—Stanek (R)**Crime Prevention**

Criminal and juvenile justice task force membership increased, funding requests reviewed by task force, grants provided to develop integrated criminal justice information systems, and money appropriated.

HF1119—Osskopp (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nursing assistants required to comply with educational requirements, and competency evaluations required.

HF1120—Stanek (R)**Crime Prevention**

Trespassing on railroad tracks provided criminal penalties.

HF1121—Greenfield (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Grants provided to nonprofit community dental clinics, dental hygienists permitted to perform certain services with limited supervision, medical assistance reimbursement rate increased for certain dentists, and money appropriated.

HF1122—Gray (DFL)**Civil Law**

Mediated settlement agreements under the Minnesota civil mediation act considered binding when all parties are represented by counsel.

HF1123—McCollum (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

St. Paul flood mitigation holding pond grant provided.

HF1124—Smith (R)**Civil Law**

Bleacher safety requirements provided, penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF1125—McGuire (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Local correctional agencies authorized to impose local correctional fees on offenders.

HF1126—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Date restrictions removed on definitions relating to day care licensing.

HF1127—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Noncertified boarding care homes provisions, Medicaid reimbursements, and client records for assisted living home care providers modified.

HF1128—Carruthers (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Definition of day provided for purposes of incarceration in a county jail or workhouse.

HF1129—Carruthers (DFL)**Education Policy**

School boards required to allow home school students to fully participate in extracurricular activities.

HF1130—Hackbarth (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Iron Range off-highway vehicle recreation area expanded, advisory committee expanded, management plan provided, and money appropriated.

HF1131—Broecker (R)**Civil Law**

Tax collection and payment process for action revised.

HF1132—Broecker (R)**Civil Law**

Duplicate filing of documents eliminated relating to delinquent real estate taxes, and court administrator governing laws updated.

HF1133—Goodno (R)**Taxes**

Commissioner of revenue authorized to waive limitations on border city tax reduction amounts.

HF1134—McGuire (DFL)**Civil Law**

Access to data on employees reporting violations of the law clarified and modified.

HF1135—McGuire (DFL)**Civil Law**

Government data on elected officials considered public information.

HF1136—Carlson (DFL)**Education Policy**

Higher education income tax credit provided.

HF1137—Greiling (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Special education reciprocity agreements developed, special education funding provided, state revenue source provided for court-placed unreimbursed tuition, and money appropriated.

HF1138—Kuisle (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Property tax equity provided for school districts, and money appropriated.

HF1139—Mulder (R)**Crime Prevention**

Sale of tobacco and tobacco-related devices prohibited to persons under 21 years of age, and criminal penalties provided.

HF1140—Leighton (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

License fees on coin and currency activated amusement machines limited.

HF1141—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Physical examinations required for certain high school athletes, and practice of medicine definition modified.

HF1142—Rostberg (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Animal cruelty provisions modified, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF1143—Goodno (R)**Taxes**

Additional allocation for certain border city enterprise zones authorized.

HF1144—Lindner (R)**Civil Law**

Public nuisance definition and provisions modified,

HF1145—Clark, K. (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Funding provided for education employers about HIV/AIDS in the workplace, housing programs for individuals with HIV/AIDS coordinated, and money appropriated.

HF1146—Howes (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Indian Child Welfare Defense Corporation provided grants to promote Indian Child Welfare Act compliance.

HF1147—Greiling (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Medical assistance reimbursement for special education services provisions modified.

HF1148—Buesgens (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Net proceeds received from sale or rental of forfeited lands available for general purposes.

E-mail schedules

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Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

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MONDAY, March 1

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF272 (Abrams) State partisan primary name changed to state party nominating election; date changed; party support of candidate required prior to ballot listing; and procedures, deadlines, and terms modified.

HF122 (Rukavina) Elective office age eligibility lowered.

(Meeting continued at 2:30 p.m.)

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's budget book presentation by Department of Health.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's recommendation for sunset of certain Department of Trade and Economic Development incentive grants: Hennepin and Ramsey County CDC's; Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans; Advantage Minnesota; city and district agricultural societies; community development corporations; community resources.

HF878, Sec. 5 (Bishop) Department of Economic Security, State Services for the Blind deficiency appropriation.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Presentations by Minnesota Highway Safety Center Director Prof. John Palmer and Department of Transportation Office of Alternative Transportation Financing Director Adeel Lari.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF650 (Hackbarth) Shooting range

servitudes provided and operator liability limited.

HF310 (Knoblach) Job reference information disclosure protection provided.

HF243 (Dawkins) Public building code violations data classification provided.

HF680 (Jaros) Income calculation modified in cases of split physical custody.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview continued.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Higher Education Services Office budget presentation by Dr. Robert Poch.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Deficiency bill presentation by Mark Levinger, attorney general's office.

HF582 (Kielkucki) School finance system provided increased equity, general education formula allowance increased, and money appropriated.

HF269 (Ness) General education revenue equity aid created and money appropriated.

Canceled

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: Canceled.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Head Start presentation by Connie Greer, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

Community and systems collaboration accounts presentations by Joyce Krupey, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF196 (Anderson, B.) Drainage systems transfer of access easements to storm sewer improvement districts authorized.

HF399 (Kielkucki) Home rule charter and statutory cities authorized to establish sidewalk utilities.

HF742 (Howes) Right to practice forestry; local government authority limited and irrebuttal presumption created.

HF864 (Howes) Hubbard County sheriff part-time peace officer positions authorized.

HF875 (Bakk) Small business government contract bid preference limited to two years.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

30 minutes after session

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF441 (Knoblach) Campaign finance provisions modified.

TUESDAY, March 2

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF610 (Tingelstad) State safe drinking water act public water supply definition modified. HF529 (Anderson, I.) Improving state employee access to medical claims.

HF746 (Stang) Health maintenance organization mental health provider geographic accessibility requirements modified.

HF598 (McCollum) Physician assistants and supervising physicians provided immunity from civil liability for rendering care in disasters.

HF615 (Bradley) Nursing facility provider training and education program established, and money appropriated.

HF636 (Paymar) Tobacco manufacturers required to report hazardous substances to assist in local ordinance enforcement.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF689 (Lindner) Payment of wages upon discharge provisions modified.

HF649 (Rostberg) Persons with mental illness employment support services and programs standards established, and money appropriated.

Final affordable housing presentations by Pat Gustafson, National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials; Rosemarie Zipoy and Barb Tomalla, Interfaith Action Organization.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF633 (Seagren) Cornerstone Advocacy Services, Inc. battered women shelter services grant provided and money appropriated.

HF294 (Broecker) Extraordinary local disaster expense aid provided and money appropriated.

HF570 (Clark, K.) Intensive case management services provided for prostituted individuals and money appropriated.

Department of Public Safety appropriation for state match for disaster relief payments (addition

to appropriation in Minn. Laws 1997, ch. 239, art. 1, sec. 7, subd. 2).
Tax Court budget presentation.
Department of Corrections budget presentation.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman
Agenda: Motorcycle Day.
HF766 (Broecker) Motorcycle display of a blue light as part of the rear brake light authorized.
HF858 (Workman) Motorcycle helmet use evidence admissibility prohibited in cases involving the operation of a motor vehicle.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: Budget presentations by State Board of Investment and governor's office.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: HFXXXX (Goodno) Lowering per se level for alcohol impairment offenses from .10 to .08.
HF621 (Fuller) Arson definition expanded to include flammable and combustible gas, first degree arson plea agreements prohibited involving sprinklers, and juvenile fireball ignition penalties provided.
HF172 (Skoglund) Substantial bodily harm definition expanded.
HF245 (Murphy) Furnishing alcohol to a person under age 21 provided increased penalties if, as a result of intoxication, the person causes or suffers death or great bodily harm.
HF261 (Entenza) Furnishing alcohol to person under age 21 provided increased penalties if, as a result of intoxication, the person causes or suffers death or great bodily harm.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares
Agenda: HF709 (Cassell) Educational facility construction and remodeling prevailing wage provision repealed.
HF605 (Tuma) Mourning dove hunting season authorized, and stamps and impact report required.
HF321 (Lindner) All school-age children authorized to participate in resident school district sponsored extracurricular activities.
HF911 (Sykora) School district and public school entity wage payment method clarified.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: HF513 (Mares) Ramsey and Washington counties regional trail land acquisition and development around White Bear Lake provided, and money appropriated.
HF699 (Gunter) Blue Earth River basin initiative supported and money appropriated.
HF645 (Tingelstad) Water supply and wastewater treatment operator certification requirements federal conformity provided, and advisory council expiration date eliminated.
HF653 (Osskopp) Legal firearm requirements for taking big game modified.

HF55 (Tomassoni) Trained force of firefighters maintained by the commissioner of natural resources, and public employee definition expanded.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: To be announced.

11:30 a.m.

The House meets in session.

12 noon

State of the State Address.

30 minutes after
State of the State Address

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness
Agenda: HF838 (Harder) Soybean diseases and genetics additional research provided, and money appropriated.
HF755 (Wenzel) Ethanol development fund balance retained and additional loan provided.
HF155 (Seifert, M.) Passing on the Farm Center appropriated money.

12:30 p.m. or immediately following State of the State Address

Canceled

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch
Agenda: Canceled.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids
Agenda: HF48 (Wolf) Performance-based gas purchasing plans sunset abolished.
HF812 (Wolf) Legislative Electric Energy Task Force house chairs modified.
HF700 (Davids) Fire protection notification required in contracts for the sale of newly constructed residential dwellings.
HF62 (Rukavina) Automobile insurance nonrenewals regulated relating to physical damage portion of policies.
HF564 (Ozment) Automatic landscape irrigation system rain checks required.
HF595 (Holsten) Petrofund reimbursement reductions standard of proof provided, above-ground storage tank upgrade or closure reimbursed, and contaminated land cleanup regulated.

2:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Land/ ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mike Osskopp
Agenda: HF191 (Rifenberg) Houston County surplus state land sale authorized.
HF195 (Howes) Hubbard County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public waters.
HF276 (Leighton) Mower County tax-forfeited land bordering public water sale authorized.
HF280 (Schumacher) Sherburne County tax-

forfeited land bordering public water conveyance authorized.

HF843 (Anderson, B.) Sherburne County authorized to convey tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF285 (Haake) Ramsey County tax-forfeited land conveyance authorized.

HF286 (Cassell) Douglas County tax-forfeited land bordering public water sale authorized.

HF306 (Workman) Hennepin County tax-forfeited land bordering public water or wetlands conveyance authorized.

HF368 (Reuter) Steele County land conveyances authorized in connection with a state land transfer.

HF373 (Ozment) Goodhue County private sales of county land authorized.

HF398 (Howes) Hubbard County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF421 (Haas) Hennepin County authorized to convey tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF502 (Osskopp) Wabasha County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF567 (Hackbarth) Anoka County authorized to convey or sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water or wetlands.

3 p.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: HF670 (Goodno) Medical assistance eligibility expanded to include employed persons with disabilities.
HF499 (Seifert, J.) Health care provider reimbursement and nonadministrative staff pay increased, and money appropriated.
HF383 (Goodno) Nursing home employee compensation enhancement provided and money appropriated.
HF345 (Bradley) Home and community-based waived services for persons with mental retardation waiting list eliminated, unspent resources reallocated, county partnerships required, reserve account authorized, and money appropriated.

3:45 p.m.

Child Care Workgroup/ FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

400N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: Child care issues.

WEDNESDAY, March 3

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: HF879 (Knobloch) Providing for regulatory relief for local units of government.
HF801 (Knobloch) Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco not considered a state agency, and report required.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: Gov. Ventura's budget book presentation by Department of Human Services.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's recommendation for sunset of certain Department of Trade and Economic Development incentive grants; St. Paul Rehabilitation Center; Microenterprise - Technical Assistance; Women Venture; MEDA; and Rural Policy and Development Center.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF878 (Bishop) Governor's deficiency bill.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF90 (Sviggum) Joint and several liability apportionment regulated.
HF541 (Stanek) Tort liability relief provided to 911 dispatchers giving prearrival medical advice.
HF232 (Bishop) Petit juries provided in certain civil and criminal cases.
HF351 (Bishop) Court taxation of parties in a civil action for juror hardship expenses authorized.

HF836 (Goodno) Business corporations regulated and uniform partnership act conforming changes provided.
HF377 (Goodno) Abortion notification data reporting required and civil penalties imposed.
HFXXXX (Broecker) Eliminating filing of duplicate documents; updating the law governing court administrators.
HFXXXX (Broecker) Revising the process for action for payment collection of taxes.
HFXXXX (Smith) Providing for the withholding of conciliation court judgements from tax refunds.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview continued.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Higher Education Services Office presentation by Dr. Robert Poch.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF130 (Finseth) Independent school district nos. 2854, Ada-Borup; 2176 Warren-Alvarado-Oslo; 846, Breckenridge; and 595, East Grand Forks provided declining pupil unit aid.
HF315 (Tomassoni) School district declining pupil unit aid created, definition modified, and money appropriated.
HF485 (Tomassoni) School district declining pupil unit aid established and money appropriated.
HF754 (Tomassoni) Range association of municipalities and schools declining enrollment grant provided, and money appropriated.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF678 (Davids) Crop and revenue insurance assistance, agricultural property tax relief and assistance, feedlot manure processing and odor control technology development assistance, and right-to-harvest provided; and money appropriated.
HF487 (Storm) Foreign ownership of agricultural land used for poultry production allowed.
HF479 (Westrom) Agricultural producer contract advisory task force established; livestock, agricultural commodity, and specialty crop contracts studied; and money appropriated.
HF816 (Peterson) Feedlot and manure management advisory committee composition modified.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Adult Basic Education. Self-sufficiency accounts.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF849 (Haake) Minor and intermediate use airports defined for metro expansion and upgrade purposes, and reliever airport sound abatement council established.
HF896 (Larsen, P.) Precluding the termination of lawful land uses by amortization.
HF608 (Rukavina) Municipal unincorporated land annexation procedures and criteria provided. Additional bills to be announced.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: Low income energy issues presentation by Energy Cents Coalition.
HF358 (Wolf) Coin-operated and public pay telephones deregulated, and telecommunication provider anticompetitive activity administrative penalties assessed.

2:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Land/ ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mike Osskopp

Agenda: HF275 (Stang) Stearns County tax-forfeited land bordering public water sale authorized.
HF354 (Solberg) Itasca County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public waters.
HF433 (Howes) Cass County authorized to exchange and sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.
HF852 (Anderson, I.) Itasca County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.
HF922 (Solberg) Tax-forfeited land in Itasca County.

Subcommittee on Liquor/ COMMERCE

Room to be announced

Chr. Rep. Erik Paulsen

Agenda: Mark-up of omnibus liquor bill.
HFXXXX (Paulsen) Extending tour boat liquor license season.
HF32 (Anderson, I.) International Falls authorized to issue a temporary on-sale liquor license.
HF153 (Seifert, M.) Marshall authorized to issue additional on-sale liquor licenses.
HF314 (Entenza) St. Paul authorized to issue temporary liquor licenses to Macalester College.
HF430 (Kahn) St. Paul authorized to issue a temporary license to sell beer on State Capitol grounds in connection with the Twin Cities Marathon.
HF439 (Orfield) Minneapolis authorized to issue an on-sale liquor license to Dudley Riggs Theatre.
HF496 (Hilty) Farm winery sales regulations modified.
HF603 (Murphy) Proctor authorized to issue an additional on-sale liquor license.

3:30 p.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: Tobacco prevention discussion.

4 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF678 (Davids) Crop and revenue insurance assistance, agricultural property tax relief and assistance, feedlot manure processing and odor control technology development assistance, and right-to-harvest provided; and money appropriated.
HF487 (Storm) Foreign ownership of agricultural land used for poultry production allowed.
HF479 (Westrom) Agricultural producer contract advisory task force established; livestock, agricultural commodity, and specialty crop contracts studied; and money appropriated.
HF816 (Peterson) Feedlot and manure management advisory committee composition modified.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: Bills to be announced.

6 p.m.

Subcommittee on Health Care Directives/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Lynda Boudreau

Agenda: HF408 (Goodno) Practice of pharmacy definition modified and patient counseling defined.

6:30 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: State Services for the Blind program.

THURSDAY, March 4

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF203 (Greenfield) Medical education and research endowment fund, children's endowment fund, and tobacco prevention endowment fund created; and money appropriated.

HF223 (Leppik) Tobacco prevention board and endowment fund created, and money appropriated.

HF719 (Seifert, J.) Tobacco; Congress memorialized to enact legislation prohibiting federal recoupment of state tobacco settlement funds.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF872 (Holsten) Building and construction contacts regulated, and environmental liability indemnification enforceability provided.

HF792 (Chaudhary) Rental housing application disclosure requirements and penalties provided, and penalties prescribed for providing false information on rental applications.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF542 (Bishop) Number of district court judges increased.
Department of Corrections budget presentation continued.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF698 (Workman) Major transportation projects commission established and report required.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Deficiency request presentation, secretary of state's office.
Department of Revenue budget presentation.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF665 (Wenzel) Marijuana; possession or sale of small amounts provided increased criminal penalties.

HF741 (Knoblach) Inmate bloodborne pathogen testing procedures created, safeguards provided, and penalties imposed.

HF839 (Pawlenty) Defense of dwelling clarified related to use of deadly force, and duty to retreat in self-defense situations limited.

HF70 (Daggett) Law enforcement agencies authorized to sell forfeited firearms, ammunition, and accessories to eligible persons.

HF763 (Smith) Theft crimes to include tenant issuance of dishonored check to landlord for rent.
HF868 (Hackbarth) Crimes constituting theft

modified to include situations involving rental personal property or equipment.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF333 (Buesgens) Board of educational administration established and money appropriated.

HF336 (Leppik) State High School League and governing board provisions modified.

HF648 (Kielkucki) State High School League provisions modified.

HF219 (Wagenius) Staff development grants established to ensure reading ability by the end of second grade, and money appropriated.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HFXXXX (Howes) Modifying harmful exotic species provisions.

HFXXXX (Vandever) State park boundary bill.
HF865 (Bakk) Combined firearm and archery antlered deer license created, and the taking of one by each method authorized.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and agriculture education.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: HF18 (Anderson, I.) School district bond sale limitations removed for certain outstanding capital loans.

Presentation by Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources regarding their coordination bonding.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF727 (Davids) Real property loans, private mortgage insurance (PMI), and lending practices regulated; prepayment penalties prohibited; escrow account interest required; and mortgage originators and servicers net worth requirements repealed.

HF744 (Haas) Motor vehicle retail installment sales regulated and contract uniformity prescribed.

HF111 (Rest) Homeowner's insurance policy nonrenewals regulated, and automobile and homeowner's insurance discriminatory practices prohibited.

HF747 (McElroy) Mandatory dram shop liability insurance minimum coverage increased.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

FRIDAY, March 5

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF853 (Rostberg) Fire sprinklers required in newly constructed state-owned buildings, fire suppression system review and inspection plan responsibilities clarified, and approval requirements provided.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Governor's budget book presentation, Department of Human Services.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's recommendation for sunset of certain Minnesota Technology, Inc. incentive grants: Natural Resources Research Institute; Minnesota Council for Quality; Minnesota Cold Weather Resource Center; Minnesota Project Innovation, Inc.; and Minnesota Inventors Congress.

9 a.m.

Joint CIVIL LAW/ CRIME PREVENTION

118 State Capitol

Chrs. Rep. Steve Smith,
Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: Approval of Feb. 26 meeting minutes.
Data privacy.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: To be announced.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview continued.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: To be announced.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF519 (Sykora) School district cost of living index created, general education formula allowance modified, and money appropriated.
HF493 (Greiling) School district teacher training and experience revenue restored, and money appropriated.

HF752 (Tomassoni) School district supplemental revenue reduction provided.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

1999 House Membership Statistics

71 Republican members
63 DFL members
99 men
35 women
20 DFL women
15 Republican women
21 newly elected members*
1 newly elected member previously served in the House
14 newly elected Republican members
7 newly elected DFL members
15.7 percent of House members did not serve last session
16 newly elected members are men
5 newly elected members are women
23.8 percent of newly elected members are women
26.1 percent of all House members are women
94.9 percent of incumbents were re-elected
0 Republican incumbents lost
6 DFL incumbents lost
15 seats were open
6 uncontested House races
0 uncontested races in DFL-held districts

New House Republican members

Jim Abeler	49A
Mark Buesgens	35B
George Cassell	10B
Dan Dorman	27A
Doug Fuller	4A
Chris Gerlach	36A
Barb Haake	52B
Tom Hackbarth	50A
Mary Liz Holberg	37B
Larry Howes	4B
Jim Seifert	57A
Julie Storm	24B
Andy Westerberg	51A
Tim Wilkin	38A

New House DFL members

Mark S. Gleason	63B
Gregory Gray	58B
Margaret Anderson Kelliher	60A
Dan Larson	40A
Ann Lenczewski	40B
Tim Mahoney	67A
Rod Skoe	2B

* Count includes Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) who was elected in 1994 to one term in the House.



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Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota's students

Percent of Minnesota eighth-graders that received passing scores (at least 75 percent) on basic skills reading test in 1998	68
Percent of African-American eighth-graders that passed	32
Percent of American Indian eighth-graders that passed	38
Percent of Asian-American eighth-graders that passed	48
Percent of Hispanic eighth-graders that passed	39
Percent of eighth-graders that received passing scores (at least 75 percent) on basic skills math test in 1998	71
Percent of African-American eighth-graders that passed	26
Percent of American Indian eighth-graders that passed	39
Percent of Asian-American eighth-graders that passed	53
Percent of Hispanic eighth-graders that passed	38
Percent of eighth-graders that received passing scores (at least 75 percent) on basic skills reading test in 1997	59
On math test	70
Percent of eighth-graders that received passing scores (at least 70 percent) on basic skills reading test in 1996	53
On math test	69
Percent of Minnesota eighth-graders in 1994 that dropped out of school by 1998	11
Percent of African-Americans that dropped out	40
Percent of American Indians that dropped out	38
Percent of Asian-Americans that dropped out	18
Percent of Hispanics that dropped out	38
Number of states that had a lower high school dropout rate than Minnesota in 1995	1
Percent of Minnesota ninth-graders that said they had used tobacco within the past 30 days in 1998	30.4
In 1995	31
Percent of Minnesota ninth-graders that said they had used alcohol in past 12 months in 1998	54
In 1995	51
Percent of Minnesota ninth-graders that said they had used marijuana in past 12 months in 1998	24.1
In 1995	21.4
Percent of male Minnesota ninth-graders that said they do not feel safe in school in 1998	11
In 1995	13

Sources: 1999 Agency Performance Report, 1999, Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning; Minnesota Milestones 1998: Measures that Matter, 1998, Minnesota Planning; State and Local Sourcebook 1999, 1999, Governing magazine.

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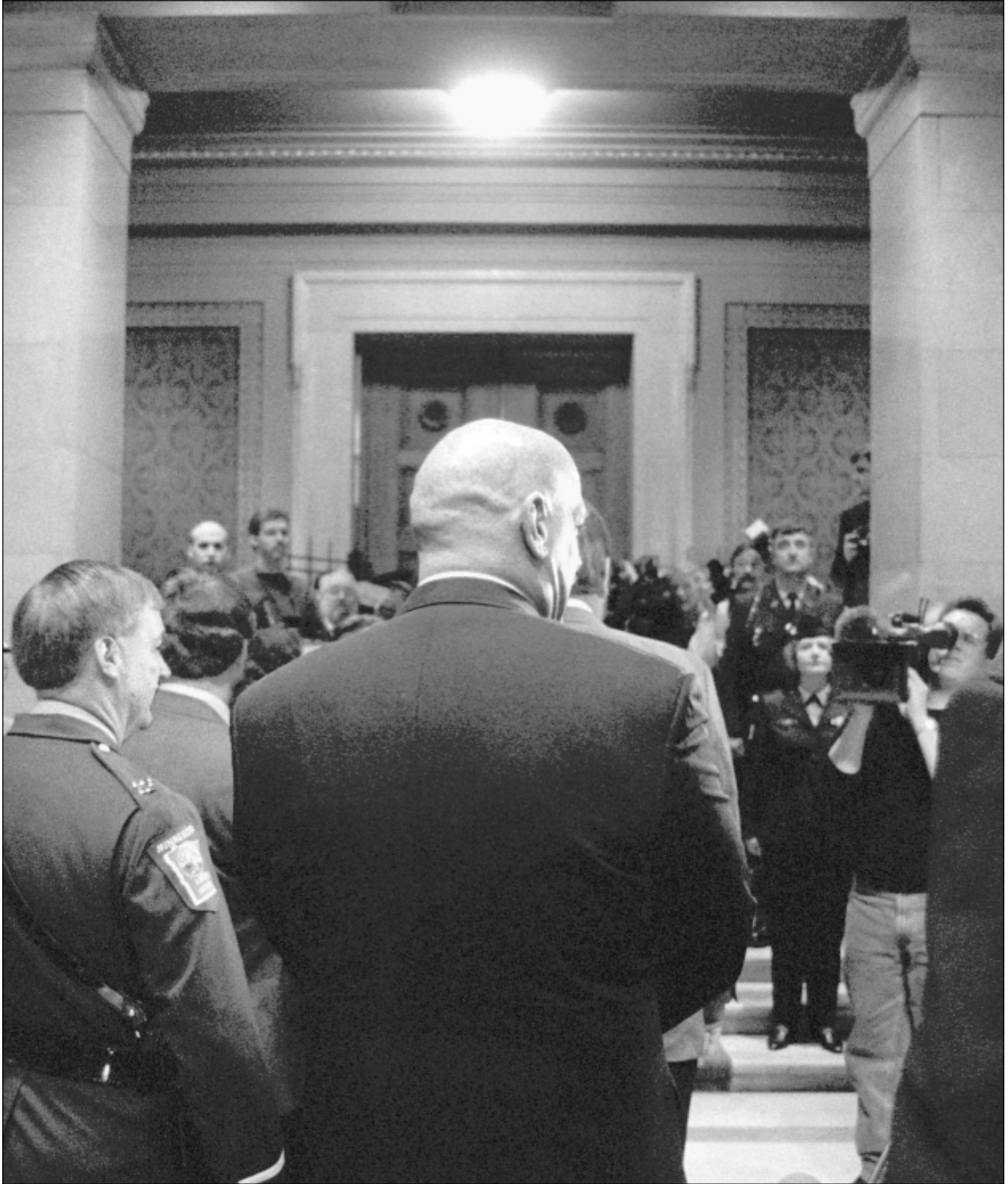
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SESSION WEEKLY

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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • March 5, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 9

Reflections

"Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I have the honor to announce the arrival of the governor of the great state of Minnesota."

The Chief Sergeant-at-Arms speaks these words in the well of the House chamber before the governor is escorted in to address the joint session of the Legislature. By law, "The governor shall communicate by message to each session of the Legislature . . ."

As protocol before a State of the State address, Senate members are announced to the House members and guests. Once they are escorted in, the joint session of the Legislature is convened by the speaker, who serves as the presiding member. All the constitutional officers and justices and judges of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals are announced and escorted in.

Protocol also directs the courtesy of inviting former governors to hear an official message to the Legislature by the newly elected governor. When Gov. Jesse Ventura gave his State of the State address March 2, three former governors were present: Wendell Anderson, Arne Carlson, and Al Quie.

Ventura's speech marked the 89th such message to the Legislature. But the messages were not titled "State of the State" until 1969, when Gov. Harold LeVander gave the 65th official message to the joint body.

After statehood, the Legislature met annually until 1879. Then, under Gov. John S. Pillsbury, lawmakers began to meet every two years. The Legislature did not meet in 1880, so Pillsbury was unable to set fiscal policy for state needs. When the St. Peter State Hospital was destroyed by fire, he personally paid for the rebuilding, and was reimbursed later by the Legislature.

Once again in 1973, the Legislature began to meet annually, but in biennial sessions.

During early statehood, most messages to the Legislature were delivered along with the governor's inaugural address in the Capitol rotunda. But in 1983 Gov. Rudy Perpich gave a separate inaugural address away from the Capitol for the first time, at Hibbing High School on the Iron Range, some 189 miles away.

Ventura joins the ranks of some memorable governors like Samuel R. VanSant, a riverboat man whose term of office brought the state into the 20th century; "hard-working and hard-swearing" David M. Clough, a lumber baron; and John A. Johnson, Minnesota's first native-born governor. Like the messages of these former governors, Ventura called for more money for public education and tax reform.

In Ventura's State of the State speech, he also advocated for self-sufficiency and restraint. Like governors in the past, he can only strongly suggest an agenda and hope the Legislature will act in his favor.

But most everyone is in agreement with his first words to the joint session and invited guests: "The state of the state is great!"

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Gov. Jesse Ventura pauses in front of the House chamber before being announced to deliver his State of the State address to the joint convention of the House and Senate on March 2.

—Photo by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

Financing K-12 education . . .

Bills would help Minnesota's lowest-funded schools

By Sandy Donovan

Closing the gap between Minnesota's wealthier school districts and its poorer ones has been a concern of lawmakers throughout the 1990s.

"Districts with property wealth have access to the best educational resources," said Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie), who's sponsoring one of several proposals this year that would create a new category of school funding aimed specifically at decreasing the disparity between poor and wealthy districts.

"The Legislature has tried over the years to increase equity, but the gap still remains," Kielkucki said.

Currently, Minnesota's public school finance system is split between the state, which picks up about 68 percent of the tab, and individual districts, which fund the rest through property tax levies.

But since voters must approve all local referendums to increase school funding, those levies remain largely optional and vary throughout the state. Currently, per student funding in the state's most flush districts is about \$1,081 more annually than per student spending in the lowest-funded districts.

In theory, school districts with the highest property values would have the highest-funded schools, but critics of the system say even that is not always true. Districts with high percentages of private-school students, retirees, or "over-extended" suburban families can have a hard time passing an excess-levy referendum. Also, areas with high concentrations of seasonal property or farms can have a lower tax base than other suburban or urban districts.

Kielkucki's plan (HF582) would establish a new component of state education revenue called equity revenue. Equity revenue would go, on a sliding scale, to all districts that fall below the 95th percentile in total school funding. Total funding includes all state revenue and funding generated through local levies.

Under the bill, equity aid would start at \$25 per pupil unit for districts at the 95th revenue percentile, and would gradually increase to \$100 per pupil for districts with the lowest



Additional state funding would be directed to poorly funded school districts in an effort to lessen the disparity between districts that get a lot of revenue through local levies and those that get very little, under proposals considered by the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

revenue. Per pupil funding is distributed according to weighted student counts, which provide more money for secondary students than for elementary students.

The bill also calls for an across-the-board basic funding allowance increase of 5 percent annually. That would amount to \$176 more per pupil in fiscal year 2000, and another \$189 per pupil the following year.

Kielkucki estimates that the plan would close the annual funding gap between the richest and poorest districts by about \$100 per pupil,

and initial calculations show that the price tag for the state would be about \$64 million in the first year.

Officials from school districts around the state appeared March 1 before the House K-12 Education Finance Committee to plug Kielkucki's proposal.

"This certainly gets us going in the right direction," said G. L. Carlson, superintendent for the St. Peter School District.

Carlson said St. Peter schools would stand to receive about \$76 per pupil in increased

funding under Kielkucki's bill, which would "go a long way for class-size reduction, a reading program, and technology upgrades."

Lawmakers also heard from Minnesotans who would benefit directly from equity funding.

Josie Boyle, a junior at Stillwater Area High School, told the committee that low revenues in her district meant she would not be able to continue with a five-year French program she began in the eighth grade. The district has a policy of only forming elective classes of 20 or more students, and since 15 of 28 people have dropped out of the language program, Boyle said the last leg will not be offered.

Although post-secondary study is an option for her, Boyle said she would have to travel into Minneapolis or St. Paul for such a course and would waste valuable time and money travelling that far.

"If I lose one year of language, I'll lose much of what I've learned and that's also a waste of time and money," she added.

But some lawmakers said situations like Boyle's aren't unique to districts with comparatively low or no local referendums.

"All schools need more money, it's not just a matter of inequity," said Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville). "I'd support more money for the general fund rather than for this."

Greiling said that one of the school districts she represents, Roseville, would not stand to

"The Legislature has tried over the years to increase equity, but the gap still remains."

—Rep. Tony Kielkucki

receive any equity aid under Kielkucki's proposal. Although the district is one of the state's wealthiest, factors like higher teacher salaries and a strong special education focus leave little extra money for other programs, according to her.

"We may not be as far ahead of you as you think when it comes to playgrounds and computers," she said.

Other lawmakers, including Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park), said providing straight equity aid would diminish local control of schools and would not reward districts whose taxpayers support a large referendum. All but 70 of Minnesota's 400-plus school districts have some amount of local levy. The St. Paul School District, which has no levy, would be the major beneficiary of Kielkucki's proposal.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) is sponsoring another bill (HF269) that would also create equity aid, but the measure would distribute the additional funding only to districts with total revenues of below the state's 25th percentile.

Ness' plan would provide enough money to those districts to bring them up to that 25th percentile, at which per pupil total spending is estimated at \$4,365. The state's general education formula allowance now stands at \$3,530 per pupil. Ness estimates that his plan would cost the state roughly \$32 million per year.

"This targets the poorest of the poor and tries to give them help," Ness said.

At the heart of both equity aid proposals is a belief that the quality of public education should be more equal across the state and less dependent on property wealth. Lawmakers have worked toward that goal in the past, most notably in a 1993 referendum reform law and in a graduations standards equity aid component of the 1998 omnibus education law.

The 1993 law increased the state's share of education funding, which had dipped to 56 percent, to more than 61 percent. That share rose from 61.9 percent in fiscal year 1998 to more than 67 percent for fiscal year 1999, and it is slated to top 69 percent by fiscal year 2000.

The 1993 law also mandated a cap on local referendums, which currently stands at \$807 per pupil.

And, in the first real step towards statewide equity, that law "equalized" the first \$315 in per pupil funds from local levies, meaning that state aid is added to those dollars based on the district's property tax base.

The 1998 graduation standards equity aid gave an extra \$34 per pupil to districts that are not at the referendum cap and that have not renewed their levies during the past five years.

The House education panel will consider HF269 and HF582 for inclusion in this year's omnibus education funding bill. 🐼

Stassen's 1939 speech hits familiar themes



It was almost exactly 60 years ago that Gov. Harold Stassen vowed to reduce government spending and decrease the state's debt in his annual address to the Legislature.

Stassen, who at 31 was the nation's youngest governor, was beginning his first term in office when he delivered a 1939 speech that touched on issues that still occupy lawmakers today.

He described to legislators his simple philosophy on the task of developing a budget for the state, and he said voters "placed their decisive stamp of approval" on his ideas in the November 1938 election.

"We were determined that we should spend less money in the next biennium than we had in the past biennium," he said.

Stassen matter-of-factly listed priorities including "spending less money, adequately meeting the needs of men and women who through no fault of their own are in need of public assistance, maintaining our education system, pressing onward for a progressive program on social betterment and security, avoiding new taxes on real estate, reducing total indebtedness of the state, and avoiding placing additional burdens on business and enterprise."

Although he is now known by some only for his repeated, quixotic runs for the presidency, Stassen was a rising star when he became governor. He would go on to win re-election to the office in both 1940 and 1942, and he would shine on the national and international stages, beginning with his speech before the Republican National Convention in June 1940 and continuing through his work to help create the United Nations.

In his 1939 budget address, Stassen noted a few areas that would be exceptions to his plans for an overall reduction in state spending. He proposed increasing the state's funding for "old-age assistance," and urged the Legislature to revise laws on property tax, pensions, and the "children's responsibility section" as they related to care of the elderly. Stassen also advocated relief to Minnesota veterans and increases in financing for the state's

education system, including post-secondary education.

Those spending increases could be accomplished by cuts in "almost every other department and activity of the state, including the office of the governor," he said.

Among his targets were eliminating unnecessary state boards or agencies and reducing the number of inspectors who traveled throughout the state.

Stassen did propose to create one new board to study unemployment and other issues on the Iron Range. One of his suggestions was to increase state taxes on iron ore by changing occupational and royalty rates from 8 to 10 percent, reversing a change that had been made two years earlier.

Stassen said his plan would reduce the state's total expenditures from just more than \$82 million to just more than \$79 million for the biennium. The current two-year budget in Minnesota tops \$20 billion.

A key aspect of Stassen's plan included investment strategies to help the state bond for new buildings. He recommended borrowing \$1.7 million for the state's building program, but he said the state could reduce its total debt by the end of the biennium from \$133 million to \$124 million, a savings of about \$9 million.

One problem with the state's budget was that the state was missing out on lost revenue from interest on state funds, Stassen explained.

He said, "We have at the present time in our trust fund for schools and other purposes over \$10 million of funds which are not invested, but are lying idle because it is not possible to secure the type of investment specified . . ."

Stassen, who left the governor's office in 1943 to join the Navy and its Pacific Fleet, went on to help draft the U.N. charter, serve as president of the University of Pennsylvania, and hold a post in the Eisenhower administration. He was a serious contender in the 1948 presidential campaign, battling New York Gov. Thomas Dewey for the Republican nomination. That was the closest he would come to the presidency.

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Healthy hog bill passes

The state would purchase pseudorabies vaccines for infected swine under a bill the House passed overwhelmingly Feb. 25. The vote was 110-21.

The bill (HF414) would provide \$1.5 million to help quell an outbreak of the highly contagious disease, which is not harmful to humans but causes pigs to have reproductive problems and to gain weight more slowly.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) is sponsoring the measure. He said farmers have done a good job over the years working to decrease incidences of pseudorabies, but in recent months, there has been a resurgence of infected herds.

While the bill had strong support, several representatives were not hog-wild about the idea.

Rep. Philip Krinkie (R-Shoreview) said he believes pseudorabies flared because farmers facing declining pork prices decided to gamble and not vaccinate.

He said the bill rewards errant behavior and teaches farmers they do not have to be responsible because the state will bail them out. He said appropriating funds would lead the state down the "road to socialized medicine for pigs."

Rep. Henry Kalis (DFL-Walters) said hog farmers themselves should solve the problem using dollars from a check-off program to match state dollars.

Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul) said she does not want to do anything for pigs the state would not do for children. She pointed out that the hog vaccine would be provided to farmers for free yet the state charges a co-payment for prescriptions under state-run health care programs.

Supporters of the bill reminded critics that hog farmers have lost hundreds of millions of dollars in the past few months as prices on the open market plummeted.

Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls) said the state had an "absolute obligation" to help continue the efforts to reduce and eliminate pseudorabies and lamented the fact the amount of funding in the bill isn't higher.



CRIME

Lower limit for DWI

Following a failed attempt last year, some lawmakers hope that 1999 will be the year to lower Minnesota's blood-alcohol standard from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent.

A bill (HF1004) aimed at accomplishing that goal was given initial approval by the House Crime Prevention Committee on March 2. The vote was 12-2.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), would lower the legal limit for drunkenness to 0.08 percent for the operation of automobiles, off-road vehicles, and motorboats. The bill would also apply the new limit to hunting with a firearm or bow.

"When a person in Minnesota is using a dangerous device, we want to make sure that person is not impaired," Goodno told the committee.

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, 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 the 0.08-percent level.



David Johnson, chief of police in Blaine, testifies in favor of a bill that would lower the blood-alcohol limit from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent for DWI and other offenses.

A number of factors affect the body's ability to process alcohol, including duration of the drinking, weight, ingestion of food, and gender. A standard drink would be a 12-ounce glass of beer, a five-ounce glass of wine, or a one-and-a-half-ounce shot of hard alcohol.

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), co-sponsor of Goodno's bill, said the proposal is simply about public safety.

"We want to make sure that when people go on the road, they will know that they will be safe," he said.

Entenza said that the 0.08-percent limit is a reasonable limit for society to set and that research indicates that all drivers are impaired at that level of blood-alcohol content.

Mike Asleson, DWI trainer with the Minnesota State Patrol, told the committee that the change in the law would result in a reduction in Minnesota's DWI-related traffic fatalities. He said the bill also sends a message to people that the state is getting tough on drunk driving.

"It just says that we cannot tolerate this continued death toll," he said.

But Jim Farrell, executive director of the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association Inc., disagreed. He said that 0.08-percent laws passed in other states have shown varied results in DWI-related arrests and fatalities, and he questioned whether the laws have truly been effective.

Farrell also cited a recent New England Journal of Medicine report stating that the risk of being killed by a driver using a cellular phone is higher than the risk of being killed by a driver at a 0.08 percent blood alcohol level.

"My concern is that in our desire to make things right, we need to do things that make sense," he said.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) offered an amendment that would have applied the lower 0.08-percent limit only to repeat DWI offenders. Under the amendment, the 0.10-percent limit would have applied for all other drivers. That amendment was rejected by the committee.

Last year, separate versions of the DWI bill passed the two bodies of the Legislature but stalled in a conference committee as legislators struggled to work out the difference between the bills.

The House version of the bill, then sponsored by Entenza, would have lowered the standard for legal drunkenness in Minnesota from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent for all

drivers. The Senate version passed last year, like Bishop's amendment, would have applied the lower limit only to repeat DWI offenders.

Goodno's proposal now goes to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Penalties for furnishing booze

Responding to the tragic deaths of teenagers like Janice Rabideaux and Kevin Brockway, lawmakers gave initial approval to bill that would toughen penalties for providing alcohol to people under the legal drinking age.

Sixteen-year-old Janice Rabideaux of Cloquet died from alcohol poisoning after a 1997 Halloween party where alcohol was provided by an adult.

Cliff Rabideaux, Janice's father, testified in support of the bill, which was approved March 2 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

"I have to deal with this the rest of my life," he said. "I hope none of you ever have to deal with this."

Rabideaux said that the person who provided the alcohol to his daughter never spent any time in jail for the crime.

Kevin Brockway of St. Paul died in an alcohol-related car crash following a New Year's Eve party on Dec. 31, 1997, where vodka had been provided by an adult. Brockway was 16 years old at the time.

Tom Brockway, Kevin's father, told the committee that providing alcohol to an underage person is like giving that person "poison," because young people cannot handle the responsibility.

Under current law, a person who provides alcohol to someone under the age of 21 who then becomes intoxicated and causes death or great bodily harm is guilty of a gross misdemeanor crime. If that person sells the alcohol to the underage person, the adult is guilty of a felony.

The bill would increase the crime of provid-

ing alcohol to someone underage from a gross misdemeanor to a felony.

"This is a loophole that needs to be closed, and I want you to close it," Brockway said.

The Crime Prevention Committee reviewed two identical bills, HF261, sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), and HF245, sponsored by Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown). The committee approved HF261. Lawmakers took no action on HF245.

Entenza's bill now goes to the House floor.

More judges wanted

Responding to a 41-percent increase in caseloads in the last 10 years, the state's district courts have made use of several methods to increase efficiency. But court officials say these stopgap measures can only do so much and new judges are needed to handle the workload increase.

A plan to provide those additional judges was approved by the House Crime Prevention Committee during a joint hearing with the House Civil Law Committee on Feb. 26.

The bill (HF542), sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), would provide 18 new trial court units — one judge, one law clerk, and one court reporter for each unit. The proposal would increase the number of judges in nine of the state's 10 judicial districts.

The bill would transfer three existing judgeships to judicial districts that are in greater need. And it would provide \$9.3 million over the biennium to pay for the new positions.

Heidi Green, manager of the research and evaluation unit of the Minnesota Supreme Court, said that the proposal would provide a 6.5-percent increase in judgeships since the last time new judges were approved in 1995. Meanwhile, she said, caseloads have increased by 10 percent over the same period.

The bill now goes to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Protecting 911 callers

A law frequently used to prosecute domestic assault offenders would be clarified under a bill approved March 1 by the House. The vote was 130-0.

Under a 1997 law, prosecutors can charge a person who interferes with a phone call to a 911 dispatcher with a gross misdemeanor crime. The law is often used against domestic assault offenders who try to prevent their victims from calling the police for help.

The bill (HF193/SF255*) would expand the law to include all emergency calls to police, ambulance services, or fire departments, not just calls placed through 911.

Bill sponsor Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) said his bill would also cover calls made directly to local police departments on other phone lines.

The bill now goes back to the Senate.

Better tracking of criminals

Lawmakers have given initial approval to a proposal seeking more integrated criminal justice information systems.

Currently, individual law enforcement agencies use several different computer systems, often to track the same information.

The bill (HF1118), approved Feb. 26 by the House Crime Prevention Committee, would provide \$1.2 million in matching grants for county and statewide development of integrated systems. The bill also outlines how these systems should work.

Bill sponsor Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove) said his bill comes as a result of the recommendations of Minnesota HEALS.

Minnesota HEALS—which stands for Minnesota for Hope, Education, and Law and Safety—is a consortium made up of corporate, community, and law enforcement groups.

The organization was started by corporate leaders in 1997 in response to a rise in violent crime, and is currently working in several at-risk Twin Cities neighborhoods to address crime, housing, employment, and health issues.

Pat Hoven, vice president for social responsibility at Honeywell Corporation and HEALS spokesperson, said that an integrated system would provide law enforcement an important crime-fighting tool. She said that such a system would accelerate the arrest, prosecution, and sentencing of criminals.

"The time is now to fix the problem," she said. "We need information sharing."

Dale Good, director of information technology at the state Supreme Court, said that there are over a thousand autonomous local criminal justice information systems in the state, including individual systems for city police departments, county sheriffs, district courts, public defenders, and city and county attorneys.

He said that the bill would provide coordination and funding that would complement the work of the criminal and juvenile justice information policy group, which has been working on statewide criminal justice information issues.

"To really finish the job, we need to drill down into the local levels," he said.

Stanek's bill would also expand the membership of the policy group, adding two members with private-sector information systems



Two fathers, Tom Brockway of St. Paul, left, and Cliff Rabideaux of Cloquet, testify in support of a bill that would increase penalties for providing alcohol to someone under 21 years old. Brockway's 16-year-old son died in an alcohol-related car crash, and Rabideaux's daughter, also 16 years old, died from alcohol poisoning. Both consumed alcohol provided by adults.

experience and a member from the attorney general's office. And the bill would give the group the authority to review the grant proposals.

The proposal now goes to the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Putting heat on criminals

A program aimed at cracking down on crime in two St. Paul neighborhoods was so successful, it should be emulated statewide.

That's the opinion of Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) who is sponsoring a bill (HF788) that would provide \$3.5 million toward that aim.

The bill would establish crime reduction aid for cities that have a high crime index. Under a funding formula, cities that are property poor would receive aid according to the number of serious crimes reported.

Dawkins told the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee that residents of his district who are afraid to step outside their homes are as much in need of aid as financially troubled farmers.

Funding would be used to intensify proactive community policing efforts, as was accomplished through the Heavy Enforcement Activities for Thirty Days program (called HEAT) in St. Paul.

Commander Richard Gardell, of the St. Paul Police Department, who headed HEAT, said the effort was successful because it combined federal, state, and local resources. He said the program had overwhelming support in the community, and he told how residents came out of their homes to applaud officers making drug arrests and to offer assistance.

Citizen complaints fell by one-half in the neighborhoods where the program was established.

He said the officers were able to be more pro-active in providing services to the community because they were relieved of having to handle emergency responses.

Under the funding formula, Minneapolis and St. Paul would receive the greatest amounts.

While lauding the idea, several representatives were concerned about the funding formula.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) said low property wealth is used as a factor for requesting state aid far too often and results in an unfair tax burden on residents of his district.

Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope) said she is troubled by the fact that among the 11 cities that would qualify for aid, several are small tourist towns in the northern part of the state.

She said she supports the idea of help for inner-city neighborhoods, but she questioned if the state should pay for policing for the "mischief and misbehavior" of tourists in cities such as Crosby, Baxter, and Brainerd.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby) said tourism-related crime is a problem in those communities, and the issue is worthy of state support.

She said that during peak tourism periods when the population of resort communities swells, the number of law enforcement officials remains the same.

The bill could be considered for inclusion in an omnibus bill later this session.



EDUCATION

Flood still troubling schools

Although it's been nearly two years since heavy flooding damaged the Red River Valley area of northwestern Minnesota, East Grand Forks Superintendent John Roach told lawmakers that his school district is still several years away from a complete recovery.

Three newstate-of-the-art schools have been completed to replace the three lost to flood waters, but it's the loss of students that has the district in a particular bind.

There are 350 fewer students in East Grand Forks classrooms today than there were two years ago, which is a drop of 14 percent. And since the bulk of school funding is paid to districts on a per pupil basis, that declining student population means a loss of about \$1.8 million per year in state aid.

But, Roach said, the district still needs to operate the same number of buildings and buses, and it's not much cheaper to run a classroom of 20 students than one of 23.

Extra state funding, in the form of declining pupil unit aid, helped the district in 1997 and 1998, and a bill (HF130) under consideration this year would extend that funding over the next three years, while gradually phasing it out by fiscal year 2002.

In addition to East Grand Forks, the bill would provide the same aid to the equally hard-hit districts of Ada-Bourup, Argyle-Stephen, Breckenridge, Climax, Kittson-Central, and Warren-Alvarado-Oslo.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus), was discussed March 3 by the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

Roach told the committee that he is optimistic that East Grand Forks will make a full recovery and that the extra state aid would mean that the school district could be ready to accommodate new students as people move back into the area.

"The fear we have is that if we have to devastate our school district, that will certainly play a role in people's decision to relocate to East Grand Forks," he said.

Many lawmakers supported the plan, but some objected to the practice of continuing to provide special, targeted funding boosts to specific areas when school districts across the state are facing financial hardships.

"The system doesn't work and we keep dealing with it one piece at a time," said Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville).

Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington), who chairs the K-12 committee, agreed that lawmakers on the panel need to continually ask the question, "How much do we do [for individual districts] at the expense of an increase in the general fund for everyone?"

The committee did not vote on HF130 but will consider it for inclusion in an omnibus K-12 finance bill.

Putting kids on public transit

A bill that would provide money for high-school students to use public transportation was considered by the House K-12 Education Finance Committee Feb. 26.

Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls), who is sponsoring the proposal, said financial details have yet to be worked out, but the bill would provide grants from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning to school districts that use public transportation. Districts would be required to match every \$4 of grant money with \$1 of district funding.

"(The bill) is still a work-in-progress, but it will give schools an option for transporting students from one location to another," Biernat said.

School districts need that option, Biernat said, because they increasingly have situations where small groups of students need to be transported, making traditional school buses a costly alternative.

Several factors contribute to those changing transportation needs, especially in the Minneapolis School District. In that city, Biernat said, more families are moving around the city, while the district has a policy of keeping kids in the same schools even if parents move across the district and away from regularly scheduled school bus routes. Also, more and more remedial programs are being offered after school hours, leaving groups of students who need rides home.

And a rise of charter schools and open-enrollment programs demand alternative transportation as well.

"We're looking at ways to disperse and de-concentrate poverty in the inner city," Biernat

said. "We need ways to get kids who live in areas of poverty to have a chance to get public transportation outside the city."

Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake) questioned districts' potential liability for accidents that could occur on public buses, and Biernat agreed that issues of safety would have to be examined.

And lawmakers from rural and suburban areas objected that the bill would only serve urban districts that already have adequate public transportation.

"Transportation needs are everywhere, not just uniquely in Minneapolis," said Rep. Leslie Schumacher (DFL-Princeton). "I would prefer we look at every school district's needs."

A 1998 bill, also sponsored by Biernat, that would have allowed students in Minneapolis and St. Paul to ride public buses was voted down by a House transportation panel last year.

The education panel took no action on this year's bill (HF455), but may consider it for inclusion in its omnibus K-12 funding measure this session.

Funds to fight lawsuits

The Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning would receive an additional \$3 million for costs associated with two Twin Cities-area lawsuits against the state, under a bill being considered by the House Ways and Means Committee.

The money would help fund the attorney general's ongoing legal work regarding the two suits.

In one case, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and a collection of parents and students filed suit in 1995 against the state, alleging that children in the Minneapolis schools are receiving a constitutionally inadequate education, mostly because of the district's high minority and low-income population. They seek to have the court order some type of desegregation plan.

In St. Paul, the school district and some parents and students also filed suit against the state, alleging that state funding is not enough for the district to provide a constitutionally adequate education. They seek more state revenue, particularly for special education and limited English proficiency programs.

Mark Levinger, assistant attorney general for the state, told members of the House K-12 Education Finance Committee on March 1 that while both cases are in mediation, neither is close to settling. He said that each case is larger than any other ever handled by the attorney general's office, in terms of the number of documents, number of witnesses, costs,

Big cat in the hat



Gov. Jesse Ventura models his new "Cat in the Hat" cap for grade-school students in the Capitol rotunda. The students gave the governor the hat after he read "Life is Fun" by Minnesota author Nancy Carlson at a March 1 Read Across America event.

staff, and ramifications for the state if either suit is lost.

Levinger said the requested money would be used to pay for mediation proceedings as well as the ongoing preparation for both suits in case they do go to trial. The St. Paul case is slated for trial in this fall, and while a trial has not been set in the NAACP case, Levinger said it could be set any time.

The \$3 million would be in addition to the \$1.3 million already appropriated for the cases for the 1998-99 biennium. Levinger said that a loss in the St. Paul case would likely cost the state several hundred million dollars per year, basing estimates on similar cases around the country that have either been settled or had rulings against states. And if the state were to lose the NAACP case, he said, that could also cost up to hundreds of millions of dollars, although costs for transportation and facilities to comply with a desegregation order are hard to estimate.

The funding request is part of an omnibus state government deficiency payments bill (HF878), sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) and being considered by the House Ways and Means Committee. The K-12 finance panel informally endorsed the proposal.

For an unofficial list of Minnesota commissioners and appointed agency heads on the World Wide Web go to: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/comm.htm>

Summer school finance plan

More students would be able to attend remedial summer school, under a bill considered by the House K-12 Education Finance Committee on March 3.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), would provide funding for basic skills summer programs, which would be available to all students that haven't passed a state-required basic skills test in reading, writing, or math.

Ness said that since the state stopped funding summer school programs 11 years ago, more and more children have been having trouble with what should be basic skills.

"If we don't do something now, this problem is only going to get worse," he said.

Many school districts now use area learning centers for summer programs, but Ness said the centers are rare in rural areas, and children are better served if they can go to their own schools.

"We need to have this available at a site where the kids have easy access and we don't have to bus them around," he said.

Several districts currently use funding from the state's learning year program to pay for summer school, but that program is set to be repealed July 1.

Ness estimated that his proposal would cost about \$1.1 million per year, but if the learning year program is not reinstated, those costs could climb substantially.

The education finance panel took no action on the bill (HF268) but will consider it for

inclusion in the omnibus K-12 funding bill later this session.

Shrinking school districts

Although enrollment in Minnesota schools continues to grow statewide, the overall increase only masks a problem of declining enrollment in most of the state's school districts, especially in rural areas.

And since the majority of state funding for schools is based on the number of students served, declining enrollment puts districts in a financial crunch.

Rep. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm) is sponsoring several bills aimed at alleviating the problem. He told the House K-12 Education Finance Committee March 3 that while most urban districts are seeing annual growth of about 2.5 percent and suburban districts are largely holding steady, many rural areas have declining enrollments of up to 10 percent.

"It's not a large enough gap that a district can really lay off a teacher, but it's large enough to create a funding problem in the district," he said.

One of Tomassoni's bills (HF485) would provide districts with declining pupil unit aid, which would equal the state's basic formula allowance (\$3,530 per pupil) times the number of declining pupil units. Declining pupil units would equal the difference between a district's pupil units for the current year and the number from three years' prior. (Pupil units are weighted student numbers that give more weight to secondary students than elementary students as a way of determining state aid.)

The bill would provide \$49.8 million for fiscal year 2000 and \$72.8 million for fiscal year 2001 for the declining pupil unit aid.

Another bill (HF315) would provide declining enrollment aid by modifying the definition of pupil units to be the greater of the district's actual pupil units during the current year, or the district's three-year average pupil unit count.

A third Tomassoni bill (HF754) would appropriate \$250,000 to study the extent and impact of declining enrollments.

Tim Collins, superintendent for the Blue Earth School District, told lawmakers that his district is typical of most rural districts with shrinking student counts. He said his district has been cutting costs wherever possible, has consolidated twice since 1996, and has been trying to pass an excess-levy referendum to make up for declining state funding.

"But it's so difficult to pass a levy when the farm crisis leaves farmers in no position to

support one, and we have five towns in one district with schools in only two towns," he said. "I can guarantee how those people in communities with no schools will vote."

Collins says the district has average class sizes of 28 students in elementary and junior high schools, and is only offering two foreign languages in the high school. And when elective classes get cut, he said, more students opt for post-secondary opportunities, leaving the district with even less revenue.

"I believe we've cut as much as we can," he told lawmakers, adding that he didn't think his district was any worse off than most in rural areas.

The committee did not vote on any of the bills, but will consider all three when it puts together an omnibus K-12 funding bill later this session.

Sports bill stalls

A bill that would have expanded extracurricular options for home school and charter school students was rejected March 4 by the House Education Policy Committee.

Lawmakers voted 18-17 not to approve the bill.

Rep. Arlon Lindner (R-Corcoran), is sponsoring the bill (HF321), which would allow students attending home schools or non-public schools outside their districts to participate in extracurricular activities sponsored by the school district in which they reside.

Under current law, it is up to individual school districts whether to allow outside students to participate in extracurricular activities. Schools can refuse students because of financial or other reasons.

Danny Quam, a resident of Maple Grove, has two sons who attend a charter school located in the Anoka-Hennepin School District. However, he requested that his sons be allowed to play football in the Osseo School District in which his family lives for two reasons.

The first was that the charter school does not have a football team. Secondly, Quam wanted his children to play sports with children they had played with in the local park system's sports. But because his children do not attend a school located in the Osseo district, he was told they would have to play for a team within the Anoka schools.

Officials from school administrator groups told the committee they oppose the bill because allowing outside students to participate in extracurricular activities could result in children already in the school system being passed over for outside students who are more talented.

Other objections to the bill came from some lawmakers who fear it would lead to athletic recruiting by allowing more students to choose their schools based on athletic possibilities.

Rodrick Atkins, a senior at Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis, said the bill would give too much latitude to home school and charter school students who had already opted out of the public school system.

He said that having "part-time players" who don't attend the school with their teammates can take away the team emphasis of sports.

Care for diabetic kids

Too often, school personnel don't have the experience to deal with students who have diabetes, said Jim McGowan, a volunteer with the American Diabetes Association.

McGowan testified March 2 before the House Education Policy Committee in support of a bill that would establish a task force to study how children with diabetes are cared for in schools.

The committee approved the bill (HF605), which is sponsored by Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield).

According to data from the American Diabetes Association, nearly one in every 600 children develops diabetes. And those children and their families deal with varying degrees of acceptance from school professionals and peers, said McGowan, whose 13-year-old son has diabetes.

Because most cases of diabetes require some form of insulin supplement, school age children receive insulin at different times throughout the day. Their food intake is also monitored to control blood sugar levels.

The task force described in the bill would be charged with recommending a statewide standard of care for diabetic students while they are in school.

The standard would include procedures for how teachers could help incorporate a student's medical needs into his or her school day and for coordination of care between school, parents, and health care providers.

In addition, the task force's guidelines would recommend how schools could learn to implement treatment for individual students. Most cases of diabetes, although similar, require different levels of treatment depending on the individual person. The bill aims to help school professionals learn to recognize how those cases differ and what treatment is needed.

The task force would be made up of 11 members including school administrators, diabetes educators, school board members, teachers, health care professionals, and parents of diabetic students. The group would

have to report its recommendations to the Legislature by Feb. 15, 2000. At that point, lawmakers would decide whether to implement the recommendations in schools.

The bill moves to the House Government Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Teaching reading better

A bill that would create a grant program for schools to help ensure that students can read by the end of second grade was approved March 4 by the House Education Policy Committee.

Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) is sponsoring the bill (HF219), which would provide money for schools to implement reading programs that fit a set of criteria outlined in the bill. The plan has already been piloted by some Minneapolis and St. Paul schools.

The criteria for the reading programs include high levels of parental involvement and the use of reliable screening tools to measure reading levels in first and second grades.

Schools would receive grant dollars determined by the number of students with reading problems, and a local match would be required. The grant amounts have yet to be determined.

"This is a doable bill to get all of our children reading by second grade," said Barbara Taylor, a professor at the University of Minnesota and author of a reading program used by students and teachers in a St. Paul school.

Taylor's curriculum uses small groups and individual instruction time for students. It stresses problem-solving skills that can help students learn words by looking for clues, instead of being told the word by a peer or teacher.

Some lawmakers objected to the bill, saying schools can use their staff development grants to pay for the teacher training.

However, Wagenius said a state commitment through her bill would send a message to schools and students.

"I want us to make that absolute commitment for all children to learn to read," she said.

The bill moves to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

Legislative history can be researched in printed materials at the Legislative Reference Library or, for the years since 1995, on the Internet. Find directions at:
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/leghist/histstep.htm>



ELECTIONS

Change for primary elections

A bill that would rename and reschedule Minnesota's primary elections was approved March 1 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee.

The primary election would be renamed "state party nominating election" to reflect its purpose, said Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), sponsor of the bill (HF272).

And, under the bill, that election would be held the fourth Tuesday in June. Primary elections are currently held the Tuesday after the second Monday in September, which Abrams said is the latest date for those elections in the nation.

The earlier date would benefit the electorate, Abrams said, because major parties would endorse their candidates sooner, allowing those candidates more time to debate each other before the general election.

Another provision of the bill would modify the requirements for constitutional office candidates to get their name on the ballot for a party nominating election. Candidates would have to get 20 percent of the votes cast in the party's state endorsing convention, or they could file an affidavit and a petition.

A valid petition would need signatures from each of the state's eight congressional districts. The petition would need signatures equal to 5 percent of the vote for that office from each district in the most recent primary, or party nominating election. For example, a person running for attorney general would have to get the number of signatures equal to 5 percent of the people who voted for attorney general.

"It would allow people who are serious about the political process either to go through the party or through a petition process," Abrams said.

Under the bill, a person could still appear on the ballot as an independent candidate without participating in the nominating elections or filing a petition.

The bill now moves to the House floor.



EMPLOYMENT

Shortfall for blind services

State Services for the Blind would get \$370,000 to address a short-term budget deficit, under a special funding bill recommended by the governor. But some who use the agency's services suggest that the shortfall is a symptom of a larger problem.

Richard Davis, assistant commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Economic Security, oversees State Services for the Blind. He told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee March 1 that the deficit comes from an increase in the need for services while the funding level has remained the same. He said the agency has taken steps to prioritize services and cut costs.

But Wally Hinz, a member of the Rehabilitation Advisory Council for the Blind, said that the shortfall may be due to agency mismanagement. He said that an independent audit is needed to ensure the financial stability of the agency.

"Financially, this agency is flirting with a heart attack that could be of fatal proportions," Hinz said.

State Services for the Blind provides job training and other services to persons who are blind or visually impaired.

The special appropriation is a part of a \$14.6 million deficiency funding bill (HF878) that seeks to address immediate state government needs. That bill is sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester).

Although the committee doesn't officially have possession of the bill, the committee will make recommendations to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville), chair of the Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee, said his committee will make an informal recommendation no later than March 8.

Reference law reconsidered

Given Robert Pannier's past employment record, he should have never been hired as a teacher for Norwood Young America Central High School.

Pannier left two metropolitan-area high schools after being accused of engaging in inappropriate behavior.

At Henry Sibley High School in Mendota Heights, he left after being warned not to use vulgarity and sexual innuendo in his class.

And at Eagan High School, where Pannier left after 19 days of employment, students complained that he was telling sexually explicit stories and asking female students for pictures of them.

Pannier was later hired by the Norwood Young America school without revealing that he had taught in Eagan.

In January 1998, Pannier was arrested and charged with having sex with a 15-year-old student.

A bill (HF310) approved March 1 by the House Civil Law Committee seeks to give

employers freedom to provide information that would prevent cases like this.

Eagan High School Principal Tom Wilson testified in support of the bill. He said that it was difficult to get information from past employers on Pannier.

"Our frustration was that we couldn't get any candid information on this candidate," he said.

Wilson said that the current system encourages past employers just to give "name, rank, and serial number" because employees can easily sue if they feel they have been unfairly characterized.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), would raise the bar for lawsuits in these cases. It would require that employees prove that the employer intentionally and maliciously gave false information, and that the information caused harm to the employee.

The bill also outlines how past employers should provide the information to prospective employers.

Knoblach said that his bill balances the needs of employers and the rights of employees.

"I believe that it is a start to providing important information, and I believe that it does provide adequate protection to potential employers," he said.

Margaret Warig of Woodbury testified against the bill. She said that she sued her employer over sexual harassment, and that false evaluations were submitted by the supervisor who harassed her.

She said that the law needs to provide protection to employees in cases like hers.

"What if I had to use them as a reference?" she said. "They could have said anything they wanted to and where would I be today?"

The bill now goes to the House floor.



GOVERNMENT

One-year lobby ban

Legislators would not be able to work as paid lobbyists at the Minnesota Legislature for one year after leaving office under a bill passed by the House on March 1. The vote was 101-30.

Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie), is sponsoring the bill (HF9). He said it is an attempt to reduce cynicism from the public and not an attempt to criticize the work of a lobbyist.

The bill would be a step in response to the perception that lobbying former colleagues on behalf of a special interest group is a conflict of interest, Kielkucki said. He described the bill as "a way to police ourselves."

"Whether it is founded or not, the percep-

tion exists," he said. "This is one way to show the public that we are concerned about this, and we will not lobby for one year."

Not everyone agreed with Kielkucki, and some lawmakers questioned why the bill would not apply to former staff members or constitutional officers.

"What is the actual need for this bill?" asked Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia).

No former legislator who has become a lobbyist has been accused of wrongdoing, Rukavina said. And under the same logic, he said, commissioners of state departments or agencies who become lobbyists should be subject to the same one-year ban.

Other opponents said the bill would prevent former legislators from doing unpaid lobbying for worthy causes.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) defended the bill, saying it is "one small step in restoring the public's trust."

"We need the public behind us, not against us, and I don't think it's that big of a sacrifice for any of us to make," he said.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

Funds for Y2K project

The Office of the Secretary of State is in the process of upgrading its 12-year-old computer system, and the approach of the year 2000 is giving that process a sense of urgency.

The office has requested an additional \$975,000 to make the system Y2K compliant by July 1.

The House State Government Finance Committee informally recommended approving the request March 4, and it will be included in a state government deficiency bill (HF878) under consideration by the House Ways and Means Committee. That bill is sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester).

Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer said she became aware of the problem shortly after she took office in January.

The office has seven major databases, each with a separate function, and they are all at risk of failure. Those databases correspond to the office's main functions, including voter registration, election reporting, and business services like the Uniform Commercial Code and records of tax liens.

When the office began the process of upgrading its old mainframe system, Kiffmeyer said, the cost and amount of time the project would take were "grossly underestimated." In April 1998 the estimated cost was \$2.1 million but current estimates are \$6 million to \$7 million, she said.

The basic plan was to replace the mainframe by creating a new client server system.

Each of the seven major databases was to be included in the system one at a time. Three of those databases are close to completion, but the other four are behind schedule.

The \$975,000 request would pay for three major areas: \$450,000 to complete the client server system for three of the seven databases; \$225,000 to fix the mainframe to make the four remaining databases Y2K compliant; and \$300,000 to upgrade the network of workstations in Minnesota counties.

A Y2K project manager would be responsible for monitoring the costs and achieving deadlines to get the project done.

Kiffmeyer pointed out that the office generates revenue from fees and surcharges. That money was originally intended to be used for upgrading the state's computer system, but it is not specifically dedicated for that purpose.

In fiscal years 1998 and 1999, the secretary of state's office generated \$12.8 million in business filing fees; \$2.9 million in Uniform Commercial Code fees; and \$2.3 million in Uniform Commercial Code surcharges.

Eric Lipman, deputy secretary of state, said that money all goes into the state's general fund. The office's budget allocation for those years was \$13 million, but the fees and surcharges brought in about \$19 million.

Benefits bill passes

Dependents of peace officers and firefighters who are killed in the line of duty can continue to receive health insurance coverage under current law, and the House passed a bill March 1 that would extend that practice. The vote was 129-0.

The bill (HF49) would provide the same benefit to a spouse who was not covered as a dependent at the time of the death but was eligible, or later becomes eligible, to be a dependent on the employer's health plan.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), sponsor of the bill, said current law does not allow continued health insurance coverage for a spouse who is covered under a separate policy at the time of the death of the peace officer or firefighter. The bill would allow a person in that situation to be covered under their spouse's plan.

The current law was passed in 1997 because many officers who had been disabled by duty-related injuries were receiving pensions but were not eligible for health coverage.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

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HEALTH

Care limits considered

Growth in the number of physician assistants and their impact, especially in rural areas, has been a part of the changing landscape of health care for the past few years.

Physician assistants are trained and licensed to help lessen the load for doctors, and they assume much of the responsibility for routine care services in clinics and hospitals.

But how much medicine should a physician assistant be allowed to practice without direct oversight by a supervising physician?

At least enough to be able to help out in the event of a disaster situation, according to Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul), who is sponsoring a bill (HF598) aimed at accomplishing that goal.

McCollum told the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee March 2 that there were instances during the 1997 flooding in the Red River Valley in which physician assistants had to pull back from assisting, even though they were military-trained in emergency medicine.

She said they didn't feel comfortable performing services because, in some cases, the supervising physician was a long distance away and in others, they weren't covered for emergency services under their supervisory agreement.

The bill would grant immunity from civil liability to physician assistants who are providing free volunteer care in disaster situations, and it would provide immunity to physicians who supervise physician assistants providing such care.

The bill also would allow physician assistants specifically to provide care in disasters without having physician and physician assistant agreements, as long as the physician assistants are appropriately supervised.

Critics said the intention is good but the bill carries a variety of problems. They expressed concerns that the bill might limit legal remedies in instances of malpractice and questioned if the bill might not have the impact of lowering standards of care.

McCollum admitted that the state's trial lawyers are uncomfortable with the bill in its current form. She hopes to meet with those concerned as the bill progresses.

"We want to assure that we have people practicing medicine properly," McCollum said. "If not, they should be sued."

The committee voted to send along the bill with no recommendation. The measure moves to the House Civil Law Committee.

Ingredient disclosure stalls

A bill that would expand reporting of hazardous substances in tobacco products stalled March 2 in the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

The bill (HF636) would require cigarette manufacturers to reveal the presence and quantity of hazardous substances defined by the U.S. Surgeon General in a three-page list. Existing law requires only the reporting of levels of ammonia or ammonia compounds, arsenic, cadmium, formaldehyde, and lead by brand.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul), the bill's sponsor, said consumers have a right to know everything that is in the various brands of cigarettes available for purchase.

Holding up a can of soup, he told the committee that almost every consumer product sold requires some sort of ingredient listing by law and cigarettes should not be an exception.

Paymar said the bill would also help cities that prohibit the sale of certain hazardous substances by ordinance.

Critics on the committee questioned if the existence of agents on the surgeon general's list in products besides cigarettes would be required to be revealed. Critics also expressed

concerns about how the requirements would be enforced and disputed Paymar's claim that knowing what was in a cigarette could lead to less smoking.

But Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie) said she knew of people who had quit or at least considered quitting after they had learned exactly what was in a cigarette.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) said that to ensure the reports were accurate, the state's labs would have to gear up to test for all of the ingredients on the list, which would be cost-prohibitive.

Two anti-smoking lobbying groups — Smoke Free 2000 Coalition and Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota — sent letters to the committee urging support for the proposal.

"Although tobacco is like no other legal product on the market — insofar as it will lead to disease and premature death if used properly — there's no reason tobacco's toxic agents should be concealed from the public," said Judy Knapp, executive director of the Minnesota Smoke-Free Coalition in St. Paul. "No other consumer product receives such special protection, yet no other product is as deadly or addictive."

The committee rejected the bill on a 12-8 vote.

Counterfeit crackdown



John Bliss, president of the International Anticounterfeiting Coalition, shows counterfeit and authentic products side-by-side to demonstrate how consumers can be easily fooled by counterfeiters. Bliss testified Feb. 26 before the House Crime Prevention Committee in favor of a bill that would impose new penalties for the manufacture and distribution of counterfeit products.

Regulatory concerns addressed

The debate over the use of bed rails in the state's nursing homes has prompted Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) to sponsor a bill (HF615) to encourage state regulators and nursing homes to work together more closely for the benefit of residents.

Bradley was also the sponsor of separate bill (HF40) aimed at clarifying policies on the use of bed rails in those facilities. That bill was passed by the House on Feb. 22.

Now it's time to work on the issues that caused the flap in the first place, Bradley told the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee on March 2.

"There are a number of deep-seated concerns about the relationship between regulators, the nursing homes, and patients," Bradley said.

The bill, which was approved by the committee, calls for training and education for state-licensed providers prior to using any new regulatory guidelines or other materials in training those who inspect nursing homes. It also requires that copies of statements of deficiencies and related letters pertaining to federal certification surveys be made available to nursing homes, when it is legal to do so.

The bill would also prohibit the practice of

ending nurse's aid training as part of an action against a nursing home when problems are discovered. And it would prohibit the use of "immediate jeopardy" fines unless the violation initially occurred within 48 hours before or shortly after the arrival of state inspectors.

The use of those practices drew loud protests from nursing home operators during the dispute over bed rail use. Operators said some immediate jeopardy fines were levied for incidents that had occurred five months earlier.

Finally, the bill would change the way the state may impose fines on nursing homes; end a mandatory two-hour check of incontinent residents and those who must be positioned; and appropriate money to study data related to falls and the use of physical restraints.

Much of the discussion on the bill centered around the mandatory checks.

Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul) said she believes that leaving those checks up to staff is not sufficient, considering that nursing homes have great turnover of staff and some workers are limited in their use of English. She expressed concerns that nursing home staff would not be able to understand the lengthy care plan mandated for each patient.

Nursing home operators assured McCollum and others that they are careful to assure that anyone with limited English skills is teamed with a more experienced worker.

They pointed out that the two-hour check requirement for incontinence does not account for the natural patterns of bodily functions and can result in bruises from unnecessarily and repeatedly being roused from bed for toileting.

Iris Freeman, executive director of Advocacy Center for Long Term Care, cautioned that state regulators should not be asked to become consultants or counselors to nursing homes, adding that they should be "neither mean-spirited nor buddies."

Bradley said he does not believe his bill calls for an unnatural alliance between regulator and regulated and stressed that everyone has a role to play in quality assurance.

The bill moves to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Parking for the pregnant

The House passed a bill March 1 that would allow handicapped parking permits for women with high-risk pregnancies. The vote was 127-0.

The bill (HF296) is sponsored by Rep. Joe Opatz. Under the measure, handicapped parking would be extended to women whose doctors certify that walking would endanger the life of the woman or the fetus.

Current law regarding handicapped parking does not include women with high-risk pregnancies as being physically disabled.

The bill moves to the Senate.



HUMAN SERVICES

Raise for health workers

Fast food workers often receive higher pay than the personal care attendants who provide life-sustaining services to the disabled across the state.

That was one of the arguments used in support of a bill (HF499) that would boost state reimbursement rates for a variety of health care services by 5 percent.

Hundreds of people who provide care and who receive that care packed the Health and Human Services Finance Committee hearing room March 2. More than a dozen testified in favor of the idea.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury), explained the intent of the funding is to hike the pay for those "in the service trenches."

He said passing the legislation would reaffirm the state's commitment to home- and community-based services, adding that without wage increases, the care programs could break down and more residents could be forced into institutions.

Those who spoke told the committee that average wages are low, there were fewer people choosing personal care as an employment option, those who do have no career track, and the turnover rate is staggering.

Ben May, a personal care attendant from Minneapolis, said he makes less than \$8 per hour and is often forced to work 72 hours straight because of the staff shortfall.

One industry group estimates it costs \$3,000 to train a personal care attendant, and if a worker doesn't stay on the job for two years, the agency providing the training takes a loss.

Terry Adamson of New Hope said she fears that with the poor working conditions, people who she considers undesirable may end up providing care.

Adamson, who has cerebral palsy, said she and others like her must be able to rely on the honest intentions of care providers who come into their homes each day.

"My life depends on it," she told the committee.

The bill carries a \$280 million price tag for the coming biennium.

Seifert admitted that was a lot of money, but he added that not passing the bill would bring

with it an even larger problem — the collapse of the home- and community-based care system.

Many of those programs developed as the state moved away from institutional settings for those with disabilities.

The bill was held over for possible inclusion in the health and human services omnibus bill.

Removing job barriers

Many of Minnesota's disabled residents are caught in a Catch-22.

Because of their medical condition, they qualify for medical assistance. But while many are able to work, some do not because employment generally means a loss of eligibility for medical assistance.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) is sponsoring a bill (HF670) he hopes will help improve the situation.

"The disabled want to work, but we as government don't allow them to work," Goodno told the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee, which approved his bill March 2.

Goodno's bill would require the state to provide medical assistance coverage for people who are employed, eligible for the Supplemental Security Income program, have assets of less than \$20,000, and pay required premiums.

The issue is a matter of taking personal responsibility, Goodno told the committee. He referred to Gov. Jesse Ventura's State of the State speech earlier in the day advocating self-sufficiency.

Supporters said disabled individuals should not be penalized for saving money for a down payment for a house or a car.

And although the bill would cost the state money, a portion would be recovered through additional income taxes the disabled workers would pay, said Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan).

The bill moves to the House floor.



LAW

Hike for jury stipends

Last year's tobacco trial netted the state a \$6.1 billion settlement. However, juror David Olson estimates that he lost up to \$50,000 because of the four-and-a-half month trial.

Olson testified March 3 before the House Civil Law Committee in favor of a bill (HF351) that would provide relief to jurors in long-running civil trials.

During the tobacco trial — which was eventually settled outside of court — Olson said he

was paid \$30 a day. In the meantime, he was responsible for raising his two daughters and for paying a \$1,300 monthly house payment. He was forced to refinance his home and to rely on credit to pay the bills, he said.

Olson said he tried to tell the judge that the case was causing economic hardship, but the judge was not convinced.

"Why should the juror have to pay?" Olson said.

Under the bill, which is sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), judges could provide jurors an additional daily stipend up to \$75 in the cases of economic hardship. Litigants would have to cough up the additional funds, and judges would decide how much each litigant would pay.

Bishop said that he is sponsoring the bill to address "the huge injustice in the way we treat jurors."

But Olson said Bishop's plan might not go far enough.

"Even with this (\$75) a day plus the additional \$30 from the county, it wouldn't have helped me," he said.

Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), chair of the committee, laid the bill over to give Bishop time to work with judges on his proposal.

No liability for dispatchers

Emergency dispatchers would be free to give over-the-phone medical instructions to callers without fear of legal troubles, under a bill approved March 3 by the House Civil Law Committee.

The bill (HF541), sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), would exempt dispatchers from civil liability when in the course of an emergency call, they provide medical information before emergency responders arrive on the scene.

Currently, some municipalities are advising dispatchers not to give medical information over the phone because the local unit of government could possibly be held liable in a lawsuit.

"Time is of the essence for these types of procedures," said Duane Flynn, fire chief for the city of Duluth.

Flynn told the committee that the life of a person in a medical emergency can depend on what happens in the first three minutes of the crisis. By simply suggesting that the person making the call tilt the victim's head back and clear an airway for breathing, emergency dispatchers may save a life.

Or the dispatcher may be able to provide more detailed information before help can arrive, he said.

"We can literally tell them over the phone how to do CPR," Flynn said.

The bill now goes to the House floor.



TAXES

Taxing the tailor

A stitch in time may save nine, but you'll probably have to pay sales tax on all 10 of them.

The efforts of hard-working tailors and seamstresses in Minnesota should not be subject to sales tax, according to Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack). He is sponsoring a bill (HF396) that would exempt repair and alteration of clothes from taxation.

Howes told the House Taxes Committee March 2 that it is generally not the state's policy to tax for "necessities of life," such as food and clothing. He said there exists an inequity in the law he hopes his bill will sew up.

Howes said that if you purchase an expensive suit from an upscale department store and it does the alterations, you aren't charged sales tax. However, if you purchase clothes at

a yard sale and take them in for alterations, you are charged tax.

The Minnesota sales tax applies to most tangible personal products and a limited number of services. In 1987, as part of an effort to increase state revenues, a number of services were added to the sales tax base. The alteration business was among them, along with cleaning, pressing, and storing clothes.

Eliminating the tax on alterations would result in a loss to the state of about \$2.5 million that's slated to be collected from 350 businesses over the next biennium.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Cutting the liquor tax

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) doesn't believe taking a drink is a sin, but he says the tax you pay on the alcoholic beverage you purchase might be.

Rukavina is sponsoring a bill (HF617) that would gradually reduce the tax rate on alcoholic beverages from 8.5 to 6.5 percent by 2003.

Rukavina told the House Taxes Committee March 2 that he's not asking for an exemption, only a reduction as a "matter of fairness."

Rukavina and those who testified in favor of the bill pointed out that the tax is particularly onerous for border communities, such as Duluth, because Wisconsin has a much lower tax.

A spokesman for the Municipal Beverage Association, which represents communities with city-owned liquor stores, said 35 retail outlets have gone out of business in recent years, many of them in border cities, as a result of the tax.

The state collects nearly \$23 million in alcoholic beverage taxes every two years from 4,500 retailers.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Gambling tax targeted

Two bills aimed at reducing taxes on lawful gambling were discussed Feb. 25 by the House Taxes Committee.

The first bill (HF393), sponsored by Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus), would reduce the rate by 50 percent, and the second bill (HF507), sponsored by Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee) would lower the rate 20 percent.

Some types of gambling were first made legal in Minnesota in 1976, and a statewide tax was imposed in 1987, and first collected in 1989. But by that year, due to the state's fiscal

It's alive



Four-year-old Benjamin Kocer takes a closer look at an Australian bearded dragon resting on the arm of Minnesota Zoo volunteer Judy Rouse. Zoo officials, seeking to increase awareness of the zoo's programs and legislative requests, brought reptiles and other zoo animals to the Capitol rotunda March 3.

crisis, the tax was raised and expanded to include more types of gambling.

"In a small town of 1,200 people, the organizations end up sending more to the state than they have available for donations," Daggett said.

The rate was reduced by 5 percent last year but needs to go lower, supporters said.

King Wilson, executive director of Allied Charities of Minnesota, said the more organizations pay in taxes, the less money is available to go to nonprofit and tax-exempt charities across the state.

"During the deficit years, these groups did their part," he added. "Now it's time for a payback."

Wilson presented information showing the increased popularity of lawful gambling over the years. Since the opening of casino gambling and the institution of the state lottery in 1989, the numbers have leveled some.

Over 3,100 lawful gambling sites operate in the state. More than 400 of them are run by veterans groups, 300 by fraternal organizations, 30 by religious organizations and the rest by a combination of varied groups.

"Minnesotans like to gamble," Wilson said. "We probably lead the nation."

Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul) noted that there is no level playing field in gambling in Minnesota because casinos are unregulated and untaxed.

He ticked off a list of organizations in his community he said wouldn't exist or would be curtailed without lawful gambling.

He also pointed out that lawful gambling is highly regulated and spending on expenses is capped.

Finseth's bill would cost the state \$55 million in tax revenue over the coming biennium. Daggett's bill would carry a \$23 million price tag.

Both bills may be heard again when the committee begins compiling the omnibus tax bill in the coming weeks.

Ventura's new rebate plan

Hopes were running high that a compromise might be near for the House and Senate conferees discussing a rebate of a large portion of the state's projected budget surplus.

Moments before the House-Senate conference committee was expected to convene March 3, Gov. Jesse Ventura's office announced they would recommend raising proposed caps on a potential tax rebate.

Under the governor's new proposal, the ceiling would rise from \$2,000 to \$5,000 for couples and from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for individuals.

Ventura also indicated support for a Senate proposal to add as rebate beneficiaries 320,000 people who would have been excluded in his original plan.

A plan by the commissioner of revenue to use data that takes into account family size and federally adjusted gross income in figuring rebates was also unveiled March 3.

The proposals drew praise from Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) who leads the House conferees on the conference committee.

"The governor deserves great praise for trying to move the process forward by being forthcoming on the caps," said Abrams, who also chairs the House Taxes Committee. "This is a step in the right direction."

Abrams said he would wait to see exactly how the rebates would shake out when new schedules are produced and then proceed from there.

The House originally passed a rebate bill (HF1) calling for money to be returned based on income taxes paid. The Senate's original version more closely resembled Ventura's proposal, calling for a rebate based on a sales tax formula.

The conference committee has met several times over the past two weeks, but has come to no agreement on the major issues dividing the bodies.



TRANSPORTATION

Illegal auto registrations

Approximately 35,000 vehicles on Minnesota roads are not registered or are registered illegally in other states, according to a report issued by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

The report also states that as many as 480,000 vehicles are not insured. That number represents about 12 percent of all vehicles in the state.

The report, called the Registration and Insurance Study, was directed by the 1998 Legislature. Lawmakers asked the department to find the number of unregistered and uninsured vehicles in the state, and to investigate the possibility of developing a shared information system that would aid in enforcing the state's insurance and registration laws.

Minnesota has a mandatory insurance law that requires vehicles to be insured while they are being operated. The state also requires that all vehicles driven primarily in Minnesota by state residents be registered in the state.

However, the study shows that many people register their cars in neighboring states to avoid paying the state's registration fees, which are higher than neighboring states. The report states that many of those people were told by

Mussel man



Jay Rendall, exotic species coordinator for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, shows members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee a clump of zebra mussels. He spoke in support of a bill that would modify laws designed to halt harmful exotic species March 4.

friends and family members that they could register their cars out of the state and are unaware it is illegal.

While department officials said the numbers in the report are estimates, they did indicate that the state loses up to \$6.8 million each year in registration and sales taxes for motor vehicles.

Along with the study, the Legislature required the department to investigate unregistered vehicles in the state. In a five-month period, the Minnesota State Patrol Vehicle Crimes Task Force recovered \$212,000 in back taxes resulting from the investigation.

Alice Gonzalo, assistant director of the department's Driver and Vehicle Services Division, said once the word spread about the investigation, there was an influx in registrations. In exchange for voluntarily paying back taxes on their vehicles, the task force did not prosecute the individuals who came forward.

In assessing the feasibility of a database, the report concluded that sharing information with other states is cost effective. However, sharing information with insurance companies would have to be done by the state instead of a private database service.

The Legislature originally directed the department to find out if a private vendor could gather insurance information, but responses from insurance companies prompted the department to recommend otherwise. Insurance vendors were concerned that their customer information could be available to competitors, and the department also found that an in-house insurance database would cost less in the long run.

Gonzalo said the department would likely bring a proposal to the Legislature next year after the results of a national study on mandatory insurance reporting are released.

More security for Ventura

Beefed-up security for the state's new governor and additional license plates for the state's growing car inventory would be funded under a deficiency payments bill (HF878) now being considered by the House Ways and Means Committee.

The House Transportation Finance Committee informally recommended \$829,000 in supplemental transportation-related appropriations March 3.

A sum of \$200,000 was recommended to step up security for Gov. Jesse Ventura. Minnesota State Patrol officials said the increase is needed because the Ventura family is living at two residences — their Maple Grove ranch and the state-owned mansion in St. Paul.

Some lawmakers questioned the need for

more security and asked if there are other options that would be more cost-effective.

State Patrol Chief Anne Beers said the size of Ventura's property in Maple Grove — 34 acres — makes the job of security more complicated. She said without the appropriation, the department would incur a heavy payroll load for overtime hours.

Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) said he thought the state patrol's request was legitimate for the job of protecting the governor, who he said was the most unique governor in the country.

"I think if we go over to the mansion, we aren't going to find six patrols playing cribbage," Workman said.

Lawmakers also recommended \$629,000 to fund license plate manufacturing. Earlier in the session, officials from the Department of Public Safety told legislators an increase of automobiles on the road has caused a shortage in license plates. Without the emergency funding, the state would run out of license plates on April 1.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) is sponsoring the so-called deficiency bill, which proposes more than \$14 million in one-time supplemental appropriations to state agencies for the current biennium.

Bikers seek change

The House Transportation Policy Committee approved a bill March 2 that would repeal a law some motorcyclists consider to be punitive.

Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) is sponsoring HF858, a bill that would strike a Minnesota law that allows into evidence proof of whether a motorcyclist was wearing a helmet in lawsuits where the cyclist is seeking damages.

Bob Illingworth, a lobbyist for the Minnesota Motorcycle Riders Association, said under the current law, motorcyclists can be punished for not wearing helmets even when the accident is not their fault. The state does not require motorcyclists to wear helmets.

He gave the example of a motorcycle rider sitting at a stoplight and being hit by a drunk driver. If the rider were injured but did not wear a helmet, that fact can be used as evidence by insurance companies to reduce or eliminate damages awarded to the rider.

Often motorcyclists settle out of court to avoid the possibility that their helmet use, or non-use, could affect their settlements, Illingworth said.

Workman, who recently purchased his first motorcycle, said that motorcycle users are very concerned about safety.

"I think it's something of a fairness issue," he said.

In another action, the committee approved a bill (HF766), sponsored by Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights) that would allow motorcycles to display a blue rear brake light. Under current state law, only emergency vehicles, snowplows, and road maintenance vehicles can display the blue light.

Both bills move to the House floor.

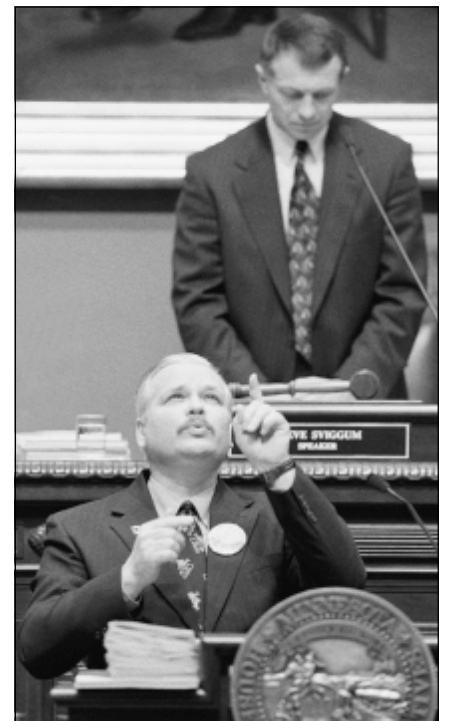


"Who is going to volunteer to drive their chair over it?" asked Dennis Delmont, spokesperson for the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, at a March 4 meeting of the House Civil Law Committee.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove) was demonstrating a device laid across the road by police officers to stop high-speed pursuits. When the offender drives his or her car over the so-called "stopstick," hollow nail-like pins deflate the tires and immobilize the car.

Stanek's bill (HF381) includes funding to provide these devices to local law enforcement agencies. The committee is considering the bill for inclusion in the omnibus judiciary finance bill.

Silent prayer



Rev. Robert Westerhaus of the Deaf Community Church in Richfield signs the invocation prior to the joint convention of the Legislature for Gov. Jesse Ventura's State of the State address March 2.

Ventura charts course for his atypical administration

By Sarah Hallonquist

In his first State of the State address, Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura vowed to run the executive branch in a style akin to a corporate chief executive officer.

And the corporation — the state of Minnesota — is in excellent shape, he said.

"The state of the state is great," Ventura told a joint convention of the House and Senate in the House chamber March 2.

Current and former members of the judicial and executive branches, including former governors Wendell Anderson, Arne Carlson, and Al Quie, were also in attendance.

Unlike during his ad-libbed inaugural speech, Ventura used a prepared text for this 47-minute address.

He was not specific as to the state's successes, but instead laid out his plans to change how government operates and to restructure tax laws. He also outlined his management philosophy for his next four years in office: choose good people, set expectations, delegate authority, and hold people accountable.

"What binds us are beliefs in a new day where ideas, not money, govern how we work," Ventura said of his cabinet, whose members span a political continuum and come from both the public and private sectors.

The governor spoke of his belief in personal responsibility, self-sufficiency, and an empowered citizenry.

Borrowing from Abraham Lincoln he said, "The role for government is to do only what the people cannot do for themselves."

Ventura said his administration will focus on investing in the state's future and not on entitlement programs, a plan that he said allows for the success of programs that benefit all citizens.

"I stand before you as governor willing to say what too many politicians at all levels of government have been scared to say: The free ride is over," he said.

Ventura named four priorities he'll work on while in office: education, transportation, smaller government, and trade and economic development. His address offered few or no surprises, highlighting much of what he presented in his biennial budget proposal in February.

For education, he proposed \$600 million in new spending, of which \$150 million would go to reducing class sizes. Private school vouchers, a plan former Gov. Arne Carlson vigor-



House Speaker Steve Sviggum greets Gov. Jesse Ventura at the speaker's desk in the House chamber just prior to the governor's State of the State address.

ously advocated, should not be a part of the state's education policy, Ventura said.

He also urged parents to become more involved in their children's schools and called for more PTA groups to organize in local school districts.

Ventura said after listening to parents, students, and teachers, he would offer a new plan for education funding and policy next year.

In the area of taxes, the governor proposed restructuring the property tax system.

"Let's face it — we've lost any logic to this system," he said. "Property taxes no longer are tied to the services that are delivered."

He said the current system punishes people for fixing up their properties, instead of charging them less when good properties require fewer governmental services.

In addition to property tax changes, Ventura reiterated his support for user fees instead of across-the-board taxes, which he said would allow for users to evaluate fee structures and programs.

Ventura also said the state's taxes should be market competitive.

"It doesn't take much for Minnesota consumers to migrate over the borders where sales tax or motor-vehicle license fees are lower," he said.

To support the state's economy, the governor said he would act as the state's salesman in his travels, selling its resources and promoting

it as a place to travel and do business. But to support the state's market, agricultural relief is a necessity, he said.

Ventura's budget originally proposed \$10 million for farm relief, but in his speech he said he would be willing to invest an additional \$50 million over the next three years for farmers in crisis situations.

Ventura made his transportation agenda clear.

"I'll know we're successful when I can ride light rail from downtown Minneapolis to the megamall, and take commuter rail from St. Cloud to the Twin Cities," he said.

He offered little detail on how he would accomplish his goals. However, his biennial budget proposal includes spending increases for education and transportation, and a permanent income tax cut. Ventura has also suggested sunset clauses and built-in evaluations for many government programs.

In addition to his budget priorities, Ventura said he would concentrate on being accessible to his employees.

"It should not be a shock-the-world event when the governor visits the state Department of Revenue," he said.

While visiting state departments in the last month, Ventura said he met people who had worked for the state for 30 years and had never met a governor.

Ventura's speech garnered applause from

both sides of the aisle, eliciting support from DFLers and Republicans often at different points.

Republicans lauded the governor's commitment to lowering income taxes, scaling back state government, and decreasing legislation. DFLers cheered for Ventura's sales tax rebate plan and his call for light-rail transit in the Twin Cities.

But while Ventura appealed to some lawmakers on their favorite topics, he also admonished them on some issues.

"Vote your conscience, not your caucus," he told legislators.

He advised them to make the Capitol a welcoming place and encourage their constituents to become more politically active.

Ventura also hinted at a unicameral legislature in his push for a smaller government.

"Until we stop measuring the success of a legislative session by how many bills are heard or passed, there is no hope of controlling spending or the sprawl of government regulation," he said.

Ventura promised that the ideas expressed in his speech would guide him throughout his term.

"For as long as I am governor, there will be no surprises about why I am signing or vetoing legislation," he said. "These are my beliefs and principles unless I am convinced through a visible, public debate that they need to be changed." 🐼

Party leaders see good and bad in Ventura speech

By Jon Fure and Paul Wahl

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle said they agreed with some parts and disagreed with other pieces of Gov. Jesse Ventura's State of the State address.

House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) was no exception.

"I think the governor gave a wonderful address from the standpoint of core philosophy and principles that we as Republicans will embrace — self-sufficiency, more individual responsibility, smaller government, empowering parents in the education of their children. Those are principles that we certainly are going to embrace," he said.

But, Sviggum said, he would have liked to hear more on the necessity of reducing taxes.

"Certainly he mentioned it, but we feel that is the cornerstone of this Legislature," he said.

And both Sviggum and Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine) said they had hoped Ventura would have advocated more assistance for Minnesota farmers.

The governor did advocate reforming the state's property tax system, asking, "Why don't we start over?"

And Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the House Taxes Committee, said he would welcome such a proposal, but Ventura will need to take the initiative to garner broad support among lawmakers.

"We want to be supportive of the governor, but we have had plenty of studies of the property tax system," Abrams said. "We have studied and studied property tax for the past 20 years.



House Speaker Steve Sviggum, left, and House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty offer the Republican response to the governor's speech.

"If (Ventura) has a proposal for real, permanent property tax reform, I guarantee I will give it not only a hearing, I will give it a series of hearings to get plenty of citizen input."

Overall, Abrams said Ventura presented "a good vision for Minnesota," and that the Republican Party generally supports Ventura's goals for smaller and more efficient government, lower taxes, and better education.

House Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) said DFLers seemed to be standing up and applauding more often than Republicans.

"The governor talked about issues that are important to him, that are a high priority for him, that fell right in line with the DFL caucus in the House," Pugh said.

Some lawmakers questioned the governor's remarks concerning former

heads of state. Ventura had said that he is "more in touch with state government than any governor in recent times at this point in my term." Having visited each of the state departments and agencies, Ventura said he met some people who have "worked 30 years for the state and never met a governor."

Those remarks were noted by Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), chair of the House Commerce Committee.

"I thought it was inappropriate for him to criticize previous administrators who governed this state," he said. "I think they all did a good job, Republican or Democrat, and they should be honored for their service."

Davids said that he spoke to former Gov. Al Quie, who was among those attending the speech, and that Quie said he also visited each of the state's departments early in his administration.

And Davids asked a rhetorical question of the current governor. "For all he wants to do to further his agenda, where are the bills?"



House Minority Leader Tom Pugh is surrounded by the media as he reacts to the State of the State address.

Kelliher brings unusual mix of rural, urban experience

By Grant Martin

Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher's idea of a vacation during the 1998 campaign might not sound relaxing to everyone. She spent the last



Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher

week in July bicycling 300 miles across Minnesota with family members to raise money to fight multiple sclerosis.

Kelliher (DFL-Mpls), whose sister-in-law has multiple sclerosis, logged over a thousand miles of training for the ride sponsored by the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Minnesota. She said that the hours of training gave her time to reflect.

"For me, it was really precious alone time," she said. "I would often just bike by myself. I could think about issues a lot, and I would spend time thinking about things in general. It was really a nice break."

Kelliher lives in the Bryn Mawr neighborhood of Minneapolis with her husband David and their two young children. She has worked as a neighborhood activist for the neighborhood association and also as a staff person in both the House and Senate.

In addition to cycling, Kelliher also enjoys writing creative nonfiction. She has had several essays published, including an essay about growing up on a Blue Earth County dairy farm during the farm crisis of the early 1980s.

"That was a huge experience to go through that turbulent time in the farm economy," she said. "Actually my family was able to make it through it, but it was never quite the same in the sense of farming."

Kelliher said that those experiences taught her how public policy can affect people's lives. And she said it makes the current farm crisis debate very real for her.

"Here, when we are talking about farm policy, I feel very connected to people who are in crisis," she said. "For some people, it's the second time that they've gone through a crisis because they went through the crisis in the '80s."

Kelliher's work as a neighborhood activist gave her an opportunity to get to know the issues affecting her district.

"It was a really great way to learn about issues by dealing with them on the front end," she said. "I'd deal with a lot of issues that would then go to the city council, the park board, or over here to the Legislature."

While working for the neighborhood association, Kelliher helped to develop a home improvement loan program and initiatives to connect neighborhood residents with local educational opportunities.

Kelliher also acted as a liaison between the neighborhood and the state Department of Transportation on the Interstate 394 expansion.

She said that transportation and transit issues will be among her main interests while serving in the House.

"It seems like a funny thing to be passionate about in some ways," she said. "But I really have a passion for finding ways to do transportation and transit funding that work for the parties that need it to work for them."

Kelliher said that she is encouraged by Gov. Jesse Ventura's approach to transportation and is happy with the appointments of Ted Mondale as chair of the Metropolitan

Council and Elwyn Tinklenberg as commissioner of transportation.

"I think that the governor is moving in the right direction," she said. "He's giving it a lot of attention, and I really applaud him for that."

Kelliher won the seat vacated by former Rep. Dee Long, the first woman to serve as speaker of the Minnesota House. Kelliher said that following a 20-year veteran presents some unique challenges, but she has a plan to overcome them.

"I think that what I've been focusing on as the new person in the district is really connecting with constituents and listening to them very earnestly about their concerns and being responsive to them," she said. "And I think that will help in the transition time."

Kelliher said that like Long she hopes to concentrate on a few issues, such as transportation, that will define her own legacy in the House.

"When I was door-knocking, people would say that I had some pretty big shoes to fill," she said. "I'd say that I plan on bringing my own pair of shoes."

District 60A

1995 population: 32,261

City: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin

Location: inner city

Top concern: "Transportation and transit are very important issues for the district and for me personally. I feel a real connection to those."

— Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher

Minnesota State Agencies

(Area code 651)

Agriculture	297-2200
Commerce	296-4026
Corrections	642-0200
Children, Families and Learning	582-8200
Economic Security	296-3644
Employee Relations	297-1184
Job Information	296-2616
Finance	296-5900
Health	215-5803
Human Rights	296-5663
Toll Free	1-800-657-3704
Human Services	296-6117

Labor and Industry	296-6107
Military Affairs	282-4662
Natural Resources	296-6157
Public Safety	296-6642
Driver and Vehicle Services ...	296-6911
Fire Marshal	215-0500
Alcohol and Gambling	
Enforcement Division	296-6159
State Patrol	297-3935
Pollution Control Agency	296-6300

Public Service	296-5120
Revenue	
Taxpayer Assistance	296-3781
Toll Free	1-800-652-9094
Trade and	
Economic Development	297-1291
Office of Tourism	296-5029
Transportation	296-3000
Veterans Affairs	296-2562
State Information	296-6013

Westerberg begins by working to end marriage penalty

By Paul Wahl

Rep. Andrew Westerberg (R-Blaine) was content to work behind the scenes in Republican politics for nearly 25 years before deciding to run for office.



Rep.
Andrew Westerberg

He worked on campaigns for other people, served in various capacities for the party, and helped organize and run conventions.

He recalls one particular convention at the St. Paul Civic Center some years back.

"I was called off the convention floor to go to Unity Hospital where my wife was having a baby," Westerberg said. "The hospital had one of those two-sided elevators and as I stepped in one side, they wheeled my wife in from the other side and we went up and had a baby."

Two hours later, he was back on the convention floor.

"I can't remember a time when I didn't want to be involved," Westerberg said. "I wanted to make a difference."

The 1998 election was not the first time Westerberg had faced his opponent, former Rep. Mike Delmont. Two years earlier, Westerberg lost by about 800 votes. This time around, Westerberg won by a similar margin.

His campaign centered on tax-cutting themes.

"We're the second highest-taxed state in the nation," Westerberg noted. "That's ridiculous."

He said his message was simple, and voters understood.

The overwhelming popularity of Gov. Jesse Ventura in Westerberg's district didn't hurt, either. Although Westerberg said his hard work was the key, he acknowledges the "Jesse factor" probably did have something to do with his margin of victory.

"I'm happy he's our governor," Westerberg said. "I really support him. I like the way he speaks his mind. I like the way he's not afraid to tell people the way it is. He makes mistakes. I fully expect to make mistakes. That's going to happen sometimes when you're trying."

Two initiatives Westerberg is sponsoring this session are closely linked to policies advocated by Ventura.

One proposal would reduce the so-called "marriage penalty" in the state's tax code. Under current law, married couples who file joint tax returns end up paying more than individual filers at the same income level.

"Not only is this a tax penalty, but it's a penalty against families," Westerberg said. "We need to do whatever we can to strengthen families."

He is also sponsoring a bill that would continue funding for a program in the Centennial School District to study the impact of smaller class sizes on the overall learning environment.

Westerberg recognizes that a freshman lawmaker probably would not get a shot at leading the charge for such an important piece of legislation as eliminating the marriage penalty were it not for his party's status as the new majority in the House.

So he is enjoying the opportunity. His name is on several pieces of legislation stemming from his work on the House Crime Preven-

tion Committee. He also serves on the House Jobs and Economic Development finance and policy committees.

But he also notes that being in the majority party often brings more responsibility, leaving less time to work on individual legislative initiatives. He said that with the crush of a busy schedule during the session, it's important to prioritize.

"I went from spending 60 hours a week in my insurance business to five hours in the month of January," Westerberg said.

His method of operation for the past 20 years in business has been to learn everything about every single aspect and facet of insurance.

"I tried to do that here with everything that touched my desk and soon found that, hey, this is not going to work," Westerberg said. "You must specialize in certain areas."

Westerberg has turned his focus toward being a clearinghouse for information, funneling as much of what crosses his desk as he can back to his constituents.

"The best way to be a good representative is to be a good communicator," he said.

District 51A

1995 population: 36,032

Largest city: Blaine

County: Anoka

Location: northwest metro

Top concern: "To restore accountability and responsibility in government. Government should take care of essential services and work together with the private sector to help accomplish what individuals cannot accomplish on their own."

— Rep. Andrew Westerberg

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Bill Introductions

HF1149-HF1483

Tuesday, March 2

HF1149—Bishop (R) **Crime Prevention**

Conditional release board created and authority to release certain older prisoners who do not pose a danger to the public provided.

HF1150—Davids (R) **Commerce**

Funeral and burial expenses insurance regulated, and funeral establishments authorized to sell and receive commissions.

HF1151—Howes (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Waste Management Act technical changes provided.

HF1152—Paymar (DFL) **Crime Prevention**

Pretrial release condition violation provided criminal penalties.

HF1153—Paymar (DFL) **Civil Law**

Juror compensation studied by the Supreme Court.

HF1154—Goodno (R) **Health & Human Services Finance**

Nursing home moratorium exception provisions modified.

HF1155—Finseth (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Cost-share assistance provided to Thief River Falls for dredging on the Red Lake River.

HF1156—Rhodes (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Metropolitan area voluntary inclusionary housing policy incentives provided, policy defined, and money appropriated.

HF1157—Boudreau (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

LeSueur County authorized to privately sell and convey tax-forfeited lands bordering public water.

HF1158—Rifenberg (R) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Fence construction and maintenance expenses sharing exemption provided to land owners establishing a lack of need.

HF1159—Stanek (R) **Crime Prevention**

Correctional officers discipline procedures act adopted.

HF1160—Koskinen (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

School finance system equity and general education formula allowance increased, and money appropriated.

HF1161—Dempsey (R) **Transportation Policy**

Port authorities authorized to retain state commercial navigation project lease and management contract revenues.

HF1162—Jennings (DFL) **Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Taylor Falls Interstate Park fire and rescue operations support grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1163—Workman (R) **Commerce**

Rental-purchase agreements regulated, cash price of property calculation provided, and cost-of-lease service charges limited.

HF1164—Erhardt (R) **Taxes**

Property tax education credit expanded to include seasonal recreational property and name changed to general education credit.

HF1165—Buesgens (R) **Transportation Policy**

Low-speed vehicles regulated.

HF1166—Chaudhary (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Elementary class size reduction program established, referendum equalization revenue formula provided, and money appropriated.

HF1167—Lenczewski (DFL) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Tax increment financing district pooling authorized for deficits caused by property tax changes.

HF1168—Gerlach (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Election law clarified and simplified.

HF1169—Holberg (R) **Crime Prevention**

Financial records search warrant time period extension by district courts authorized.

HF1170—Holberg (R) **Crime Prevention**

Domestic assault within seeing or hearing distance of a child provided increased criminal penalties.

HF1171—Holberg (R) **Crime Prevention**

Prosecutors granted discretion related to victim or witness birth date disclosure.

HF1172—Holberg (R) **Crime Prevention**

Harassment and stalking crime enhanced penalty provision expanded to include violations from another state.

HF1173—Pelowski (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Firefighter arbitration procedures provided.

HF1174—Mulder (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Board on Aging health insurance counseling and assistance grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF1175—Haas (R) **Commerce**

Financial institution fees, charges, and time periods regulated; part-time banking locations authorized; and conforming changes provided.

HF1176—Greenfield (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

State board of physical therapy established, rulemaking required, and licensing requirements provided.

HF1177—Clark, K. (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) post-employment training authorized for certain participants, and money appropriated.

HF1178—McElroy (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Landlord prelease deposits regulated and civil penalties provided.

HF1179—Mares (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Teachers Retirement Association and first class city teacher retirement fund association service credit purchase authorized for military service, out-of-state teaching, and maternity leaves.

HF1180—Mares (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

MSRS, PERA, and TRA retirement annuity formula computation provisions modified.

HF1181—Rest (DFL) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Alternative annexation procedure provided.

HF1182—Kuisle (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

County economic development authorities authorized.

HF1183—Seifert, J. (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Secretary of state service of process, notice requirements, and business organization names regulated; and conforming changes provided.

HF1184—Knoblach (R) **Commerce**

One call excavation notice system damage provisions modified.

HF1185—Haake (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Game refuge deer hunting permits percentage issued to senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

HF1186—Greiling (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Special education revenue and excess cost revenue modified, and preK-12 special education pupil weighting increased.

HF1187—Johnson (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

General education basic formula allowance increased, training and experience revenue restored, and money appropriated.

HF1188—Gleason (DFL)**Commerce**

Real property loans and private mortgage insurance (PMI) regulated, prepayment penalties prohibited, escrow account interest required, and mortgage originators and servicers net worth requirements repealed.

HF1189—Wejcman (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Mental health professional defined related to medical assistance coverage.

HF1190—Harder (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Westbrook Care Center hospital and clinic improvement grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1191—Larson, D. (DFL)**Commerce**

Real property loans and private mortgage insurance (PMI) regulated, prepayment penalties prohibited, escrow account interest required, and mortgage originators and servicers net worth requirements repealed.

HF1192—Erhardt (R)**Taxes**

Sales tax payment and refund requirements for exempt capital equipment sales repealed.

HF1193—Nornes (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

First Call Minnesota federal reimbursement claims processed by the Department of Human Services.

HF1194—Wenzel (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Finance**

Garrison, Kathio, West Mille Lacs Lake sanitary district grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1195—Van Dellen (R)**Civil Law**

Second and fourth judicial district tenant screening report requirements modified.

HF1196—Van Dellen (R)**Transportation Policy**

Metropolitan area cities and towns authorized to set speed limits within their jurisdiction.

HF1197—Van Dellen (R)**Taxes**

Income tax credit for increased research activities extended to noncorporate taxpayers.

HF1198—Hackbarth (R)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Anoka County authorized to privately sell surplus state land.

HF1199—Cassell (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

K-12 education technical amendments bill.

HF1200—Harder (R)**Agriculture & Rural Development Finance**

State agricultural experiment stations appropriated money.

HF1201—Ness (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Family farm partnership definition modified.

HF1202—Ness (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Minnesota foundation for student organizations funding provided.

HF1203—Kubly (DFL)**Agriculture & Rural Development Finance**

University of Minnesota farm safety and health program appropriated money.

HF1204—Rostberg (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Commissioner of agriculture appropriation provided for the county agriculture inspection program.

HF1205—McGuire (DFL)**Civil Law**

Electronic access to data clarified, data access notice requirements modified for students and employees, deadlines for providing data changed, and government entities required to report acquisition of surveillance devices.

HF1206—McGuire (DFL)**Civil Law**

Data access procedures published, data practices compliance required in privatization contracts, model policies prepared, historical director required to assist in records management; information policy training program appropriated money.

HF1207—Dorman (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

General education basic formula allowance increased, pupil unit weightings increased, learning and development revenue expanded, class size reduction provided, and money appropriated.

HF1208—Paulsen (R)**Commerce**

Brewer wholesaler agreement terminations authorized under certain circumstances.

HF1209—Boudreau (R)**Family & Early Childhood Education Finance**

Child care worker training grants provided, advisory committee created, and money appropriated.

HF1210—Gleason (DFL)**Taxes**

Percentage of rent constituting property taxes increased.

HF1211—Larsen, P. (R)**Crime Prevention**

Sale, possession, purchase of, or mislabeling of dog or cat fur provided misdemeanor penalties.

HF1212—Gray (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

First grade preparedness program expanded, and money appropriated.

HF1213—Rostberg (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 911, Cambridge-Isanti, provided grant for year-round optional school, and money appropriated.

HF1214—Haas (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Nursing home bed moratorium exception provided.

HF1215—Pelowski (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Southern rail corridor grade crossing minimum safety standards provided.

HF1216—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Practical examination requirements modified for chiropractors licensed in other states.

HF1217—Abeler (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Certain state employee exempted from public pension plan disability benefit offset from workers' compensation benefits.

HF1218—Buesgens (R)**Taxes**

Income tax subtraction provided for military pay for personnel serving outside of the state.

HF1219—Kahn (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

State agencies required to promote bicycle commuting by state employees.

HF1220—Dempsey (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Child care and treatment instructional aid provided, placement provisions modified, uniform billing system and approval of education programs provided, and money appropriated.

HF1221—Finseth (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Commissioner of natural resources appropriated money for construction of ring dikes.

HF1222—Leighton (DFL)**Civil Law**

Uniform Statute and Rule Construction Act adopted.

HF1223—Tunheim (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Disaster assistance payments provided to certain farmers, and money appropriated.

HF1224—Holberg (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Cedar Lake area water and sanitary sewer district established.

HF1225—Ozment (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Annexation by ordinance limited.

HF1226—Ozment (R)**Taxes**

Use of tax increment revenues for social or recreational facilities prohibited.

HF1227—Entenza (DFL)**Education Policy**

School guidance counselor to student ratio established.

HF1228—Greenfield (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Peace officers authorized to issue seat belt citation after stop for violation of certain ordinances or vehicle registration laws.

HF1229—Westerberg (R)**Crime Prevention**

Kidnappers required to register as predatory offenders.

HF1230—Chaudhary (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Senior citizen drug program eligibility expanded.

HF1231—Ness (R)**Education Policy**

Telecommunications access grants provisions modified, Minnesota education telecommunications council modified, and money appropriated.

HF1232—Hackbarth (R)
Crime Prevention

Death penalty imposed in certain first-degree murder cases, automatic appellate review and statutory framework provided, and money appropriated.

HF1233—Peterson (DFL)
Agriculture Policy

Service contractor investment protection provided to commercial solid or liquid manure management or application services.

HF1234—Solberg (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 319 joint library project continued.

HF1235—Swenson (R)
Agriculture Policy

Livestock production facilities exempted from ambient hydrogen sulfide standards on days manure is being removed from barns or manure storage facilities.

HF1236—Kubly (DFL)
Agriculture Policy

Joint and several liability provided for permit violations of owners of animals in feedlots.

HF1237—Kubly (DFL)
Agriculture Policy

Feedlots required to assure ability to pay environmental damages.

HF1238—Dehler (R)
Agriculture Policy

Industrial hemp classified as an agricultural crop, growers required to be registered, and criminal penalty imposed.

HF1239—McGuire (DFL)
Civil Law

Office of public access to government data established, and duties transferred.

HF1240—Kahn (DFL)
Crime Prevention

Criminal sexual conduct involving consenting adults repealed.

HF1241—Bishop (R)
Education Policy

University Center Rochester appropriation for course and degree offerings.

HF1242—Vandever (R)
Taxes

Sales and use tax and motor vehicle excise tax rate reduced.

HF1243—Sykora (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Special assessment rate for the workforce investment fund lowered, and provisions governing the fund modified.

HF1244—Dehler (R)
Crime Prevention

Consideration of past treatment for alcohol or controlled substance use prohibited for purposes of driver's license sanctions, and revocation provided for violation of a "no alcohol" condition of a driver's license.

HF1245—Peterson (DFL)
Agriculture Policy

Price discrimination prohibited in certain livestock transactions, reports and notices required, enforcement provided, and civil penalties imposed.

HF1246—Solberg (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy

MinnesotaCare included in county-based purchasing, and purchasing provisions modified.

HF1247—Kubly (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Enhanced pairing combination aid provided.

HF1248—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Harmful exotic species provisions modified relating to natural resources.

HF1249—Goodno (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Development limited in unincorporated areas abutting municipalities.

HF1250—Kahn (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
State and local election voting age changed from 18 to 16, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF1251—Rest (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Purchase of prior service credit authorized for a certain employee of Independent School District No. 281, Robbinsdale, and mandated partial employer payment of the purchase amount.

HF1252—Murphy (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Money appropriated for a snowmobile trail to connect the Willard Munger state trail and the North Shore state trail.

HF1253—Harder (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Bingham Lake wastewater system connected to city of Windom, and money appropriated.

HF1254—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Secondary career and technical education funding formulas modified.

HF1255—Skoglund (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Gamma hydroxybutyrate classified as a controlled substance.

HF1256—Clark, K. (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Youthbuild program appropriated money, and youth employment program provisions modified.

HF1257—Rostberg (R)
Taxes
Income tax credit provided for certain expenses incurred related to tobacco-related illness, and money appropriated.

HF1258—Entenza (DFL)
Civil Law
Summary dissolution process revived relating to family law.

HF1259—McGuire (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Reporting requirements expanded for health professionals concerning injuries resulting from alcohol or controlled substance related accidents, and civil and criminal immunity expanded for reports by health professionals.

HF1260—Tingelstad (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Medical assistance reimbursement rate maximums increased relating to special transportation services.

HF1261—Ness (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Local government paid wages information required for prevailing wage determinations.

HF1262—Ness (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Prevailing wages and comparable worth of occupations consistency required.

HF1263—Olson (R)
Commerce
Board of electricity required to adopt rules authorizing sign contractor special licenses.

HF1264—Dawkins (DFL)
Civil Law
Uniform guardianship and protective proceedings act adopted.

HF1265—Workman (R)
Transportation Policy
Rural residential district speed limits provided.

HF1266—Mullery (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Women encouraged to enter nontraditional careers, grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF1267—Pawlenty (R)
Civil Law
Economic loss arising from the sale of goods provisions established related to the uniform commercial code.

HF1268—Greiling (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
State agency rulemaking regulated.

HF1269—Ness (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
Urban agricultural high school created, planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1270—Finseth (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
Urban agricultural high school created, planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1271—Westrom (R)
Commerce
Uniform farm and equipment dealers warranty reimbursement act adopted.

HF1272—Abrams (R)
Civil Law
Court administration costs in specified judicial districts funded by the state, court employee collective bargaining provisions established, taxes imposed, and money appropriated.

HF1273—Ozment (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Eminent domain damage award reductions prohibited for agricultural, metropolitan preserve, or RIM program land.

HF1274—Daggett (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Provisional firearms safety certificate provided for persons with mental disabilities and assisted hunting authorized.

HF1275—Cassell (R)**Crime Prevention**

Firearm carry permit issuance provided, and issuance criteria established.

HF1276—Ozment (R)**Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**

Watershed management organization board membership modified.

HF1277—Bishop (R)**Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**

Wastewater treatment provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF1278—Peterson (DFL)**Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**

Farm and small business pollution control permit requirements mediation authorized for hardship cases and money appropriated.

HF1279—Peterson (DFL)**Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**

Montevideo recreational trail completion grant provided, bonds authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1280—Buesgens (R)**Jobs & Economic
Development Policy**

Jordan wastewater treatment facility construction grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1281—Osskopp (R)**Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**

Card club activities authorized for a Class B operator of a Class A racetrack.

HF1282—Jennings (DFL)**Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs**

Municipalities authorized to provide contract bid specifications, design, and construction standards.

HF1283—Osskopp (R)**Crime Prevention**

Federal disaster relief fund state matching grants authorized, open appropriations provided, reporting requirements specified, and money appropriated.

HF1284—Hilty (DFL)**Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs**

Banning Junction area water and sanitary sewer district authorized.

HF1285—Harder (R)**Transportation Policy**

Agricultural aircraft registration tax exemption provided.

HF1286—Kahn (DFL)**Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs**

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board authorized to distribute and sell hydroelectric power, Mississippi River at St. Anthony Falls protected, and city definition modified.

HF1287—Dorn (DFL)**Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs**

Mankato area growth management and planning study grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1288—Seifert, M. (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Marshall regional emergency response training center construction provided and money appropriated.

HF1289—Entenza (DFL)**Commerce**

Sale of alcohol or providing alcohol to under age persons civil and criminal penalties imposed, under age alcohol purchase minimum fine provided, liquor law compliance check grants authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1290—Larsen, P. (R)**Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs**

Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport: Bloomington, Minneapolis, and Richfield airport impact zones and tax increment financing districts authorized; airport impact fund created; and Metropolitan Council activities permitted.

HF1291—Swenson (R)**Transportation Policy**

School bus types redefined to allow seating for two extra persons.

HF1292—McGuire (DFL)**Family & Early Childhood
Education Finance**

Child care assistance administration technical and conforming changes provided.

HF1293—Marko (DFL)**Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs**

Washington County taxpayer's personal information disclosure provisions expiration date extended.

HF1294—McElroy (R)**Transportation Policy**

Prorated motor vehicle license fees authorized after dealer transfer.

HF1295—Clark, J. (R)**Taxes**

Property tax homestead treatment extended to include property leased to family farm corporations.

HF1296—Mares (R)**Education Policy**

School district swimming pool levy provided.

HF1297—Wenzel (DFL)**Jobs & Economic
Development Policy**

Little Falls fishing museum and environmental center planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1298—Storm (R)**Jobs & Economic
Development Policy**

Bridges program; rental housing assistance program for persons with a mental illness or families with an adult member with a mental illness appropriated money.

HF1299—Howes (R)**Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**

Minnesota Conservation Corps fees deposited in a special revenue fund for corps projects and administration.

HF1300—Hackbarth (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Agricultural chemical use liability claim defense coverage by insurers required.

HF1301—Vandever (R)**Environment &
Natural Resources Policy**

State park additions, deletions, and name changes provided; land exchange and transfer authorized; state wayside abolished; and Rock County authorized to privately sell surplus state land.

HF1302—Pugh (DFL)**Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**

Teacher earning limitations resumed for returning retirees.

HF1303—Goodno (R)**Commerce**

Health plan company uniform complaint resolution and external appeal processes established, and money appropriated.

HF1304—Pugh (DFL)**Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**

Senate and House of Representatives size reduced, length of terms modified, unicameral law enactment provided, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF1305—Sviggum (R)**Transportation Policy**

Kenyon excess highway easements transfer required.

HF1306—Clark, K. (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Lead center services medical assistance coverage provided and federal waivers authorizing window replacement medical assistance coverage required.

HF1307—Clark, K. (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Disabled working individuals medical assistance coverage provided.

HF1308—Skoglund (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Motor vehicle registration suspension authorized when transferee fails to apply for a new title within allotted time, certificate of title detachable form and completion required, and money appropriated.

HF1309—Bradley (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nursing home administrator licensing; board of examiners for nursing home administrators; immunity for complainants, board members, and staff; and acting administrator permits provisions modified.

HF1310—Goodno (R)**Crime Prevention**

Juvenile justice provisions clarified, and child protection and delinquency laws separated.

HF1311—Dawkins (DFL)**Taxes**

This old house; property tax valuation exclusion for certain improvements application requirements modified.

HF1312—McElroy (R)**Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**

Minnesota electronic authentication act provisions modified.

Thursday, March 4

HF1313—Storm (R)**Taxes**

Manufactured home parks property tax class rate decreased.

HF1314—Lenczewski (DFL)**Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy**

MSRS general state employees retirement plan service credit purchase for prior temporary employment authorized for a certain person.

HF1315—Mulder (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district nos. 411, Balaton, 402, Ivanhoe, 404, Lake Benton, 418, Russell, 584, Ruthton, and 409, Tyler, cooperative secondary facility planning and administrative expenses grant provided; and money appropriated.

HF1316—Mulder (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Lake Benton visitor center and railroad depot planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1317—Daggett (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Becker County nursing facility medical assistance rate increase provided.

HF1318—Sykora (R)**Family & Early Childhood Education Finance**

State agency child care assistance program duties clarified, program integrity and fraud investigation provided, and money appropriated.

HF1319—Workman (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Chanhassen tax increment financing district extension provided.

HF1320—Pelowski (DFL)**Education Policy**

School district discipline policy review participation expanded and crisis management policies provided.

HF1321—Hausman (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

St. Paul Como Park zoo and conservatory maintenance subsidy provided, and money appropriated.

HF1322—Paulsen (R)**Education Policy**

Corporate franchise education expenses credit authorized.

HF1323—Nornes (R)**Family & Early Childhood Education Finance**

Family visitation center grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1324—Cassell (R)**Education Policy**

Teacher training improvement collaborative pilot program established, public college and school district involvement provided, and money appropriated.

HF1325—Kielkucki (R)**Education Policy**

Individual income tax credit for eligible education expenses expanded to include tuition for music teacher instruction.

HF1326—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Family, foster, and day care human services licensing and reporting requirements modified.

HF1327—Stang (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Laboratory school grant provision expanded to include school operations and money appropriated.

HF1328—Fuller (R)**Crime Prevention**

DNA; convicted predatory criminals required to provide biological specimens for analysis.

HF1329—Broecker (R)**Civil Law**

Government data access and computer program copyright provisions modified.

HF1330—Mahoney (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Sober high school pilot program grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1331—Trimble (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

St. Paul Port Authority job skills partnership program funding provided and money appropriated.

HF1332—Huntley (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Abortion data reporting requirements repealed.

HF1333—Daggett (R)**Commerce**

Wood sale contracts regulated.

HF1334—Howes (R)**Taxes**

Sales tax exemption provided for equipment and materials used to make improvements to certain resorts.

HF1335—Hasskamp (DFL)**Taxes**

Sales tax exemption provided for construction materials used in building Hallett community center in Crosby.

HF1336—Seifert, J. (R)**Commerce**

Continuity of contracts provided relating to European currency.

HF1337—Carruthers (DFL)**Taxes**

Motor vehicles qualifying for the lieu tax on older passenger automobiles definition expanded.

HF1338—Smith (R)**Crime Prevention**

Privatization of correctional facility services regulated, nonsecurity institutional contract review provided, inmate work for private employers restricted, and report required.

HF1339—Gerlach (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Public employer hiring freeze imposed.

HF1340—Trimble (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

St. Paul housing funding provided.

HF1341—Abrams (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Minnesota amateur sports commission grants authorized for youth athletic facilities, and money appropriated.

HF1342—Entenza (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Chemical use assessment conducted and report submitted for certain alcohol-related violations by underaged persons.

HF1343—Abeler (R)**Education Policy**

Charter school program design specifications modified, and teachers authorized to perform administrative functions.

HF1344—Schumacher (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Benton County tourism tax increment financing project authorized.

HF1345—Winter (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Pollution control agency animal feedlot registry required.

HF1346—Knoblach (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Training procedures for local election officials modified, and money appropriated.

HF1347—Gerlach (R)**Crime Prevention**

Community custody authorized as alternative to jail terms.

HF1348—Holberg (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Tort liability exception clarified relating to snow and ice accumulation on municipal property.

HF1349—Swenson (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Population threshold for municipal state transportation aid eligibility abolished.

HF1350—Bakk (DFL)**Taxes**

Koochiching and St. Louis counties hospital district tax levy increased.

HF1351—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Health plan company acceptance of sole community pharmacies required.

HF1352—Entenza (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Counties authorized to establish programs for alternative responses to child maltreatment reports.

HF1353—Carlson (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district referendum equalization revenue increased, class size reduction program established, and money appropriated.

HF1354—Gunther (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Minnesota talented youth math project expanded, and money appropriated.

HF1355—Hausman (DFL)**Education Policy**

English as a second language ESL instructors in Adult Basic Education, ABE, programs licensure requirements exception provided.

HF1356—Wenzel (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Operational skills instructor funding authorized for Central Lakes College, Brainerd campus.

HF1357—Carruthers (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Limited English proficiency and special education programs two-year lag replaced with one-year lag.

HF1358—Rhodes (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

School-linked prevention and early intervention grant program for children established, and money appropriated.

HF1359—Mahoney (DFL)
Crime Prevention

Crime victim restitution and reparations provisions clarified and expanded, time limit for filing claims extended, and exception provided for all child abuse cases.

HF1360—Tunheim (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Special education revenue and excess cost revenue modified, and pre-kindergarten special education pupil weighting increased.

HF1361—Mulder (R)
Taxes

Certain agricultural property eliminated from the property tax base for new debt service levies for Independent School District No. 2689, Pipestone-Jasper.

HF1362—Mulder (R)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance

At-home infant child care program provisions modified, and money appropriated.

HF1363—Storm (R)
Higher Education Finance

Higher education student share reduced, and child care grant program modified.

HF1364—Koskinen (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance

New chance program appropriation provided in Hennepin County.

HF1365—Clark, K. (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Commissioner of labor and industry to adopt standards for ergonomics to reduce the incidence of repetitive motion injuries, and advisory task force established.

HF1366—Buesgens (R)
Education Policy

Advisory group established to make recommendations on strategies to address the needs of students who fail to meet the requirements of the state's high school graduation rule.

HF1367—Buesgens (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Youth service program revenue increased.

HF1368—Dawkins (DFL)
Commerce

Age discrimination prohibited in automobile renting to persons at least 21 years of age.

HF1369—Rostberg (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Uncashed checks of a political subdivision exempted from uniform disposition of unclaimed property act.

HF1370—Rostberg (R)
Agriculture Policy

Organic agriculture promotion and funding provided, advisory task force expiration date extended, and money appropriated.

HF1371—Harder (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 81, Comfrey, tornado damage appropriation provided.

HF1372—Harder (R)
Taxes

Sales and use tax exemption provided for materials and supplies used in expansion of an agricultural processing facility.

HF1373—Holsten (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Tax-forfeited land sale authorized in Washington County.

HF1374—Holsten (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Gaming machines and card games authorized under the direction of the state lottery, horse racing purse payments established, and Minnesota fund advisory task force established.

HF1375—Workman (R)
Taxes

Property tax exemption provided certain electric utility property.

HF1376—Kelliher (DFL)
Crime Prevention

Resolution memorializing the United States Senate to ratify the United Nations convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

HF1377—McElroy (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Dakota County Housing and Redevelopment Authority renamed, and powers of the Dakota County community development agency provided.

HF1378—Leppik (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Minnesota Technology, Inc. appropriation provided for Minnesota Project Innovation.

HF1379—Jennings (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Environmental assessment worksheet requirements modified for metal shredding facilities in Mississippi River area.

HF1380—Jennings (DFL)
Higher Education Finance

Pine Technical College virtual reality center appropriation provided.

HF1381—Hausman (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Minnesota access facilities development act provided for acquisition and development of soccer and other amateur athletic facilities, and money appropriated.

HF1382—Fuller (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Bemidji authorized to exercise power of eminent domain for acquisition of certain trust fund land.

HF1383—Wilkin (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Optometrist licensing provisions modified.

HF1384—Wolf (R)
Commerce

Energy conservation improvement program provisions modified relating to public utilities.

HF1385—Carruthers (DFL)
Civil Law

Data practices provisions modified relating to personnel data, criminal history data made public, and other classified.

HF1386—Mulder (R)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance

Early Childhood Family Education, ECFE, revenue increased, expectant parent activities included, and money appropriated.

HF1387—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Taxes

Biomass electrical generating facility construction provided sales and use tax exemption on materials and equipment purchases.

HF1388—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

World War II veterans memorial construction provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1389—Juhnke (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Kandiyohi tax-forfeited land public sale authorized.

HF1390—McElroy (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Alternative collateral pool provided for deposit and investment of local public funds.

HF1391—Leppik (R)
Higher Education Finance

Tobacco settlement money disposition provided, health professional education and medical research endowment fund created, and money appropriated.

HF1392—Jennings (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy

Minnesota Family Investment Fund, MFIF, provisions modified relating to earned income disregard, food stamps, and employment services; food assistance to legal noncitizens continued, and TANF administrative cap proposed.

HF1393—Jennings (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy

Human services technical changes and statutory cross-references provided.

HF1394—Pawlenty (R)
Commerce

Uniform Commercial Code secured transactions provisions adopted, and revised Article 9 provided.

HF1395—Rhodes (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Group residential housing block grant pilot project created and money appropriated.

HF1396—Munger (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Wastewater treatment facilities meeting federal water pollution control act standards and wastewater infrastructure financing provided, and money appropriated.

HF1397—Stang (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Stearns County tax increment financing district housing and redevelopment actions ratified.

HF1398—Peterson (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Dawson tax increment financing district duration extended.

HF1399—Erhardt (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Municipal tax increment financing district creation limited.

HF1400—Stang (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 740, Melrose, health and safety revenue accelerated grant payment authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1401—Erhardt (R)
Taxes

Senior citizen homeowner additional property tax refund provided, and money appropriated.

HF1402—Erhardt (R)
Taxes

Income tax rebate provided and money appropriated.

HF1403—Buesgens (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Scott County; Blue Lake wastewater treatment plant consumptive groundwater use permit approved.

HF1404—Swenson (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Swan Lake migratory waterfowl refuge designated and refuge provisions modified.

HF1405—Johnson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

School restructuring grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1406—Solberg (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 4, McGregor, energy improvements levy authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1407—Folliard (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Early elementary class size reduction program funded and money appropriated.

HF1408—Knoblach (R)
Taxes

Central Minnesota events center construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF1409—Carruthers (DFL)
Taxes

Motor vehicle transfer provisions modified for the purpose of exempting gifts from vehicle sales tax.

HF1410—Knoblach (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

St. Cloud tax increment financing district housing and redevelopment expenditures authorized.

HF1411—Paulsen (R)
Civil Law

Property management company and apartment building managers and employees authorized to appear in conciliation and unlawful detainer court on behalf of their employers.

HF1412—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Wildlife management area designation orders rescinded and consolidated conservation areas account appropriations reinstated.

HF1413—Seifert, J. (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Maltreatment investigative licensing data access use clarified and expanded, welfare and death review committee data classification provided, and revenue tax credit data access expanded.

HF1414—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Deaf and hard-of-hearing services division provisions modified.

HF1415—Finseth (R)
Agriculture Policy

Gray wolf management provided and criminal penalties imposed.

HF1416—Haas (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Tax increment financing district parcel inclusion effective date modified.

HF1417—Mahoney (DFL)
Crime Prevention

DNA; predatory offender DNA specimen required.

HF1418—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Minnesota families foundation established, medical education and research costs and local public health endowment funds created, tobacco settlement funds dedicated, and money appropriated.

HF1419—Hasskamp (DFL)
Commerce

Health plan coverage age limit for cleft lip and palate extended to the required age limit for dependent coverage.

HF1420—Paymar (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

St. Paul West Seventh Street/Gateway area enhancement funded and money appropriated.

HF1421—Wilkin (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Temporary podiatric permit extension provided and requirements modified.

HF1422—Dawkins (DFL)
Taxes

Mortgage registry and deed tax proceeds excess credited to the community rehabilitation fund account.

HF1423—Anderson, B. (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Precinct caucus procedures modified, preference balloting established and reported, and presidential primaries eliminated.

HF1424—Rostberg (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Uniform disposition of unclaimed property act exemption provided for uncashed political subdivision checks.

HF1425—Carruthers (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

First-grade preparedness program made permanent and money appropriated.

HF1426—Tingelstad (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Well notification fees, advisory council on water supply systems and wastewater treatment facilities terms, rural hospital grant provisions, and health professional student loan repayment provisions modified.

HF1427—Rostberg (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Natural resources software and intellectual property sale and licensure authorized; and youth snowmobile operation, drivers license safety designations, nongame wildlife check-off, and forestry development project provisions modified.

HF1428—Wolf (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Student-based education finance system provided.

HF1429—Holsten (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Stillwater historic territorial prison wall fortified, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1430—Tuma (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Leased lakeshore lot exchange or sale provisions modified.

HF1431—Dawkins (DFL)
Civil Law

Contracts for deed recording requirements modified, minimum contents specified, civil cause of action established, sample forms and educational materials provided, and money appropriated.

HF1432—Hausman (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

St. Paul RiverCentre and skyway system underground connection grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1433—Hausman (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

St. Paul RiverCentre and skyway system underground connection grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1434—Tingelstad (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Minnesota Children's Museum project greenstart grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1435—Buesgens (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Richard Green institute grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1436—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy

University of Minnesota Medical School primary care physician training initiative appropriated money.

HF1437—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Sustainable forest resources act repeal date modified.

HF1438—Jaros (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

University of Minnesota, Duluth, police officer prior service credit recredited by the public employees police and fire plan.

HF1439—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Minnesota Conservation Corps appropriated money.

HF1440—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Intermediate care facilities payment rate determination modified, local system needs planning process required, and statewide advisory committee established.

HF1441—Tunheim (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

General education revenue equity aid component created and money appropriated.

HF1442—Tunheim (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Roseau County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

- HF1443—Abeler (R)**
Health & Human Services Finance
Independent living skills training program funded for persons with epilepsy and money appropriated.
- HF1444—Krinkie (R)**
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) provisions modified.
- HF1445—Vandevor (R)**
Civil Law
Injury or death resulting from equine activities limited liability provided.
- HF1446—Rhodes (R)**
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Office of environmental assistance, public service department, transportation regulation board, and departments of administration, public safety, and corrections reorganization codified.
- HF1447—Tomassoni (DFL)**
Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle license plate impoundment modified in cases where the violator is not the owner.
- HF1448—Jaros (DFL)**
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Minnesota Technology, Inc. natural resources research institute grant provided and money appropriated.
- HF1449—Wilkin (R)**
Health & Human Services Policy
Persons with mental retardation day training and habilitation rate variance criteria modified.
- HF1450—Kielkucki (R)**
K-12 Education Finance
Five star school accreditation program established and money appropriated.
- HF1451—Kielkucki (R)**
Agriculture Policy
Agricultural research grants board established, cropland levy authorized, agricultural property tax rates reduced, and money appropriated.
- HF1452—Boudreau (R)**
K-12 Education Finance
Library for the blind and physically handicapped appropriated money.
- HF1453—Rhodes (R)**
Health & Human Services Policy
Adolescent health program grant established, and money appropriated.
- HF1454—Rostberg (R)**
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Community forest improvement grants provided.
- HF1455—Hausman (DFL)**
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Riparian forest management provided.
- HF1456—Bakk (DFL)**
Taxes
Certain delinquent tax abatement authorized in Lake County, Two Harbors, and Lake Superior Independent School District No. 381, and land conveyance recorded upon abatement.
- HF1457—Chaudhary (DFL)**
State Government Finance
Red Tail project appropriation provided to honor the Tuskegee airmen.
- HF1458—Jennings (DFL)**
Health & Human Services Finance
Certain Chisago County nursing facility reimbursement provision modified.
- HF1459—Johnson (DFL)**
K-12 Education Finance
Learning academy training expanded, library site technology grants eligibility requirements modified, database access program for public libraries and school modified, and money appropriated.
- HF1460—Jennings (DFL)**
Health & Human Services Finance
Certain Chisago County nursing home reimbursement provisions modified.
- HF1461—Skoglund (DFL)**
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Commissioner of natural resources authorized to enter into a lease of land at Fort Snelling.
- HF1462—Solberg (DFL)**
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Seaway Port Authority of Duluth appropriation provided for a warehouse, and bonds issued.
- HF1463—Pelowski (DFL)**
Education Policy
Commissioner of administration authorized to develop and distribute a policy on student records and other data on school-aged children, and money appropriated.
- HF1464—Jaros (DFL)**
Transportation Policy
Percentage of public transit operating costs paid by provider of large urbanized service reduced.
- HF1465—Carruthers (DFL)**
Civil Law
Revisor of Statutes instructed to recodify data practices law, and annual updates provided.
- HF1466—Dorman (R)**
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Albert Lea police and fire survivor retirement benefit increase allowed.
- HF1467—Sykora (R)**
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Early Childhood and Family Education, ECFE, children and family support programs provided, and money appropriated.
- HF1468—Olson (R)**
Education Policy
School districts required to provide remedial instruction to students failing minimum core course requirements, and cost reports required.
- HF1469—Chaudhary (DFL)**
K-12 Education Finance
Additional compensatory revenue authorized for free or reduced price meals in certain school districts.
- HF1470—Wolf (R)**
Commerce
Sale of alcoholic beverages authorized at Northrop Auditorium on University of Minnesota campus.
- HF1471—Krinkie (R)**
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Legislative approval required for fee increases, expiration dates provided for certain fees, and conforming changes made.
- HF1472—Mulder (R)**
Transportation Policy
Special number plates for collector aircraft provisions modified.
- HF1473—Clark, J. (R)**
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Minnesota Technology, Inc. inventors congress grant provided and money appropriated.
- HF1474—Smith (R)**
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Water quality cooperative activities restricted within two miles of incorporated municipalities.
- HF1475—Nornes (R)**
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
School district adult basic education service level defined, basic population aid provided, and money appropriated.
- HF1476—Stang (R)**
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Increased levy authorized North Fork Crow River watershed district.
- HF1477—Rostberg (R)**
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Environmental improvement pilot program modified and made permanent.
- HF1478—Holsten (R)**
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
City annexation area division into urban and rural service districts authorized for the purpose of property taxation.
- HF1479—Entenza (DFL)**
K-12 Education Finance
School district definition modified related to homeless students, homeless student count date clarified, education program grants provided, and money appropriated.
- HF1480—Fuller (R)**
Judiciary Finance
Bureau of Criminal Apprehension facilities constructed in St. Paul and Bemidji, and money appropriated.
- HF1481—Hausman (DFL)**
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Como Park education and resource center construction completed, and money appropriated.
- HF1482—Lenczewski (DFL)**
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Metropolitan Radio Board sunset date extended.
- HF1483—Tomassoni (DFL)**
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minimum fire state aid relief association eligibility expanded.

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

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ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Minnesota Zoo budget presentation.
Office of Environmental Assistance budget presentation.

HF878 (Bishop) State governmental operations supplemental funding provided and money appropriated.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Metro Area Planning and Metropolitan State University planning presentations, Morrie Anderson, Dennis Nielsen, Phil Davis, and Monica Manning of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF242 (Dawkins) School district compensatory revenue modified to reflect enrollment changes.

HF618 (Abeler) School districts with significant enrollment eligible for free or reduced price lunches provided additional compensatory revenue.

HF782 (Biernat) School district basic skills intervention program funding created and money appropriated.

HF785 (Biernat) School district basic skills revenue enhanced, English language learner funding extended, compensatory revenue cap removed, free and reduced price meal eligibility under-reporting adjusted, grant program created, and money appropriated.

HF824 (Biernat) School district compensatory revenue allocation flexibility continued.

HF827 (Rest) Virtual school district created and money appropriated.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF1009 (Broecker) Green acres property tax treatment extended to certain dissected agricultural property.

HF1063 (Paymar) Senior citizens' property tax deferral program maximum allowable household income increased.

HF1064 (Hackbarth) Manufactured home parks property tax class rate modified, and homestead and agricultural credit aid adjustment provided.
HF1089 (Rifenberg) Agricultural property debt service and referendum levy property tax credit provided, and money appropriated.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Report on federal funds requested by Department of Children, Families and Learning to set up a child care computer network.
Summary of governor's bill.

HF873 (Mulder) CLEAR Corps; lead hazard reduction project grant provided and money appropriated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF174 (Stang) Richmond annexed to the Paynesville area hospital district.

HF627 (Larsen, P.) Washington County; housing and redevelopment authority commissioners' term length modified.

HF726 (Knoblach) Political subdivision capital project grant standards provided.

HF526 (Mullery) Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board employee appointment provided.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: HF358 (Wolf) Coin-operated and public pay telephones deregulated, and telecommunication provider anticompetitive activity administrative penalties assessed.

1:45 p.m.

Library Subcommittee/ Legislative Coordinating Commission

546 State Office Building

Chair to be announced

Agenda: Elect chair.

Review Legislative Reference Library's proposed budget for 2000-01 biennium.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

6 p.m.

Subcommittee on Employee Relations/ Legislative Coordinating Commission

112 State Capitol

Chair to be announced

Agenda: Elect officers.

Adopt subcommittee rules.

Review/approve subcommittee bill.

Review/approve budget proposal for 2000-01 biennium.

Other items approved by the chair.

TUESDAY, March 9

7 a.m.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF165 (Stang) Disability license plate issuance allowed for motor vehicles modified for use by disabled persons.

HF1053 (Opatz) Disability parking regulatory provisions modified, certain vehicle registration fee credits abolished, and local ordinances

MONDAY, March 8

7:15 a.m.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

Tours

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Tour, Department of Transportation Traffic Management Center, 1101 4th Ave. S., Minneapolis.

Tour, Department of Transportation Waters Edge Building, 1500 W. County Road B2, Roseville.

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF879 (Knoblach) Local units of government regulatory relief provided.
HF801 (Knoblach) Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco not considered a state agency, and report required.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Department of Human Services budget presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Economic Security budget presentation.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF510 (Biernat) Child and medical support order administrative process repealed, family law magistrates appointed, and money appropriated.

regulating long-term parking authorized.

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF332 (Mulder) Rural health clinics and federally qualified health center services cost-based reimbursement continued.

HF429 (Bradley) Programs for persons with developmental disabilities alternative licensing system pilot project duties transferred to the Region 10 Quality Assurance Commission, federal waiver request required, and money appropriated.

HF912 (Jennings) Medical assistance reimbursement geographic groups redefined, nursing facility rate increase negotiations authorized, and money appropriated.

HF467 (Goodno) Medicare certification exemption allowed for nursing facilities under certain circumstances and criteria specified.

HF480 (Workman) Carver County intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR) reconfiguration project authorized.

HF640 (Bradley) State Advisory Council on Mental Health membership, duties, and reporting requirements modified.

HF834 (Boudreau) Adult mental illness crisis housing assistance program created and money appropriated.

HF958 (Greenfield) Employers authorized to provide workers' compensation benefits through health insurance, nursing facility 24-hour coverage contracts authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1028 (Leppik) Rule 80; Golden Valley nursing facility medical assistance reimbursement rate modified for residential rehabilitation services.

Note: Meeting will continue in 5 State Office Building at 7 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF663 (Daggett) State project wage payment provisions modified.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF1004 (Goodno) DWI; maximum allowable blood alcohol level lowered for hunting, handling explosives, criminal vehicular operation, and operating a motor vehicle, recreational vehicle, or watercraft.

HF158 (Stanek) Credit for time served intent clarified, presumption in favor of consecutive sentences created, specific findings required for concurrent sentences, and sentencing guidelines conforming changes required.

HF13 (Stanek) Criminal gang oversight council and strike force operation funded, grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF683 (Clark, K.) Restorative justice program grants and training funded, and money appropriated.

Department of Public Safety Bureau of Criminal Apprehension budget presentation.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Budget presentations by Capitol Area Architectural & Planning Board, and governor's office.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF12 (Seifert, J.) Three strikes; mandatory life sentence imposed for persons convicted of a third violent felony offense.

HF135 (Bishop) Repeat assault offenders with prior delinquency adjudications provided enhanced penalties.

HF732 (Osskopp) Offenders convicted of failure to appear after release required to pay incurred costs.

HF733 (Osskopp) Defendant restitution request challenge time period limited.

Others to be announced.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue in 118 State Capitol at 3 p.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF41 (Pelowski) Minnesota science and mathematics foundation established, and money appropriated.

HF819 (Ness) Adult English as a Second Language program requirements modified.

HF973 (Tomassoni) Lola and Rudy Perpich Minnesota Center for Arts Education name changed to Perpich Center for Arts Education.

HF577 (Tuma) Private career school requirements modified and clarified.

HF1058 (Reuter) Business, trade, and correspondence schools legislative review required; and training firms operation authorized.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF1151 (Howes) Waste management act technical changes provided.

HF581 (Rostberg) Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund payments for failing individual sewage treatment systems authorized.

HF1277 (Bishop) Wastewater treatment provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF842 (Fuller) Cross-country ski pass provisions modified.

HF841 (Opatz) Central Minnesota regional parks and trails plan created in Stearns, Benton, and Sherburne counties.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF703 (Van Dellen) Single factor sales apportionment adopted related to corporate franchise tax.

HF273 (Munger) Biosolids processing equipment sales and use tax exemption clarified.

HF324 (Jennings) Ski area machinery and equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF422 (Clark, K.) Vitamin, mineral, and whole food supplement sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF681 (Jaros) Vitamins and minerals sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF611 (Rest) Materials used in metalcasting sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF671 (Molnau) Road and bridge maintenance equipment purchased by counties sales tax and motor vehicle sales tax exemption provided.

HF809 (Skoglund) Tree trimming and stump removal services sales tax exemption provided.

HF1099 (Kuisle) Vehicles used by interstate carriers exempted from sales tax.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Governor's budget request for the Department of Agriculture.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: University of Minnesota's presentation on Higher Education Asset Preservation Renewal Account continued.

Testimony on cancellation projects continued.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF747 (McElroy) Mandatory dram shop liability insurance minimum coverage increased.

HF583 (Gunter) Township Mutual Insurance Company investments regulated.

HF1066 (Seifert, M.) Township mutual insurance company territories of operation regulated.

HF1163 (Workman) Rental-purchase agreements regulated, cash price of property calculation provided, and cost-of-lease service charges limited.

HF180 (Wolf) Safety regulated for persons on amusement rides.

HF1303 (Goodno) Health plan company uniform complaint resolution and external appeal processes established, and money appropriated.

2:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Land/ ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HFXXXX (Juhnke) Authorize public sale of certain tax-forfeited land that borders public water in Kandiyohi County.

HF1044 (Howes) Cass County authorized to privately sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF1042 (Finseth) Red Lake County authorized to privately sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

WAYS & MEANS

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: Revenue forecast, Department of Finance Commissioner Pam Wheelock and Assistant Commissioner Peggy Ingison.

Budget resolution.

3 p.m.

Legislative Audit Commission

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Program evaluation topic selection.
Review of program evaluation report: *Counties' Use of Administrative Penalties for Solid and Hazardous Waste Violations*.
Review of financial audit reports: Office of Technology and Minnesota State Retirement System.

6 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HFXXXX (Finseth) Wolf management bill.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF928 (Hackbarth) Snowmobile metal traction device use on paved public trails prohibited, sticker required, and money appropriated.

HF1070 (Howes) Resident lifetime game and fish licenses provided, trust fund established, fees imposed, and report required.

HF1130 (Hackbarth) Iron Range off-highway vehicle recreation area expanded, advisory committee expanded, management plan provided, and money appropriated.

HF107 (Dehler) 24-hour angling license fee reduced, and lottery machine issuance authorized.

HF1279 (Peterson) Montevideo recreational trail completion grant provided, bonds authorized, and money appropriated.

6:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Gaming & Technology/ GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mike Osskopp

Agenda: HF686 (Dehler) Dice games authorized in retail establishments licensed to sell alcoholic beverages.

HF1281 (Osskopp) Card club activities authorized for a Class B operator of a Class A racetrack.

HFXXXX (Holsten) Slots at Canterbury Downs.

WEDNESDAY, March 10

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF1086 (Reuter) 800 Megahertz radio purchase authority cancelled.

HF914 (Krinkie) Charitable organization annual reports required to include government agency funding information.

HF605 (Tuma) Diabetes and schools task force established, and money appropriated.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Department of Human Services budget presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Economic Security budget presentation continued.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF811 (Wolf) Scott County State-Aid Highway No. 27 preliminary engineering and environmental studies funded, and money appropriated.

Testimony by Department of Transportation Deputy Commissioner Ed Cohoon.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF1267 (Pawlenty) Economic loss arising from the sale of goods provisions established related to the uniform commercial code.

HF1124 (Smith) Bleacher safety requirements provided, penalties provided, and money appropriated.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Citizens Council on Voyagers National Park budget presentation.
Board of Water and Soil Resources budget presentation.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Mayo Medical School budget proposal, Dr. Anthony Windebank.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HFXXXX (Wolf) Providing for a student-based system of education finance.

Canceled

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: Canceled.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: State Aids and Credits presentation by House Research.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF779 (Finseth) Farmer-lender

mediation act sunset repealed and mediation program transferred to the Minnesota Extension Service.

HF1052 (Molnau) Agricultural crop security interests regulated and collateral treatment modified.

HF808 (Ness) Bovine paratuberculosis diagnosis data classification provided, Board of Animal Health executive secretary name changed to executive director, and sale of cattle limitations repealed.

HF384 (Anderson, B.) State and county fair food handler license provisions modified.

HF1238 (Dehler) Industrial hemp classified as an agricultural crop, growers required to be registered, and criminal penalty imposed.

HF447 (Winter) Livestock price discrimination prohibited and civil penalties provided.

HF486 (Bakk) Riparian landowners and aircraft operators allowed bulk delivery of nonoxygenated gasoline.

Note: Meeting will continue at 5 p.m. in 10 State Office Building.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: HF93 (Tunheim) Adult basic education aid funding formula modified to include eligibility for a sparsity allowance, and money appropriated.

HF847 (Sykora) First Call Minnesota; statewide family and community services information and referral system established, and money appropriated.

HF594 (Clark, K.) Teen-age prostitution prevention and intervention grants provided, and money appropriated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF420 (Haas) Brooklyn Park; housing improvement area established.

HF619 (Hackbarth) Shooting ranges preserved, net losses limited, and relocation costs provided.

HF773 (Westfall) Fire department expense reimbursement provided for costs incurred extinguishing motor vehicle fires within highway or interstate rights-of-way.

HF1140 (Leighton) License fees on coin and currency activated amusement machines limited.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: To be announced.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

Immediately following session

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF981 (Holsten) Deer, bear, elk, and moose tag requirements modified.

HF1013 (Holsten) Dark house and fish house licensure requirement exemption provided to occupied shelters left on the ice less than a day.

HF1274 (Daggett) Provisional firearms safety

certificate provided for persons with mental disabilities and assisted hunting authorized.
HF810 (Marko) Archery bow transportation requirements modified.
HF866 (Bakk) Blaze orange requirement exemption provided to trappers.

3 p.m.

WAYS & MEANS

316 State Capitol

Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: HF670 (Goodno) Medical assistance eligibility expanded to include employed persons with disabilities.

HF50 (Dempsey) Goodhue County levy limit adjustment authorized for certain payments in lieu of tax.

SF407 (Swenson) McCloud West School District, facility grant.

HF112 (Bishop) Fraudulent use of another's personal identity provided felony penalties, and civil forfeiture of property authorized.

HF878 (Bishop) State governmental operations supplemental funding provided and money appropriated.

4 p.m.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF612 (Seifert, M.) Minneota tax increment financing district expenditures authorized.

HF840 (Wenzel) Garrison; local contributions for tax increment financing district authorized.

HF985 (Workman) Chanhassen tax increment financing district extended and requirements modified.

HF1006 (Milbert) Inver Grove Heights tax increment financing district duration extended and tax increment use specified.

HF676 (Hilty) Carlton County cemetery levy for Sawyer authorized.

4:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Health Care Directives/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

400N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Lynda Boudreau

Agenda: HF537 (Boudreau) Complementary and alternative health care freedom of access act adopted.

HF685 (McCollum) Massage and oriental bodywork therapist registration system established, rulemaking authorized, and penalties imposed.

HF949 (Abeler) Midwifery practice and licensure requirements clarified.

5 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF779 (Finseth) Farmer-Lender Mediation Act sunset repealed and mediation program transferred to the Minnesota Extension Service.

HF1052 (Molnau) Agricultural crop security interests regulated and collateral treatment modified.

HF808 (Ness) Bovine paratuberculosis diagnosis data classification provided, Board of Animal Health executive secretary name changed to

executive director, and sale of cattle limitations repealed.

HF384 (Anderson, B.) State and county fair food handler license provisions modified.

HF1238 (Dehler) Industrial hemp classified as an agricultural crop, growers required to be registered, and criminal penalty imposed.

HF447 (Winter) Livestock price discrimination prohibited and civil penalties provided.

HF486 (Bakk) Riparian landowners and aircraft operators allowed bulk delivery of nonoxygenated gasoline.

Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: Report on July 1, 1998 actuarial valuations and recommendations for actuarial assumption and standards changes, Thomas K. Custis, F.S.S. Milliman and Robertson, Inc., consulting actuary retained by the commission. HF152 (Rostberg) Cambridge Regional Human Services Center extended treatment options; program employees provided correctional employee retirement plan coverage.

HF410 (Entenza) Correctional employees retirement plan service credit provided.

HF435 (Milbert) MSRS; service credit purchase authorized for a certain member.

HF1080 (Boudreau) Rice County correctional employees public employees police and fire plan coverage ratified.

HF1179 (Mares) Teachers Retirement Association and first class city teacher retirement fund association service credit purchase authorized for military service, out-of-state teaching, and maternity leaves.

HF589 (Mares) Qualified tax-sheltered annuity vendors expanded for the purpose of employer contributions.

HF708 (Mares) Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS), Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA), and Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) authorized to purchase or construct an administrative building.

Other items as designated by the chair.

6:30 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Economic Security budget presentation continued. State Services for the Blind program.

THURSDAY, March 11

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF959 (Goodno) Supplemental aid recipients with special needs provisions modified. HF1047 (Wejman) Anorexia; medical assistance coverage of anorexics authorized.

HF1023 (Haas) Employer-subsidized health coverage program established.

HF807 (Howes) Rural hospital improvement grant program expanded, medical assistance coverage of telemedicine conferences and critical access hospital outpatient fee cost-based system provided, uniform billing established, and money appropriated.

HF1126 (Abeler) Date restrictions removed on definitions relating to day care licensing.

HF1127 (Abeler) Noncertified boarding care homes provisions, Medicaid reimbursements, and client records for assisted living home care providers modified.

HF1216 (Abeler) Practical examination requirements modified for chiropractors licensed in other states.

HF860 (Boudreau) Board of Dentistry hygienist membership increased.

HF408 (Goodno) Practice of pharmacy definition modified and patient counseling defined.

HFXXXX (Seifert, J.) Agency bill.

HFXXXX (Boudreau) Agency bill.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue after session in 10 State Office Building.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF798 (Anderson, B.) Injured employees civil remedies provided in cases of employer safety violations.

HF877 (Wolf) Unemployment; re-employment insurance procedure modifications and technical changes provided to conform with federal requirements.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF542 (Bishop) Number of district court judges increased.

HF717 (Seifert, J.) Housing calendar consolidation program extended outside the 2nd and 4th judicial districts.

HF338 (Larsen, P.) Emergency management grant program created and rulemaking authorized.

Department of Public Safety Bureau of Criminal Apprehension budget presentation continued.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: To be announced.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Budget presentations by state auditor's office and attorney general's office.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF13 (Stanek) Criminal gang oversight council and strike force operation funded, grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF839 (Pawlenty) Defense of dwelling clarified related to use of deadly force, and duty to retreat in self-defense situations limited.

HF1055 (Van Dellen) Methamphetamine crime provisions expanded, booby trap criminal penalties imposed, child neglect and endangerment conviction provisions clarified and consecutive sentencing authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1255 (Skoglund) Gamma hydroxybutyrate classified as a controlled substance.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue 30 minutes after session in Basement Hearing Room, State Office Building.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF954 (Buesgens) Substitute teacher licenses provided and probationary period consecutive year provisions modified.
HF953 (Gleason) Nonresident truant student termination from the enrollment options program provided.
HF881 (Dawkins) Ramsey County; after-school enrichment program role clarified.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HFXXXX (Tuma) Lakeshore lease lot exchange.
HFXXXX (Rostberg) Department of Natural Resources technical bill.
HFXXXX (Osskopp) Minnesota Pollution Control Agency technical bill.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF890 (Abrams) Income tax rates and marriage penalty reduced; sales, cigarettes, and liquor accelerated tax liability repealed; motor vehicle registration tax modified; agricultural assistance provided; and money appropriated (governor's tax bill).

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Governor's budget request for the Department of Agriculture.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: To be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF270 (Osskopp) Minnesota Comprehensive Health Insurance policies providing number one or two plan benefits prohibited from imposing a maximum lifetime benefit limit.
HF1150 (Davids) Funeral and burial expenses insurance regulated, and funeral establishments authorized to sell and receive commissions.
HF1175 (Haas) Financial institution fees, charges, and time periods regulated; part-time banking locations authorized; and conforming changes provided.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

6 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Room to be announced
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: Wastewater treatment bills to be announced.

FRIDAY, March 12

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Department of Human Services budget presentations.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: To be announced.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: To be announced.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: HF7 (Haake) Motor vehicle emissions inspection program repealed.
Board of Soil and Water Resources budget presentation continued.
Department of Natural Resources budget presentation continued.
HF1301 (Vandever) State park additions, deletions, and name changes provided; land exchange and transfer authorized; state wayside abolished; and Rock County authorized to privately sell surplus state land.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: To be announced.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF241 (Dawkins) Integration revenue following students to charter schools authorized.
HF784 (Biernat) Charter school students, nonpublic students, and students subject to hazardous conditions transportation funding increased; and money appropriated.
HF820 (Seagren) Charter schools; referendum revenue and integration revenue provided, building lease aid increased, leased facilities real estate taxes eliminated, start-up funding payment schedule established, and money appropriated.
HF859 (Seagren) A Chance to Grow/New Visions; Minnesota learning resource center program start-up costs funded and money appropriated.
HF871 (Sykora) Charter school districts provided.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Department of Revenue budget presentation continued.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: Motor vehicle sales tax.

HF161 (Ozment) Sales and use tax and motor vehicle sales tax rates reduced, and political subdivisions and lottery tickets sales tax exemption provided.

HF252 (Westfall) Sales, use, and motor vehicle sales tax rates reduced for one year.

HF575 (Lenczewski) Sales, use, and motor vehicle sales tax rates reduced.

HF890 (Abrams) Income tax rates and marriage penalty reduced; sales, cigarettes, and liquor accelerated tax liability repealed; motor vehicle registration tax modified; agricultural assistance provided; and money appropriated (governor's tax bill - motor vehicle section).

12:30 p.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: 1022 (Abrams) Health maintenance organizations regulatory authority transferred to commissioner of commerce.

HF1034 (Abrams) Health care liability act adopted, health care plan coverage and treatment classification regulated, and remedies provided.

SATURDAY, March 13

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF817 (Wagenius) Relative ex parte temporary child custody provisions expanded.
HF821 (Reuter) National origin discrimination by businesses prohibited.

HF963 (Knobloch) Firefighter previous employment background investigations authorized, disclosure requirements and immunity provided, and civil and criminal penalties imposed.

HF1098 (Van Dellen) Uniform statutory rule against perpetuities amended relating to trusts.
HF1195 (Van Dellen) 2nd and 4th judicial district tenant screening report requirements modified.
HF1144 (Lindner) Public nuisance definition and provisions modified.

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Minnesota House of Representatives 1999 Members

District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-	District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-
		Room*				Room*	
49A	Abeler, Jim (R)	581	1729	33A	Lindner, Arlon (R)	417	7806
45A	Abrams, Ron (R)	585	9934	47A	Luther, Darlene (DFL)	371	3751
19B	Anderson, Bruce (R)	411	5063	67A	Mahoney, Tim (DFL)	223	4277
3A	Anderson, Irv (DFL)	343	4936	55A	Mares, Harry (R)	401	5363
6A	Bakk, Thomas (Tom) (DFL)	345	2190	65B	Mariani, Carlos (DFL)	209	9714
59A	Biernat, Len (DFL)	303	4219	57B	Marko, Sharon (DFL)	221	3135
30B	Bishop, Dave (R)	453	0573	55B	McCollum, Betty (DFL)	239	1188
25B	Boudreau, Lynda (R)	473	8237	36B	McElroy, Dan (R)	437	4212
30A	Bradley, Fran (R)	559	9249	54A	McGuire, Mary Jo (DFL)	259	4342
53B	Broecker, Sherry (R)	533	7153	39B	Milbert, Bob (DFL)	243	4192
35B	Buesgens, Mark (R)	415	1072	35A	Molnau, Carol L. (R)	443	8872
46B	Carlson, Lyndon R. (DFL)	279	4255	21B	Mulder, Richard (R)	515	4336
47B	Carruthers, Phil (DFL)	217	3709	58A	Mullery, Joe (DFL)	387	4262
10B	Cassell, George (R)	421	4317	7A	Munger, Willard (DFL)	283	4282
52A	Chaudhary, Satveer (DFL)	311	4331	8A	Murphy, Mary (DFL)	357	2676
23A	Clark, James T. (R)	583	9303	20A	Ness, Robert "Bob" (R)	509	4344
61A	Clark, Karen (DFL)	307	0294	10A	Nornes, Bud (R)	471	4946
11A	Daggett, Roxann (R)	439	4293	19A	Olson, Mark (R)	501	4237
31B	Davids, Gregory M. (R)	367	9278	16A	Opatz, Joe (DFL)	281	6612
65A	Dawkins, Andy (DFL)	215	5158	60B	Orfield, Myron (DFL)	377	9281
14A	Dehler, Steve (R)	491	7808	29B	Osskopp, Mike (R)	449	9236
29A	Dempsey, Jerry (R)	549	8635	66A	Osthoff, Tom (DFL)	273	4224
27A	Dorman, Dan (R)	579	8216	11B	Otremba, Mary Ellen (DFL)	393	3201
24A	Dorn, John (DFL)	201	3248	37A	Ozment, Dennis (R)	479	4306
64A	Entenza, Matt (DFL)	213	8799	42B	Paulsen, Erik (R)	445	7449
42A	Erhardt, Ron (R)	591	4363	38B	Pawlenty, Tim (R)	459	4128
17A	Erickson, Sondra (R)	407	6746	64B	Paymar, Michael (DFL)	331	4199
1B	Finseth, Tim (R)	517	9918	32A	Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)	295	8637
44A	Folliard, Betty (DFL)	211	3964	13B	Peterson, Doug (DFL)	287	4228
4A	Fuller, Doug (R)	525	5516	39A	Pugh, Thomas W. (DFL)	267	6828
36A	Gerlach, Chris (R)	531	5506	46A	Rest, Ann H. (DFL)	277	4176
63B	Gleason, Mark S. (DFL)	313	5375	28A	Reuter, Doug (R)	507	5368
9A	Goodno, Kevin (R)	563	5515	44B	Rhodes, Jim (R)	409	9889
58B	Gray, Gregory (DFL)	229	8659	32B	Rifenberg, Michelle (R)	423	1069
62A	Greenfield, Lee (DFL)	207	0173	18A	Rostberg, Jim (R)	545	5364
54B	Greiling, Mindy (DFL)	253	5387	5A	Rukavina, Tom (DFL)	375	0170
26A	Gunther, Bob (R)	379	3240	17B	Schumacher, Leslie J. (DFL)	327	5377
52B	Haake, Barb (R)	429	0141	41A	Seagren, Alice (R)	477	7803
48A	Haas, Bill (R)	569	5513	57A	Seifert, Jim (R)	577	7807
50A	Hackbarth, Tom (R)	575	2439	21A	Seifert, Marty (R)	593	5374
22B	Harder, Elaine (R)	487	5373	2B	Skoe, Rod (DFL)	321	4265
12A	Hasskamp, Kris (DFL)	353	4333	62B	Skoglund, Wes (DFL)	251	4330
66B	Hausman, Alice (DFL)	245	3824	34A	Smith, Steve (R)	503	9188
8B	Hilty, Bill (DFL)	241	4308	3B	Solberg, Loren A. (DFL)	309	2365
37B	Holberg, Mary Liz (R)	433	6926	33B	Stanek, Rich (R)	543	5502
56A	Holsten, Mark William (R)	381	3018	14B	Stang, Doug (R)	597	4373
4B	Howes, Larry (R)	431	2451	24B	Storm, Julie (R)	527	7065
6B	Huntley, Thomas (DFL)	351	2228	28B	Swiggum, Steve (R)	463	2273
7B	Jaros, Mike (DFL)	291	4246	23B	Swenson, Howard (R)	539	8634
18B	Jennings, Loren Geo (DFL)	237	0518	43B	Sykora, Barb (R)	403	4315
48B	Johnson, Alice M. (DFL)	349	5510	50B	Tingelstad, Kathy (R)	567	5369
15A	Juhnke, Al (DFL)	329	6206	5B	Tomassoni, David J. (DFL)	233	0172
59B	Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)	255	4257	67B	Trimble, Steve (DFL)	289	4201
26B	Kalis, Henry J. (DFL)	317	4240	25A	Tuma, John (R)	369	4229
60A	Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (DFL)	231	0171	1A	Tunheim, Jim (DFL)	335	9635
20B	Kielkucki, Tony (R)	521	1534	34B	Van Dellen, Henry Todd (R)	571	5511
16B	Knoblach, Jim (R)	451	6316	51B	Vandever, Ray (R)	529	4124
49B	Koskinen, Luanne (DFL)	301	4231	63A	Wagenius, Jean (DFL)	227	4200
53A	Krinkie, Philip (R)	365	2907	61B	Wejzman, Linda (DFL)	203	7152
15B	Kubly, Gary W. (DFL)	315	4346	12B	Wenzel, Stephen G. (DFL)	389	4247
31A	Kuisle, William (R)	565	4378	51A	Westerberg, Andrew (R)	523	4226
56B	Larsen, Peg (R)	551	4244	9B	Westfall, Robert L. (Bob) (R)	553	6829
40A	Larson, Dan (DFL)	225	7158	13A	Westrom, Torrey (R)	557	4929
27B	Leighton, Rob (DFL)	261	4193	38A	Wilkin, Tim (R)	413	3533
40B	Lenczewski, Ann (DFL)	337	4218	22A	Winter, Ted (DFL)	247	5505
45B	Leppik, Peggy (R)	485	7026	41B	Wolf, Ken (R)	359	5185
2A	Lieder, Bernie L. (DFL)	323	5091	43A	Workman, Tom (R)	537	5066

Note: Room numbers are subject to change.

List as of March 4, 1999

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

Minnesota Senate 1999 Members

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66 Anderson, Ellen R. (DFL)	G-24 Cap.	5537	54 Marty, John (DFL)	326 Cap.	5645
41 Belanger Jr., William V. (R)	113 SOB	5975	39 Metzzen, James P. (DFL)	303 Cap.	4370
13 Berg, Charles A. (Ind.)	G-51 SOB	5094	2 Moe, Roger D. (DFL)	208 Cap.	2577
61 Berglin, Linda (DFL)	309 Cap.	4261	32 Morse, Steven (DFL)	G-24 Cap.	5649
48 Betzold, Don (DFL)	306 Cap.	2556	29 Murphy, Steve (DFL)	301 Cap.	4264
64 Cohen, Richard J. (DFL)	317 Cap.	5931	25 Neuville, Thomas M. (R)	123 SOB	1279
28 Day, Dick (R)	147 SOB	9457	52 Novak, Steven G. (DFL)	322 Cap.	4334
20 Dille, Steve (R)	103 SOB	4131	43 Oliver, Edward C. (R)	121 SOB	4837
14 Fischbach, Michelle L. (R)	149 SOB	2084	34 Olson, Gen (R)	119 SOB	1282
62 Flynn, Carol (DFL)	120 Cap.	4274	19 Ourada, Mark (R)	145 SOB	5981
49 Foley, Leo (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	4154	65 Pappas, Sandra L. (DFL)	120 Cap.	1802
23 Frederickson, Dennis R. (R)	139 SOB	8138	37 Pariseau, Pat (R)	109 SOB	5252
50 Hanson, Paula E. (DFL)	328 Cap.	3219	27 Piper, Pat (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	9248
58 Higgins, Linda I. (DFL)	227 Cap.	9246	59 Pogemiller, Lawrence J. (DFL)	235 Cap.	7809
24 Hottinger, John C. (DFL)	120 Cap.	6153	57 Price, Leonard R. (DFL)	235 Cap.	297-8060
5 Janezich, Jerry R. (DFL)	328 Cap.	8017	63 Ranum, Jane B. (DFL)	306 Cap.	297-8061
40 Johnson, Dave (DFL)	111 Cap.	9261	45 Robertson, Martha R. (R)	125 SOB	4314
15 Johnson, Dean E. (R)	117SOB	3826	35 Robling, Claire A. (R)	151 SOB	4123
6 Johnson, Douglas J. (DFL)	205 Cap.	8881	53 Runbeck, Linda (R)	107 SOB	1253
18 Johnson, Janet B. (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	5419	11 Sams, Dallas C. (DFL)	328 Cap.	297-8063
46 Junge, Ember R. (DFL)	205 Cap.	2889	12 Samuelson, Don (DFL)	124 Cap.	4875
44 Kelley, Steve (DFL)	321 Cap.	297-8065	31 Scheevel, Kenric J. (R)	129 SOB	3903
67 Kelly, Randy C. (DFL)	323 Cap.	5285	47 Scheid, Linda (DFL)	317 Cap.	8869
30 Kiscaden, Sheila M. (R)	135 SOB	4848	7 Solon, Sam G. (DFL)	303 Cap.	4188
16 Kleis, Dave (R)	143 SOB	6455	60 Spear, Allan H. (DFL)	120 Cap.	4191
36 Knutson, David L. (R)	133 SOB	4120	17 Stevens, Dan (R)	105 SOB	8075
51 Krentz, Jane (DFL)	235 Cap.	7061	1 Stumpf, LeRoy A. (DFL)	G-24 Cap.	8660
56 Laidig, Gary W. (R)	141 SOB	4351	4 Ten Eyck, David J. (DFL)	G-24F Cap.	4913
9 Langseth, Keith (DFL)	122 Cap.	3205	42 Terwilliger, Roy (R)	115 SOB	6238
10 Larson, Cal (R)	153 SOB	5655	22 Vickerman, Jim (DFL)	226 Cap.	5650
21 Lesewski, Arlene J. (R)	131 SOB	4125	38 Wiener, Deanna L. (DFL)	303 Cap.	297-8073
3 Lessard, Bob (DFL)	111 Cap.	4136	55 Wiger, Charles W. (DFL)	325 Cap.	6820
33 Limmer, Warren (R)	127 SOB	2159			
8 Lourey, Becky (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	0293			

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Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

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Minnesota women in public office

Women currently serving in the Minnesota House of Representatives	35
As percent of total members	26.1
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As percent of total members	29.9
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As percent of total senators	32.8
Women as percent of all Minnesota legislators, 1998	28.4
In 1996	30.4
In 1990	21.4
In 1980	7.5
In 1970	0.5
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On Supreme Court, out of seven seats	2
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As percent of total	8
1998 total of women serving as county commissioners in Minnesota, out of 448 seats	77
As percent of total	17
1998 total of women serving as school board members in Minnesota, out of 2,398 seats	796
As percent of total	33
Percent of Minnesota mayors who were women in 1997	13.5
Percent of city councilors who were women in 1997	24.4

Source: *Women in Elected Office — 1998 Election Results*, 1998, Commission on the Economic Status of Women.

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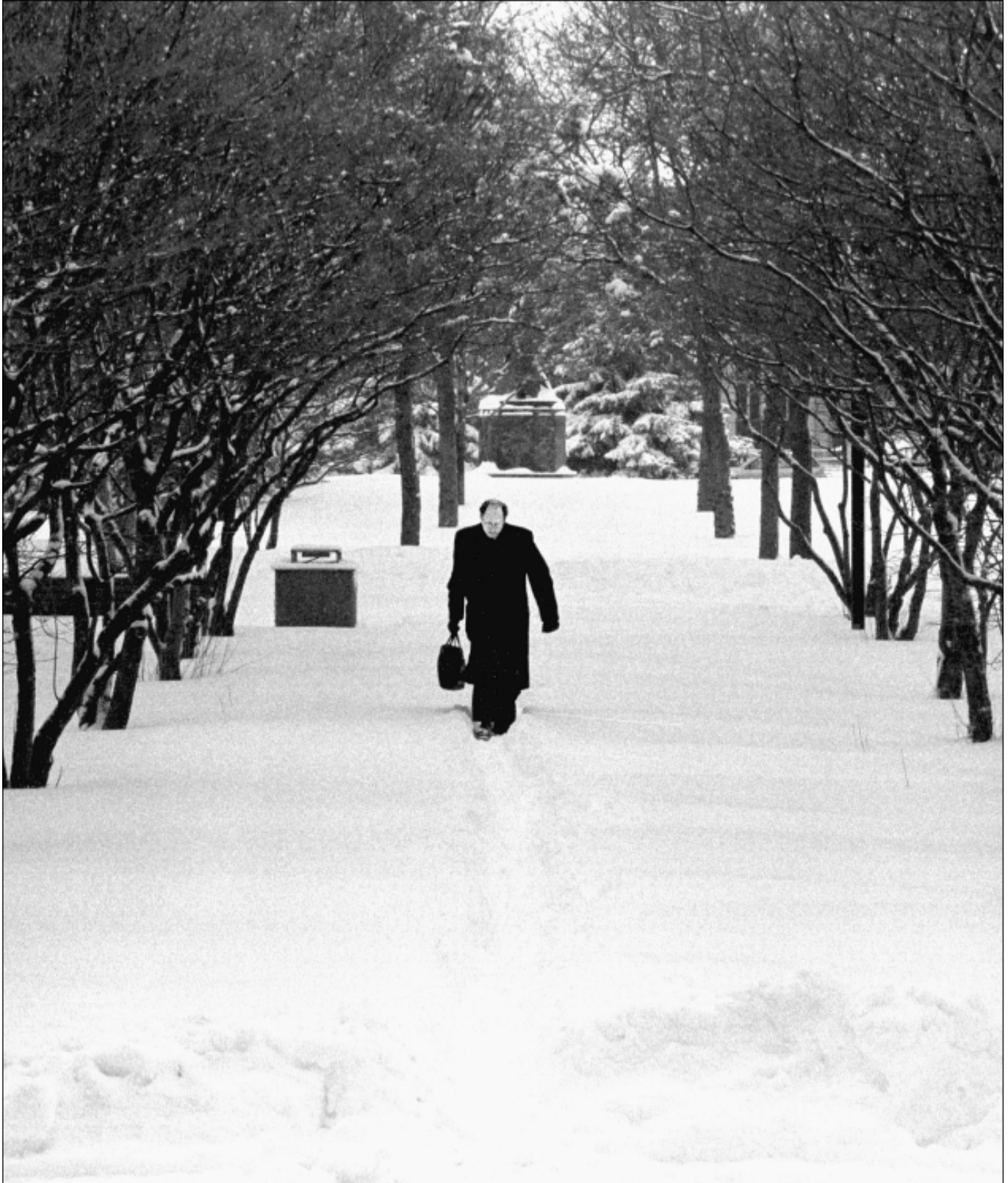
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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ March 12, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 10



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SESSION WEEKLY

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Reflections

A tie that binds the Legislature and the judicial branch is only a memory for Mechanic Arts High School alumni. The school no longer stands just east and south of the Capitol or anywhere in St. Paul. The Judicial Center now occupies the space occupied by the high school for 77 years until 1987, although it closed in 1976.

And though the school building is no longer there, it lives as a direct connection to the new Judicial Center that houses courtrooms and offices for the Minnesota Supreme Court. What's distinctive about Mechanic Arts High School is the number of its alumni that became public servants in local, state, and federal government, and made contributions to social justice throughout the country.

One of the school's notable graduates, who died on March 4, was former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun. He served on that court for 24 years, and deserves his place of honor in the Capitol across from the old Minnesota Supreme Court chamber entrance, facing the bust of his colleague and childhood friend, former Chief Justice Warren A. Burger.

Burger and Blackmun spent their youth on St. Paul's East Side. There they attended Van Buren Elementary School. Burger moved on to Johnson High School as a student and graduate, but his compatriot, Blackmun, went to Mechanic Arts where he finished as an honors graduate.

Around the time Blackmun was a student at Mechanic Arts, another St. Paul favorite son graduated from the school. He was Roy Wilkins, who later became a civil rights leader and head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Some other graduates were former House member Phil Hier; William F. "Billy" Williams, executive aide to 14 governors; and former Ramsey County sheriff, Charles Zacharias. Others were retired St. Paul Deputy Chief James Griffin and actress Joan Davis. Even today, loyal graduates maintain the Mechanic Arts "M" alumni club.

Rep. Tom Osthoff of St. Paul is also a graduate. He led the efforts to preserve part of the well-loved school by getting the old school water fountain installed in the new Judicial Center.

"Speaker David Jennings allowed me to have 12 bills that related to saving that fountain," Osthoff recalled.

And Mechanic Arts is fondly remembered by House employee M.J. Hedstrom. In 1984, staff and House members occupied the building during the State Office Building renovation. Hedstrom and others remember it as one of the best examples of English Renaissance they've seen in a school building. "It had massive floor to ceiling windows, with welcomed cross ventilation," she said.

She noted that the bullpen where everyone worked together in a collegial, fun, yet chaotic manner "had squeaky oak floors and child-size drinking fountains and restrooms."

So that no one forgets, the school's motto is chiseled on the fountain saved by Osthoff. The words that drove Blackmun, Wilkins, Osthoff, and others to a higher calling remain: "*Get Into the Game. Don't Be a Quitter.*"

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Jon Erik Kingstad trudges through the 16 inches of snow that fell March 9, the most snow since Halloween 1991 when St. Paul saw 22 inches.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

Three strikes . . .

Plan would keep violent felons off the streets for good



Three-time violent felons would be subject to mandatory life sentences under a bill approved March 9 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Photos and photo illustration by Tom Olmscheid

By Grant Martin

Almost five years to the day after California Gov. Pete Wilson signed the nation's toughest "three strikes and you're out" law, members of the House Crime Prevention Committee approved a bill March 9 that would make Minnesota the 27th state to enact three-strikes legislation.

"Civilized society should not permit a person freedom to injure others time and time again," said Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury), sponsor of the bill.

Seifert's bill (HF12) would require courts to sentence a person who is convicted of a third violent felony to life imprisonment. And for second-offense violent felons, the bill would lower the threshold necessary to use increased sentences already in place in current law.

Seifert, who once served as an assistant public defender, said that his bill will send a strong message to violent criminals.

"You do this again, and you are out of society," he said. "You will not walk again as a free person."

Dakota County Attorney Jim Backstrom and Sgt. Bernard Martinson, sex crimes investigator with the Minneapolis Police Department, also testified in support of the bill.

"If they do not correct their behavior, if they victimize someone again, they will not get another chance," Backstrom said. "This time will be their last."

Both Backstrom and Martinson told the committee of instances where repeat violent offenders would have been stopped by a three-strikes law.

Seifert's bill would limit the scope of crimes that could be counted toward the mandatory sentence and allow some judicial discretion. The bill exempts several felony level crimes from consideration, including certain drug crimes, third-degree assault, second-degree arson, and burglary.

The bill would also give judges the power to waive the mandatory life sentence if the court finds substantial and compelling reasons to do so.

Seifert said under the eyes of the law, for example, aiding and abetting a crime is the same as the crime and that he wants to give judges discretion in such cases.

Some lawmakers expressed concern that this provision would give judges too much authority and that judges would just ignore the mandatory sentence guidelines.

Critics of three-strikes laws argue that they clog the courts with jury trials as each felony conviction becomes more important and prompt exploding corrections costs as convicts serve longer sentences.

Seifert's bill now goes to the House Judiciary Finance Committee, where it is sure to face some tough questions about potential costs to the state's courts and corrections system.

The Department of Corrections and the Sentencing Guidelines Commission are currently studying the fiscal effects the bill would have on the state.

Early figures suggest the bill may cost the state an additional \$12 million over the next two years and may require an additional 650 prison beds.

Those estimates are based on an earlier version of the bill that would have applied the mandatory sentences to more crimes. The state agencies will be adjusting their figures, and the dollar amounts will likely go down.

Washington became the first state to pass a three-strikes law when voters approved an initiative in 1993. The Washington law applied only to serious and violent offenders.

In 1994, California Assemblyman Bill Jones, whose daughter was murdered, sponsored the three-strikes legislation in that state. The law was signed in March 1994, and that November, voters approved a similar proposition by a 44 percent margin.

The California law is much broader than either the Washington version or Seifert's proposal. Under the law, offenders with one serious or violent felony conviction — the first strike — are sentenced to a doubled sentence for the conviction of any additional felony — the second strike.

Offenders convicted of two serious or violent felonies receive life imprisonment for any additional felony conviction — the third strike. The second and third strike convictions don't have to be for violent or serious felonies.

After five years of California's three-strikes law, scholars and elected officials have begun to evaluate how effective it has been.

Jones, who now serves as California's secretary of state, recently released a report declaring the law a success. It said the law is responsible for preventing more than 1 million crimes and for saving Californians more than \$21 billion in crime-related costs.



Minneapolis Police Sgt. Bernard Martinson, a sex crimes investigator, testifies March 9 in favor of the three-strikes proposal.

law enforcement tactics, and conflict resolution.

California corrections officials had predicted that the three-strikes law would result in a prison population increase of 37 percent. The attorney general's office reported an actual increase of only 32 percent, compared to a 27-percent increase nationally. Twenty-three percent of all California inmates are second- and third-strike convictions.

But the Justice Policy Institute, a research institution based in San Francisco, challenges the findings. The institute studied crime data in California's 12 largest counties, and found that the counties that strictly used the three-strikes law did not see a significant decrease in crime compared to the other counties.

The institute also found that San Francisco County, which didn't strictly enforce the law, saw a larger decrease in the crime rate than the six counties that most vigorously enforced the law.

Other scholars argue that recent crime rate numbers might not be a good indicator of how well these laws work because the entire country has seen a drop in crime rates, even states like Minnesota that don't have three-strike laws.

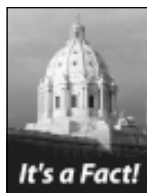
Others say the results of these laws are very difficult to observe because prosecutors are using the laws to plea bargain to get convictions and defendants are giving up information in return for having charges reduced to misdemeanor levels.

Meanwhile, California lawmakers are considering a bill that would limit their three-strikes law. That bill would require that the second or third strike be a serious or violent offense, making the measure more in line with Seifert's proposal in Minnesota. 🐾

According to information from the California attorney general's office for up to 1997, crime in the state dropped 27 percent overall. The state saw a 40-percent decrease in homicide, a 17-percent decrease in rape, and a 29-percent decrease in robbery.

The attorney general attributes these figures to the three-strikes law and a combination of community policing, new

Minnesotan fought scourge of the South



Andrew J. Volstead is known for his anti-liquor activism in Congress, but he took up other righteous causes, including a fight to stop racially motivated lynchings.

Volstead served in Congress from 1903 to 1922. A lawyer from Granite Falls, he was elected to the U.S. House as a Republican.

He is most famous for his involvement in the prohibition movement. He sponsored the Volstead Act, the law that enforced the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, added in 1919. The Volstead Act prohibited the sale, manufacture, and transportation of all alcoholic beverages. In 1933, the law was stricken from the books when the 18th Amendment was repealed.

But in a 1922 speech on the floor of the U.S. House, Volstead ignored the shouts of his critics to make his case for an anti-lynching bill he was supporting.

He argued that the 13th Amendment — the anti-slavery amendment — was not enough protection against lynching for African-Americans. Volstead built his argument on clauses in the 14th Amendment that guarantee due process and equal protection of the law. The amendment has been used both successfully and not so successfully in cases where state law is found to conflict with individual rights laid out in the U.S. Constitution.

"That a person who is lynched by a mob has been deprived of life without due process of law, and that he has been denied the equal protection of the law needs no argument," said Volstead.

The 13th and 14th amendments abolished slavery and recognized African-Americans and American Indians as U.S. citizens protected by the Constitution. Volstead believed the 14th Amendment was an important safeguard against states

allowing lynching. But, he said, it was not being used that way.

"We are confronted with a situation that must bring a blush of shame to every law-abiding citizen," Volstead said. "The record shows that since this amendment was adopted thousands of persons have been put to death by mob violence."

During his speech, several of Volstead's congressional colleagues asked him to yield the House floor, or to take questions. Volstead refused to accommodate them, stopping only once to respond to a congressman from Texas who questioned the police power of the federal government.

"I cannot yield," Volstead said. "If I yield to everyone who wants to ask me a question, I would never get through. It is impossible to discuss a constitutional question with continual interruption."

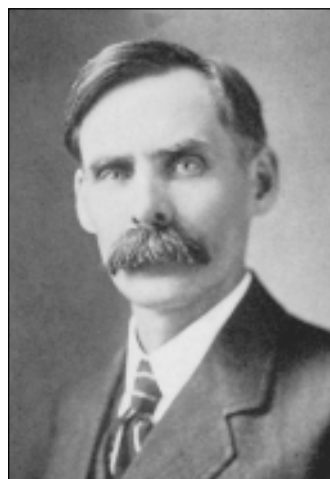
So Volstead continued, citing various U.S. Supreme Court cases and academic interpretations of the Constitution.

He resisted criticism that Congress had no power to control actions of

individuals, saying that if that were true, then the 14th Amendment would be void of meaning. Volstead argued that the Supreme Court would side with him, because Congress has the authority to pass laws that enforce and uphold the Constitution.

"The government that will not defend its defenders, that will not protect those whom it compels to face shot and shell to protect its interest, is a disgrace to the family of nations," he said. "And I hope that this Congress will help to wipe such a stain from our flag and carry out the purpose of those who drew and those who proposed this amendment."

Although the anti-lynching measure Volstead so ardently defended was passed by the U.S. House, it did not become law; it stalled on the Senate floor just before the 67th Congress adjourned for the year.



Andrew J. Volstead

Photo courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Hemp legalization advances

An effort to allow Minnesota farmers to legally grow industrial hemp appears to be as resilient as the crop itself.

A hemp legalization bill was introduced in 1997 but was rejected by a House agriculture panel. Another proposal to study the issue stalled on the House floor that year. In 1998, both the House and Senate approved a measure to go forward with a study, but that bill was vetoed by then-Gov. Arne Carlson.

This year, the issue has sprouted up again. An industrial hemp bill was approved March 10 by the House Agricultural Policy Committee.

Bill sponsor Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph) told the panel that his bill (HF1238) would permit experimental and demonstration plots to investigate the potential for industrial hemp as a commercial agricultural crop in the state.

The bill also would require that those wishing to grow hemp register with the state and that the commissioner of agriculture report to the Legislature each year on hemp activity.

Opponents of the measure argued that hemp is the equivalent of marijuana and, as such, is illegal to possess. They also said that industrial hemp legalization is being promoted by the pro-drug subculture.

"Drug use, especially marijuana use among young people, has risen sharply in all age groups in the past five years," said Jeanette McDougal, co-chair of DrugWatch Minnesota. "Children perceive promotion of the fiber-hemp marijuana to be affirmation and normalization of all marijuana."

The U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy also warned that legalizing hemp production could send the wrong signal to the public.

That office is also concerned that sanctioning the growing of industrial hemp could mean the de facto legalization of marijuana cultivation, since both are products of the same type of plant. It could be virtually impossible to tell the legal plant from the illegal version without chemical analysis, the group claims.

Bill supporters see hemp as another economic option for the state's hard-pressed farmers.

"We believe that industrial hemp has positive potential as a new crop for Minnesota," said Edgar Olson, executive director of

Agricultural Utilization Research Institute in Crookston.

He said his group stands at the ready in identifying markets and new uses for the crop, which often include paper, fiberboard, twine, birdseed, and oil.

The bill goes to the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Protecting wolves & livestock

The House Agriculture Policy Committee spent a great deal of time talking about the wolves, but the conversation had nothing to do with basketball.

A plan by the federal government to "delist" timber wolves — now called gray wolves — from the Endangered Species Act has necessitated that the state adopt a wolf management plan.

Meanwhile, agricultural interests are seeking solutions to the growing conflicts between wolves and farmers.

The result is a bill (HF1415), sponsored by Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) that would require the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to prepare a comprehensive wolf management plan and spell out how that management would be addressed in state law. The committee approved the bill March 10.

The process began in 1997 when a citizen's roundtable process was begun to study controversial aspects of wolf management, according to Mike DonCarlos, furbearer specialist with the DNR, who has shepherded the project thus far.

He told the committee March 9 that most of the citizen group's conclusions are reflected in the bill.

The plan includes provisions that would allow wolves to be killed in defense of human life, allow harassment of wolves to discourage contact with people and livestock, and establish penalties and restitution amounts for illegal wolf-killing.

But the bill drew immediate fire from some lawmakers and representatives of the ranching industry.

Janet McNally, a sheep farmer from Hinckley, said that 11 years ago her farm required no defense from wolves. This coming year, she will spend as much as \$2,400 to protect her lambs from wolves.

"That's my second highest cost, over feed,



Sam Baxter of Brooklyn Park, who manages a shop that sells industrial hemp products, shows off a pair of toddler's overalls and other items made of hemp to lawmakers considering a bill March 10 that would allow farmers to legally grow hemp on an experimental basis.

in my entire budget for 500 animals," McNally said.

She said her flock suffered from wolves stalking the animals and that on several occasions her sheep lost weight because of their fears of attack.

Dick Lecocq of Mora, president of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association, said problems with wolves didn't appear on his ranch until wolves were added to the endangered species list.

Since the number of wolves has increased, so has the number of reported attacks on livestock.

The bill moves to the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Regaining their balance



Minnesota's agricultural supply dealers are now allowed to sell Balance — a new pesticide compound — to customers outside the state, under a measure signed into law March 8 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

State law prohibits use or distribution of restricted-use pesticides not registered with the state commissioner of agriculture. Balance has received "conditional use" registration by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which makes it legal for use in many neighboring states.

The compound isn't available for use in Minnesota; however, under the new law, dealers may sell it to farmers in other states where its use is legal.

The effective date of the authorization is retroactive to Jan. 1, 1999 to allow out-of-state customers who have made a pre-payment on their 1999 agricultural chemical needs to select Balance as their product of choice later this spring.

The measure was sponsored by Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy).

HF370/SF424*/CH5

Farmer-lender mediation

With Minnesota's farm crisis growing more serious by the day, some say the state should do everything it can to foster communication between farmers and bankers.

Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) said that's one reason he has introduced a bill that would maintain farmer-lender mediation to settle credit disputes.

The mediation law was originally passed in 1986 when the state was facing its last farm crisis. It has been renewed every two years since.

Finseth's bill (HF779) would keep the program alive and would move it from the University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs to the Minnesota Cooperative Extension Service.

The bill called for the program to be made permanent, but the committee approved an amendment that would simply extend the program for two more years.

Jerry Schoenfeld, a lobbyist for Independent Community Bankers, told the House Agriculture Policy Committee March 10 that the original intent was to have the law expire every two years to avoid constitutional challenges.

He said he is intimately acquainted with the details of the legislation because he helped write the law as a House member in 1986.

"Mediation works best when both sides have an incentive," Schoenfeld said.

He said many lenders dislike mediation because they see it as a delaying tactic. He also said that over the years, too many lawyers had been involved in the process.

Most of the committee members were in favor of keeping mediation in place; however, there was little taste for making it permanent.

Rep. Gregory Davids (R-Preston) proposed an amendment that would maintain the measure's temporary status. Davids, chair of the House Commerce Committee, said he believes it is the only way the bill could succeed, given the stiff opposition by banking interests.

With the amendment attached, the bill was approved. It will next be heard in the House Higher Education Finance Committee.



CHILDREN

Preventing prostitution

A bill that would fund programs aimed at curbing teen-age prostitution was considered March 10 in the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee.

The bill (HF594), sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls), would provide grants to groups that focus on intervening in and preventing teen-age prostitution.

Errin Determan, an advocate with the TeenPRIDE prevention program, said that children are drawn into prostitution at an average age of 14.

"Unfortunately, girls and boys all over the state of Minnesota are trapped in prostitution," she said.

If funded under the bill, TeenPRIDE would open up another facility in Greater Minneapolis, she said.

A woman named Carol testified that she had been brought into prostitution as a child in the 1960s, when she lived in rural Minnesota. Carol now works as an activist in northern Minnesota to prevent teen-age prostitution. She declined to give her last name because she said she wants to protect her family.

"We have been trained to think of prostitution by what we can see," she said. "But in rural Minnesota we need to open our eyes."

Although the bill does not contain a specific appropriation amount, Clark estimated that about \$1.1 million would fund the grant program, which would be available statewide.

The committee did not take action on Clark's bill. Lawmakers will consider the bill for inclusion in the family and early childhood education finance omnibus bill.



CRIME

Tracking sex offenders

Seeking to close a loophole in the state's sex-offender registration law, the House passed a bill March 11 that would make sure offenders like Roger Lloyd Zimmerman are registered. The vote was 132-0.

In July 1996, Zimmerman broke into a Wayzata home and raped a 13-year-old girl who was babysitting for her neighbor. In 1998, Zimmerman was found to have committed the crime but was found "not guilty by reason of mental illness." He is currently being held at the state hospital in St. Peter.

Under the current registration law, Zimmerman is not required to register when released because he was found "not guilty" of first degree criminal sexual conduct and wasn't committed as a "sexually dangerous person."

Zimmerman was committed for being "mentally ill and dangerous to the public," which does not fall under the notification law.

The bill (HF228/SF174*), sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), would change the law to specifically state that offenders who are charged with crimes listed under the offender registration law but are found not guilty by reason of mental illness are to be registered.

The sex-offender registration law, passed in 1991, requires that offenders register their address with law enforcement officials for 10 to 15 years upon release from prison or commitment.

The bill now goes back to the Senate.

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Firearms for sale

Local law enforcement agencies would be allowed to sell confiscated firearms, under a bill approved March 5 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Current law requires that those agencies destroy all forfeited weapons that they cannot use, including firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories.

The bill (HF70), sponsored by Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee), would give agencies the authority to either destroy those weapons or sell them to federally authorized dealers.

The bill would also require local agencies to sell any antique guns they seize. But semi-automatic, military-style assault weapons would continue to be destroyed, under the bill.

Under current law, local law enforcement agencies keep 70 percent of the proceeds from the sale of any forfeited property, county attorneys and other prosecutors get 20 percent of the proceeds, and the state receives the remaining 10 percent.

Michael Jordan, former state public safety commissioner and current spokesperson for the St. Paul Police Department, said his police department would probably continue its policy of destroying confiscated firearms.

But he said the department would attempt to sell any antique firearms, which could fetch as much as \$100,000.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

Dog coats for dogs only

A plan to deter people from peddling clothing made of dog or cat fur was approved March 9 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

The bill (HF1211) would make buying or selling clothing made from dog or cat fur a misdemeanor level crime. The bill would also provide penalties for mislabeling dog or cat fur with the intent of deceiving buyers.

Bill sponsor Rep. Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland) said 2 million dogs and cats are killed worldwide each year for their coats.

"I want to send a message to the rest of the United States that we won't tolerate this," she said.

In December 1998, Burlington Coat Factory Warehouse Corp., based in New Jersey, recalled hundreds of Chinese-made coats because they contained dog fur.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

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

Combating child porn

Investigators say they are seeing a proliferation of child pornography on the Internet, and lawmakers want to give them the tools to fight it.

A plan to give sex crime investigators what they need was approved March 11 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

The bill (HF1081) would increase penalties for distributing child pornography from five years to 10 years in prison. It would also increase the crime level for possessing child pornography from a gross misdemeanor to a felony.

The bill would clarify the definition of these crimes to make it easier to prosecute Internet offenders.

Bill sponsor Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) said investigators used to see the same pictures being circulated day in and day out.

"Now they're seeing a new photo every day, and that means a new child is being raped every day," he said.

The bill now goes to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Chamber music



Minnesota Orchestra cellist Joseph Johnson of Minneapolis performs "Hungarian Rhapsody" by David Popper in the well of the House chamber as part of Arts Advocacy Day on March 10.



EDUCATION

Students as subs

A bill that would expand the pool of substitute teachers in Minnesota was approved March 11 by the House Education Policy Committee.

The bill (HF954), sponsored by Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), would grant substitute teacher licenses to college students who have completed their student teaching requirements.

Students enrolled in post-secondary education must complete a student teaching component as part of the requirements for a teaching license, and the practice occurs often toward the end of their degree work. The bill would allow those students to work as substitute teachers while finishing up their degrees.

The impetus for the bill comes from a current and projected substitute teacher shortage in many areas of the state, said Mark Porter, director of human resource and legal services for the Rosemount/Apple Valley/Eagan School District.

"My concern is that we're not able to fill even the vacancies created by illness," Porter said.

Buesgens, a school administrator in the same school district, said the shortage has prompted some teachers to use their preparation hours to fill in for colleagues.

While the measure was approved, some legislators expressed concern that having students as substitute teachers could raise liability issues if students were not fully qualified to teach in certain areas.

But Porter said that currently there are substitute teachers who teach subjects in which they haven't been specially trained.

Buesgens said that having students who are near graduation serve as substitute teachers would not be detrimental, since many recent graduates often use substitute teaching as a point of entry into a school district in which they would like to teach permanently.

The bill now moves to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

Punishment for truants

Lawmakers in the House Education Policy Committee approved a bill March 11 that would limit open enrollment options for students who habitually miss school days.

Rep. Mark Gleason (DFL-Richfield) is sponsoring the bill (HF953).

Gleason's bill targets those students who have opted to attend schools located outside

of the district in which they live. Minnesota's open enrollment law allows students to enroll in non-resident school districts within certain capacity limits for each school.

The bill would allow school districts to terminate the open enrollment agreement with students under specific circumstances.

The first would apply to a student who skips seven days of school, has been involved in truancy intervention services, and has been referred to juvenile court. Additionally, a school could expel a 16- or 17-year-old non-resident student for 15 unexcused absences. In many cases, an unexcused absence is one without parental approval.

School boards can dismiss students for a number of reasons, including bringing weapons to school or violating certain district policies. But under current law, attendance is not a basis for expelling resident students from schools.

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) said she views the open enrollment law as a right, not a privilege. Gleason's bill, she said, would turn open enrollment into a privilege by having an attendance requirement.

Terry Freeman, a member of the Richfield school board, said the bill would cause open enrollment students to take their choice of schools seriously.

"We're asking those students to take ownership of that choice," she said.

Freeman said many of the open enrollment students in her district have been expelled or were near expulsion in other school districts, and that the bill would give them an incentive to stay in school.

"We're trying to engage students in the learning process," Freeman said.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

Funds for adult education

Lawmakers on the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee considered three bills March 10 that would fund adult basic education programs throughout the state.

Adult basic education is available to people over the age of 16 who need skills to function above the 12th-grade level. Minnesota has programs that offer high school diploma equivalency degrees, English as a second language, adult literacy classes, citizenship education, and courses on basic math, reading, or workplace skills.

One of the bills (HF1695) would set up funding for adult basic education programs for the 2000-01 biennium. Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington) is sponsoring the measure.

Over the next two years, the bill would

provide \$45 million in aid to adult basic education programs and \$9.1 million for adult graduation programs.

Aside from operating funds, a portion of the appropriation would be used for grants for classroom technology, special education equipment, and a citizenship promotion program.

The other two bills seek to modify funding formulas for adult basic education programs in rural areas. In 1997 and 1998, the Legislature began allocating money on a per-student basis, and the amount of money dedicated to those programs was increased.

But as the changes offset long waiting lists for adult basic education in some areas, rural programs have suffered because they have fewer students than urban programs.

HF93, sponsored by Rep. Jim Tunheim (DFL-Kennedy), would grant a \$10,000 sparsity allowance to adult basic education sites in rural areas.

"We are faced with closure of these sites if something isn't done," said Carol Gregerson, an adult basic education coordinator for the Northwest Minnesota Service Cooperative.

The third bill would address the rural funding problem a different way. Sponsored by Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls), the bill (HF1475) would grant an additional \$1 per capita to sites located in areas with less than 30,000 in population.

Nornes' bill would also require the adult basic education sites to have an approved level of service to be eligible for the extra aid. The Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning would have to report to the Legislature on the service levels provided by

the sites and the effectiveness of the programs there.

Lawmakers did not take action on any of the three bills, but they will consider the measures for inclusion in the family and early childhood education finance omnibus bill.

Training teachers better

A bill that would allow K-12 public schools to set up teacher training academies was approved March 11 by the House Education Policy Committee.

The bill (HF1324), sponsored by Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria), would institute a pilot program for five schools to train college students studying to be teachers and enrolled in public universities. It would bring student teachers into the classroom at an earlier stage of their education and, most likely, for a longer time.

Cassell, a former school superintendent, said the goal of his bill is to attract and retain more people in the teaching profession and to avoid the state's projected teacher shortage.

School districts would be able to design their own training programs and would have to apply to the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning to become a training site.

Up to \$20,000 would be available to each training site for start-up costs. And under the bill's provisions, the North Branch School District would be one of the pilot sites eligible for the money because it has already implemented a teacher training program.

The committee did not approve or reject

Head Start singers



Head Start children perform a routine set to music while holding various cut-outs in the Capitol rotunda March 11.

Cassell's bill, but instead forwarded it to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee for further consideration.

Arts school name change

A bill that would shorten the name of the Lola and Rudy Perpich Minnesota Center for Arts Education in Golden Valley was approved March 9 by the House Education Policy Committee.

Under the bill (HF973), the school's name would be changed to the Perpich Center for Arts Education. It would be the third name change for the institution, which was established in 1989.

In 1996, the Minnesota School and Resource Center for the Arts changed its name to honor the late Gov. Rudy Perpich, a strong supporter of the school.

David O'Fallon, the school's executive director, said the Perpich family was in favor of the name change.

"Frankly, it's easier to do business with a simpler name," he said.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm), moves to the House floor.

Licensing rules examined

A bill that would set up a separate licensing process for some teachers of deaf and hard-of-hearing students was approved March 11 by the House Education Policy Committee.

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) is sponsoring the bill (HF213), which drew many citizens to testify at the bill's first public hearing on Feb. 18.

The bill would allow teachers of the oral/aural deaf education method, which does not use sign language, to be licensed after demonstrating a minimum competency level of American Sign Language.

Under current law, all deaf and hard-of-hearing educators must fulfill the same licensure requirements, which include a higher level of proficiency in sign language.

The oral/aural method teaches deaf or hard-of-hearing children to speak with the use of cochlear, or inner ear, implants and emphasizes lip-reading skills.

Greiling said the present requirements discourage people from entering the oral/aural deaf education field. And, she said, because those teachers exist in small numbers in Minnesota, many families must send their deaf and hard-of-hearing children to schools out of state.

"Parents in Minnesota don't have a free range of choices," she said.

Judd Grafe, a Rochester parent of two deaf children, said his children attend school in St. Louis because of the limited number of oral/aural teachers in Minnesota.

"I'm asking for the ability to bring them home," said Grafe.

The bill now moves to the House Government Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Private school scholarships

The House Education Policy Committee considered a proposal March 9 designed to encourage math and science education by providing scholarships for tuition at private schools that offer advanced-level curriculum.

One such school, the Minnesota Academy of Mathematics and Science, is located in Winona. The cost of tuition at the academy ranges from \$14,000 to \$18,000 per year.

Some lawmakers expressed concern that the proposed \$960,000 appropriation for scholarships over two years would solely benefit the Winona academy.

But Rep. Gene Pelowski (DFL-Winona), the bill's sponsor, disagreed. He said other private schools that meet the program criteria outlined in the bill could also attract students who receive the scholarships.

"I don't see why there couldn't be competition for these programs," he said.

The bill (HF41) moves to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee for further consideration.



ELECTIONS

Changes eyed in finance laws

A bill that would alter campaign finance laws, including those related to disclosure and gifts, was approved March 4 after several days of debate by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Some provisions of the bill (HF441), sponsored by Rep. Jim Knobloch (R-St. Cloud), would clarify current law that prohibits legislators from accepting gifts of any monetary value from lobbyists.

The bill would allow some exemptions to the ban, which Knobloch said are meant to be reasonable without allowing huge loopholes. For example, lawmakers would be allowed to receive free meals at events related to their occupations, such as a teacher receiving a meal at a teachers' convention.

The gift ban would also be extended to include local elected officials, which some committee members opposed.

"We passed this on ourselves, and this is where it should stop," said Rep. Doug Reuter (R-Owatonna).

Other committee members argued that the potential for influencing decisions through gifts is just as likely on the local level as it is at the state level.

Some opponents of the bill said its proposed disclosure requirements would mean less information for the public. Beth Frazier, of the Minnesota Alliance for Progressive

Child harmony



Ellen Ahlness, 3, takes a break from lobbying at the feet of her mother, Lori, during a rally in the Capitol rotunda March 10 for Early Childhood Family Education. The pair were part of a group from Harmony ECFE in Maplewood.

Action, called it “campaign finance de-form at its worst.”

Under current law, candidates are required to disclose the name, address, employer, and occupation of anyone who makes a campaign contribution of more than \$100. Knoblach’s bill would raise that ceiling to donations of more than \$250, which is in line with requirements for federal candidates. Donors of less than \$250 would only have their name and address made public.

Knoblach said his bill would lead to more disclosure of information related to campaign finance. The measure would require candidates to disclose assets of spouses and dependents, so that a person couldn’t avoid disclosing a conflict of interest by transferring an asset to a family member. Candidates who are independent contractors or consultants would have to disclose their sources of income that pay them more than \$1,100. And disclosure laws would apply if a candidate creates a special fund, such as a legal defense fund or a fund for an inaugural party.

The bill now moves to the House floor.



ENVIRONMENT

Budget trouble at zoo

A bill (HF878) approved March 10 by the House Ways and Means Committee would make up some of a current budget shortfall of the Minnesota Zoo in Apple Valley.

The zoo funding is one of several proposed appropriations contained in the measure, all for state agencies or departments that are seeking money to make up for deficiencies in the current fiscal year.

The zoo’s budget includes revenue from admission, money from the state’s general fund, and funding from other contributors, said Jim Reinholdz, vice president of finance for the zoo. The zoo’s current annual budget is \$15.4 million, he said, which was reduced \$500,000 between 1998 and 1999. And since 1990, the budget has been reduced by a total of \$1.5 million.

Zoo officials had requested \$1 million in deficiency money, but the approved bill contains provisions for only \$600,000.

The House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee recommended approving only that portion of the request.

Among those who testified before that committee on behalf of the zoo were third-graders Rebekah Manz and Jakki Fisk, who attend Capitol Hill School in St. Paul. They had recently visited the zoo with their class, and Rebekah pronounced the trip “better than learning from books.”

Many lawmakers agreed that the zoo is a



Third-graders Rebekah Manz, right, and Jakki Fisk, both of St. Paul, testify on behalf of the Minnesota Zoo before lawmakers considering a funding request by the zoo’s board March 8.



valuable resource but were reluctant to support the entire \$1 million. Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) said part of the problem with the current shortage is that the zoo received funding for a new exhibit, but attendance has turned out to be less than projected.

State law prevents the zoo from increasing admission fees. But some of the revenue losses could be recouped if that provision were to be repealed, said Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), chair of the environment panel.

That committee’s recommendation included allowing the zoo to raise admission fees to make up for the deficiency.

Reinholdz said the zoo would have to make up the \$400,000 that was not approved by laying off the equivalent of 60 full-time employees, which is about 25 percent of the staff.

The deficiency bill now moves to the House floor.



FAMILY

Court ruling prompts action

Lawmakers gave initial approval to a new process for child support hearings that would replace an administrative law process recently struck down by the state Supreme Court.

Under the previous system, child support cases involving public authorities were heard through an administrative law process. Because counties often enforce child support payments, these cases accounted for most child support cases.

The Legislature had moved the cases from the state district courts in an effort to provide a more expedient process and a more informal setting in which to decide child support issues.

But in a ruling released Jan. 28, the Supreme Court found that the administrative hearing process for child support cases is unconstitutional.

The court stated that the process violates the separation of powers outlined in the state constitution. And the court concluded that such decisions belong in the judicial branch and not in the executive branch.

The Supreme Court stayed the effect of the ruling until July 1 to give the Legislature time to modify the system.

The bill, approved March 8 by the House Civil Law Committee, would repeal the unconstitutional administrative process and would create a new expedited process in the judicial branch.

The bill would establish child support magistrates to oversee the hearings, and the state courts would outline rules for this process. It would also appropriate an unspecified amount to pay for the new magistrate positions.

“The court abolished a system, and it needs to be replaced,” said Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls), sponsor of the bill.

Diane Eagon, a district court judge in Hennepin County and member of a court work group on child support, said that the courts want to make sure the child support system continues to operate efficiently.

“We’re all concerned that child support continue to proceed as expeditiously as possible,” she said.

The Office of Administrative Hearings had about 12,000 child support hearings last year. Officials said that 93 percent of all child support orders were issued within 30 days of the hearing.

The bill (HF510) now goes to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

If you will be visiting the Capitol in the near future, call the Capitol Historic Site Program at (651) 296-2881 to schedule a tour.

First call for funds

Not all family emergencies warrant a 911 call. A system of community service numbers called First Call Minnesota can provide individuals and families with the necessary information they need to prevent a suicide, find a new job, or cope with a disability.

A bill sponsored by Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior) would provide money to First Call Minnesota to manage its 11 regional information centers and to develop a statewide database of referral and social services agencies. The bill was considered March 10 by the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee.

The measure would provide \$500,000 to maintain and expand the operation of referring people to agencies and services that can help them.

"Every day, hundreds of people start journeys to places they're not familiar with," said Bill Schultz, the organization's president. "Part of our job is to tell people where to go."

First Call Minnesota receives about 70 percent of its funding from private organizations, and United Way funds some of the state's 11 programs. The other 30 percent comes from federal funds.

In 1996, the Legislature made a one-time appropriation of \$237,000 to help First Call serve more counties. Since that time, every county in the state has been included in the organization's information database and five new sites have been added. First Call also maintains a World Wide Web site.

The committee took no action on Sykora's bill (HF847), but will consider it for inclusion in the family and early childhood education omnibus finance bill.



GAMBLING

Slots & cards at Canterbury

A plan for a state-sanctioned casino at a Shakopee horse track was helped out of the gate March 9 by the Subcommittee on Gaming and Technology of the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

The bill (HF1374) would allow slot machines and blackjack at Canterbury Park, a horse racing facility with a long history of financial troubles. The slots would be overseen by the Minnesota State Lottery.

The subcommittee also advanced two other bills that would allow new forms of gambling in the state, including card games at Canterbury Park and dice games in taverns.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), sponsor

of the plan to allow slot machines, acknowledged the controversy inherent in proposals to expand gambling in the state, but he said his goal is to benefit the horse racing industry.

A percentage of the proceeds from the slot machines would be used to increase the purses for horse races. In the past four years, the total purses at Canterbury Park have been about \$4 million. One of the track's closest competitors is Prairie Meadows in Des Moines, Iowa, which has about 1,000 slot machines that help generate purses totaling about \$15 million.

The higher purses attract more horses to the track, a better quality of horses, and more breeders to Iowa, Holsten said. Many breeders who used to be based in Minnesota have migrated south.

"This is about creating a viable horse racing industry in Minnesota," he said.

Among the benefits of revitalizing that industry would be a related boost to agriculture. The grain consumed by horses, for example, would increase demand for local commodities, Holsten said.

Daniel Mjolsness, of Seven Springs Farm near Red Wing, said the horse racing industry contributed about \$250 million to the state economy when horse racing was at its highest popularity in Minnesota in the late 1980s.

Gordon Adams Jr. testified against the bill on behalf of the American Indian gaming industry. Poverty was rampant in American Indian communities before gaming boosted those economies, he said. Adams said if gambling is expanded at Canterbury Park, he fears it will soon be expanded to other areas, which will hurt the casinos and their communities.

"Our economic situation has improved, but we still have a long way to go to become self-sufficient," he said.

The subcommittee also approved HF1281, which would allow a card club at Canterbury Park. Under the bill, the card games would not be banked by the track. Instead, a share of the money wagered by participants would go to the house. Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) is sponsoring the bill.

The third bill approved by the subcommittee was HF686, sponsored by Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph). The bill would allow dice games, ranging from "liar's poker" to "who buys," to be played in bars, as long as the establishment does not organize or participate financially in the games.

Dehler's bill was sent to the full Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee with a recommendation to pass. The other bills were sent along without any recommendation.



GAME & FISH

Aiming to be inclusive

A bill that would allow people who are mentally disabled to hunt with a parent or guardian was approved March 10 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Under the bill, sponsored by Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee), a person who completes the classroom portion of a firearms safety course but is unable to pass the written test because of a developmental disability could receive a provisional firearms safety certificate.

The parent or guardian that would accompany that person would also need a firearms safety certificate.

"It would be a very limited amount of people, and they would have to prove that the safety requirements would be met," Daggett said.

The idea for the bill came from a family that has hunted together for many years but was not able to bring along their child with Down syndrome.

"It's a self-esteem issue," Daggett said.

The bill (HF1274) will be included in an omnibus game and fish bill.



GOVERNMENT

Bolstering budgets

A \$17 million appropriations bill was approved March 10 by the House Ways and Means Committee to pay for budget deficiencies for the current fiscal year.

The bulk of the money, about \$11.7 million, would go to the Minnesota Department of Human Services to make up for a budget shortfall due to a delay in federal reimbursements for MinnesotaCare. Although the state and the federal government have reached an agreement concerning the delayed funds, and reimbursements began March 1, the deficiency funding is still needed to cover costs the department has had to cover in the past months.

The Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning would also receive \$3.5 million primarily to pay legal costs of two major lawsuits. Both involve claims that school districts are providing constitutionally inadequate education, one in Minneapolis and one in St. Paul.

And the Minnesota Department of Public Safety would receive \$629,000 to pay for license plates for new automobiles, which Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) said will be paid back when the license plates are sold. The

department would also receive \$200,000 to pay for additional security for Gov. Jesse Ventura.

A year 2000 compliance program in the secretary of state's office would also be funded under the bill. That office would receive \$225,000 from the state's general fund under the measure.

Other areas that would receive funds are the Campaign Finance and Disclosure Board, the Minnesota Zoological Board, and State Services for the Blind.

The bill (HF878), sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), now moves to the House floor.

Commission cut called for

The House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee approved a bill March 5 that would reduce the size of the Legislative Audit Commission from 20 to 16 members.

The commission is made up of 10 senators and 10 House members with equal representation from the majority and minority caucuses. Tax committee chairs in each body are required to be commission members.

The bill (HF1003) would repeal that tax chair requirement, and reduce representation from each caucus in both bodies to four members.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville), sponsor of the bill, said a 1997 law increased the commission to 20 members in an effort to make it more bipartisan, but he said it's now unnecessarily large.

The commission works closely with the Office of the Legislative Auditor, which performs about 80 financial audits per year and several detailed evaluations of programs. This year the office has evaluated state programs including out-of-home placement of juveniles, building and fire codes, and animal feedlot regulation.

Legislative Auditor Jim Nobles said the commission helps decide which programs will be evaluated.

"Every year there is a process of surveying legislators to get suggestions as to what evaluations they think should be done," he said. "We can't do all of them, so they have to have criteria to prioritize."

The bill now moves to the House floor.

Legislative history can be researched in printed materials at the Legislative Reference Library or, for the years since 1995, on the Internet. Find directions at:
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/hist/histstep.htm>



HEALTH

Tobacco funds draw debate

The House Health and Human Services Policy Committee spurned a plan to create an anti-smoking endowment with tobacco settlement money, but the panel approved another proposal to provide state grants for local initiatives to curb teen smoking.

Earlier this session, the committee gave the thumbs-up to a plan to devote the bulk of the tobacco settlement dollars to plugging the gap formed by the proposed elimination of the medical services provider tax.

But the panel considered another bill March 4 that would create a tobacco-prevention endowment fund and a board to administer it. That bill (HF223) is sponsored by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley).

"We've been given a gift — the opportunity to eliminate smoking without taking a dime out of everyone's pocket," Leppik told the committee.

She called her plan "comprehensive and sustainable" and said it would keep the principal drawn from tobacco settlement funds in place, supporting programs with earned interest. She advocated using \$655 million of the \$1.3 billion one-time settlement payments for her plan.

But Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) offered — and the committee accepted — an amendment that replaced the endowment proposal with a plan to provide \$7.5 million annually in grants from the state's general fund to community health boards for initiatives to reduce the rate of smoking and tobacco use among youth.

Mulder's amendment calls for broad collaboration between health boards and other organizations that already provide services to children as young as toddlers, such as Head Start. He said the amount represents a substantial increase from the \$2.5 million in state and federal funds now dedicated to such programs.

"The object is to stop children from starting and encouraging adults to quit," Mulder said, adding that the proposal would dedicate almost \$1 million to evaluate the effectiveness of the new programs.

Several committee members expressed concern that not using the settlement money for endowments would result in losing some of the funds to the federal government.

Mulder and Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) both argued that the state is under no obligation to spend the money on health-related issues and that the settlement doesn't delineate what amounts should go to

settle which portions of the claims the state made against the cigarette manufacturers.

Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie) said she envisions a turf war, not a collaboration, over funds created in Mulder's plan.

Amendments to create a children's endowment, a medical research endowment, and a health professional education and medical research endowment, in addition to the tobacco prevention endowment fund, were offered and rejected.

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls) said proposed endowments provide an opportunity to do something unique and memorable. He said they offer "unbelievable" opportunities for innovation.

"That opportunity doesn't present itself around here very often," he said.

He also noted that Gov. Jesse Ventura's budget calls for using tobacco settlement dollars to create endowments.

House supporters of the endowment proposals are not giving up their cause. Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) launched an unsuccessful attempt to add the endowments to the bill in procedural action on the House floor March 10.

Easing organ donation

Tissue and eyes would be added to the list of organs available for donation on the state's Health Care Directive, under a plan the House passed March 8.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park), passed the House on a vote of 132-0.

Luther said the modified wording would foster public awareness of the critical shortage of eyes and tissues and of the thousands of people waiting for such donations.

Noting that Luther herself received a donated liver from a Minnesota man, Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) praised her efforts on the bill.

"She's here today to our great benefit because of the foresight and courage of a gentleman from Fergus Falls," Bishop said.

The bill (HF74/SF301*) goes to the governor.

Training demands altered



Signed by the governor

A new state law will remove the current requirement that the state's boards of dentistry, medical practice, nursing, and podiatric medicine have rules requiring continuing education on infection control, including blood-borne diseases.

Effective Aug. 1, the individual boards will

have the option of requiring continuing education that is best suited to the needs of those it licenses, rather than a blanket program prescribed by law.

Proponents of the measure argued that the scope of infection control procedures is changing continually and the various medical boards need the latitude to make changes quickly.

Supporters also argued that the existing law is arcane because it requires even psychiatrists, who generally aren't exposed to blood-borne diseases, to complete infection-control instruction.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) and Sen. David Ten Eyck (DFL-East Gull Lake) sponsored the measure.

HF171/SF121*/CH5

Volunteer ambulance crews

A bill that would define a volunteer ambulance attendant for purposes of reimbursement was passed by the House March 4. The vote was 132-0.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), was requested by ambulance associations after a 1998 lawsuit brought certain wage and hour issues to light.

Under the measure, ambulance crewmembers would be defined as volunteers, and thus not entitled to minimum wage protection, even if they receive some financial compensation for their duties.

The bill (HF214/SF241*) goes to the governor.

Extending payments to clinics

Unless the Legislature acts, a good number of the state's rural health clinics and federally qualified health centers could go out of business later this year.

That was the message March 9 from Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) and others to the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Mulder, who is sponsoring a bill that would extend Medicaid reimbursements to those clinics, explained that under existing law the cost-based reimbursements from the state's Medical Assistance program are scheduled to end Dec. 31. The bill was approved by the committee.

When state reimbursements for those clinics was begun in 1997, officials assumed that universal health coverage and statewide implementation of Medicaid managed care would be completed by the end of 1999.

That would have made continued state aid unnecessary, according to Jonathan Watson, associate director of the Minnesota Primary Care Association.

"Clearly, neither of these two goals has been achieved," Watson pointed out.

With Medicaid revenue slashed 40 percent, clinics that serve mostly low-income uninsured clients in inner-city and rural settings wouldn't be able to keep the doors open without continued state aid.

There are believed to be about 120,000 people without health insurance of any sort in Minnesota and another 57,000 who rely on Medicaid.

Mulder said in a more normal clinic setting, only a small portion of patients would have their bills paid through Medicaid, making it easier to absorb revenue cuts.

But in federally some qualified health centers and rural clinics, nearly all the patients have their bill picked up through Medicaid.

Mulder's bill (HF332) would extend Medicaid reimbursements at their existing level through Dec. 31, 2002.

Although a specific dollar amount is not included in the bill, Watson said some clinics stand to lose as much as \$1 million annually if the Legislature allows the Medicaid cuts to become effective.

The bill moves to the Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Preventing lead poisoning

A bill that would fund lead-poisoning prevention efforts was approved March 8 by the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee.

The bill (HF873), sponsored by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), would provide \$500,000 over two years for CLEARCorps, an organization dedicated to lead-poisoning prevention. The group received \$225,000 from the state for the 1998-99 biennium.

In addition to state dollars, CLEARCorps receives funding from private and public organizations, and its workers are provided through the federal AmeriCorps program.

CLEARCorps educates families and communities about the dangers of lead poisoning and supplies workers to remove contaminants from homes.

Mulder said at least 3,000 children in Minnesota suffer from lead poisoning. And the children who are tested each year represent only one-third of the young population who should be tested, he said.

Lead poisoning occurs when substances containing lead are ingested in the body. This can happen when children pick up and eat old paint chips that contain lead or when they come in contact with dust and dirt particles that contain lead. Children who live in older houses in urban areas are often particularly at risk.

The damage can begin almost immediately, depending on the amount of lead that enters the body. Lead poisoning can cause learning disabilities, lower IQ scores, attention deficits, and kidney damage. In some cases, it can be fatal.

Dr. Catherine Jordan is a pediatric neuro-psychologist at the University of Minnesota who specializes in the effects of lead poisoning in children. She told lawmakers that because lead affects the brain, the poisoning can lead to severe behavioral problems, including juvenile delinquency and criminal conduct later in life.

In addition to the \$225,000 appropriated to CLEARCorps for the current biennium, the state funded another lead abatement program at \$75,000 during that period. Gov. Jesse Ventura has recommended no state money for lead abatement programs in his 2000-01 proposed budget.

The committee will consider Mulder's bill for inclusion in the family and early childhood education omnibus bill.

Debate on diet drugs

If you're overweight and receive benefits from the state's Medical Assistance program, the weight-loss program the state wants for you is the old fashioned plan — diet and exercise.

State law prohibits coverage of appetite suppressants, often called anorectics. In fact, they are banned in statute from consideration by a panel that reviews drugs to be covered by the program.

Rep. Linda Wejcman (DFL-Mpls) is sponsoring a bill (HF1047) that would put them back into the picture for consideration.

Wejcman told the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee March 11 she has no intention of requiring that such drugs be covered by Medical Assistance, only that they be allowed for consideration.

She said a former constituent of hers suffers from obesity and has diabetes and hypertension as a result. If he could use a drug to successfully lose weight, other symptoms may require less intensive treatment.

Opponents zeroed in on the potential cost of adding appetite suppressants to the list of drugs covered and questioned their effectiveness.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) said the drugs would "add costs to an already costly system."

Wejcman countered that the state's formula committee may not approve the drugs, meaning the bill wouldn't cost the state a dime.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), a physician, said that one of the drugs currently in use costs as much as \$1,000 a year and with additional levels of care required for those taking it, the cost could be as high as \$3,000 a year per patient.

He estimated the potential annual impact of the bill at \$30 million.

Dr. Jim Russell of Anoka told the panel that medicine can only be counted on to help a patient lose 6 to 16 pounds and added that in his experience, most people gain the weight back when they stop taking the drugs.

Wejcman said the original ban on consideration of weight loss drugs was likely linked to the use and proliferation of amphetamines in the early 1990s. She said amphetamines aren't used for weight-loss today and that continued research could turn up an even more effective drug.

"I wouldn't want us to miss that opportunity," Wejcman said.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) encouraged the committee to make its decision on the matter based on policy considerations and to let the Health and Human Services Finance Committee make the determination on how much it might cost.

The panel agreed and approved the bill. It moves to the finance panel.



HIGHER EDUCATION

Taylor made building

The House passed a bill March 11 that would authorize construction of the Taylor Center, a privately-funded building on the campus of Minnesota State University, Mankato. The vote was 132-0.

The bill (HF492) is sponsored by Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato).

Because the campus is part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, and therefore a state entity, the Legislature is required to approve the new building's construction.

Formerly known as Mankato State University, the school raised \$16.5 million in private donations to pay for the center. It is named in honor of alumnus Glen Taylor, chief executive officer and chair of the Taylor Corporation and owner of the Minnesota Timberwolves basketball team.

Taylor donated \$9.2 million toward the project, which consists of a 5,000-seat arena, athletic programs and facilities, and a student welcome center.

The bill moves to the Senate.

Heat is on Winona State

Officials from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system caught a little heat from lawmakers March 5 when they brought forward a multi-million-dollar bonding request to replace the boiler system at Winona State University.

"We are really at an emergency condition right now," said Darrell Krueger, president of Winona State.

But before they approved the bill (HF520), members of the House Higher Education Finance Committee asked why the school did not make its request last year in the MnSCU capital budget.

"I think I'll have to take personal responsibility for this," Krueger said. "I don't believe that I paid enough attention."

But Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), the chair of the committee, said MnSCU was also to blame for funding other projects instead of the boiler problem.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Gene Pelowski (DFL-Winona), would allot \$8.9 million for a new boiler system and emergency generators at the university. Normally such requests are made in even-numbered years, when the Legislature puts together a bonding bill to fund capital projects for state facilities.

While lawmakers usually pass an emergency bonding bill in odd-numbered years, Gov. Jesse Ventura has not indicated that he would support one this year. That leaves the possibility of using cash — most likely from the state budget surplus — for the project.

Elaine Belew, MnSCU's director of facilities planning and programs, said the institution was well into its budgeting process last year when Winona's boiler request came forward. But she said it would have been possible to drop some projects in order to take care of the problem.

Pelowski urged his colleagues to approve the bill, saying the newly merged MnSCU system could work out its budgeting problems as it matures. Rather than punishing the system by waiting another year to fund the boiler system, he said the Legislature should take care of the issue now to avoid having to close the campus down if the heating system stops working.

"I don't know that these boilers will blow like a Keystone Cops movie episode," he said. "They'll simply fail."

The bill now moves to the House Capital Investment Committee.

HESO pitches budget

State grants and scholarships, as well as programs aimed at providing college information to low-income families, top the list of budget priorities for the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office (HESO).

The office, which serves as the financial aid arm of the state, is requesting \$45.6 million in new funding for the 2000-01 biennium. The agency's officials presented its biennial budget proposal over three days ending March 5 before the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Currently, the office spends about \$140 million per year, with 90 percent going toward financial aid and information programs.

HESO officials are seeking additional dollars to supplement existing outreach efforts and to fund new programs that would help offset college costs.

One such proposed program, to be called "college corps," would pay college students to travel to urban schools to discuss post-secondary education choices with younger students. The program would use work-study funds to pay student salaries and would require participants to be trained in teaching middle and high school students about financial aid programs.

Another project, called Get Ready!, is already in place. The initiative is targeted at low-income families or families without any previous higher education experience. Program administrators inform parents and students about the costs of college and the requirements needed to attend a post-secondary institution.

About 10 schools have students participating in the project, which began four years ago. HESO is requesting a \$625,000 increase in funding over the next two years for the program, which supplies counseling and information to students in fourth through sixth grades.

HESO is also proposing additional money to beef up state and federal scholarships for students who perform community service. Also under the HESO plan, a new "Minnesota promise scholarship" would guarantee grant money to students if they fulfill a set of requirements. The scholarship would be aimed at students who come from low-income families.

Another part of the agency's proposal would increase the state's child-care grant program by allowing more schools to participate and raising the per-student funding. Post-secondary students with low to moderate incomes are eligible for the grant, which currently awards \$2,000 per child per year.

In his proposed biennial budget, Gov. Jesse Ventura has recommended funding about 9 percent of the office's request for new dollars.

Most of his budget recommendations for the agency are dedicated to technology and library systems, work-study funding, and fulfilling the state's reciprocity agreement with North Dakota.

Under the governor's budget, two programs that offer grants to nursing students would be cut.

The committee took no action on the issue. When the request comes before the committee in the form of a bill, it could be considered for inclusion in the committee's higher education omnibus finance bill.

Safeguards for students

A House panel approved a bill March 9 that would tighten regulations on for-profit and private career schools in Minnesota.

The bill (HF577), sponsored by Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield), was considered by the House Education Policy Committee.

Many parts of the bill contain only technical changes to current law, but there are a few provisions that would make substantive changes relating to consumer-protection issues.

State law provides and governs licensing requirements for those post-secondary schools that offer certificates in professional or technical skills but do not offer graduate or baccalaureate degrees. For-profit religious schools are exempt from these regulations.

Tuma's bill would require the schools to provide proof of the staff they advertise as well as clear information on costs and refund policies. It would also make schools include state government contact information for handling student complaints.

"If you walk in and find out the course is taught by Buffy the Vampire . . . you can walk away and not pay," Tuma said.

The bill moves to the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Computer training considered

A bill that would change licensing provisions for computer training was discussed March 9 by the House Education Policy Committee.

Under the proposal (HF1058), a legislative review process would be set up to update licensure and registration of computer training firms every five years.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Doug Reuter (R-Owatonna), would also allow some com-

puter training facilities that are licensed as schools to be able to register instead as training firms, therefore loosening restrictions on what kinds of students they can serve.

Training firms, which are not licensed, can often only serve groups of employees from corporations, but individuals must enroll in a licensed school to take some of the same courses offered by training firms. However, licensed schools often require an enrollment fee or entail a longer course length than the training firms. The bill would allow for training firms to serve individuals as well.

The committee did not approve or reject Reuter's bill. The measure was forwarded to the House Higher Education Finance Committee for further consideration.



HOUSING

Landlords seek legal relief

Landlords say that the Legal Aid Society is using Minnesota's human rights law to force them into the Section 8 rental assistance program, and they want lawmakers to put a stop to it.

A bill clarifying that the human rights law doesn't require landlords to participate in the federal Section 8 program was approved March 10 by the House Civil Law Committee.

"Landlords are having to spend \$14,000 and \$15,000 on these cases that are just being thrown out of court," said Rep. Arlon Lindner (R-Corcoran), sponsor of the bill (HF1026).

"They are attempting to make Section 8 a mandatory program," said John Horner, a lobbyist with the Minnesota Multi Housing Association.

Horner said that landlords are not discriminating against people who receive public assistance, they are choosing not to participate in an optional federal program that often puts additional burdens on landlords.

Steve Frenz, a Minneapolis landlord, told the committee that he doesn't accept federal Section 8 rental assistance simply as a business practice. He said that he will not accept the vouchers because he uses month-to-month leases and the program requires year-long leases.

Frenz said the city of Minneapolis has been very aggressive in pursuing nuisance claims against landlords and that he wants the ability to end a lease quickly to get rid of problem tenants.

Frenz said he received a "shot across the bow" from the Legal Aid Society saying that they were prepared to take him to court.

"Either I start accepting, or I would be subject to a lawsuit," he said.

Jane Michaels of Minneapolis was the subject of the Legal Aid letter sent to Frenz. Michaels has used Section 8 vouchers for the last 10 years in her Powderhorn neighborhood apartment. Frenz recently bought the building, and she cannot afford the rent without the assistance.

"I feel like there is no reason I should have to move," she told the committee. "I've been an excellent tenant."

Kevin Reuther, an attorney with the Legal Aid Society, said that the Section 8 program allows month-to-month leases after the initial year-long lease. So, he said, Frenz's business practice would fall under the program.

"Why is it that you really want to get rid of a tenant like Jane Michaels?" he said.

Janeen Rosas, commissioner of the Department of Human Rights, said that housing discrimination is a fine line, like all cases of discrimination.

She said landlords who reject tenants simply because they are receiving Section 8 vouchers are guilty of discrimination. But landlords who don't accept Section 8 vouchers because of business practices are not.

For example, she said, if a candidate for police dispatcher is rejected because that person has a thick foreign accent that might impede the job performance, it isn't discrimination. If that person is rejected because of their national origin, it is.

"Just because the two things are closely correlated, that doesn't mean that they're one and the same," she said.

The bill now goes to the House floor.



HUMAN SERVICES

Reducing pay disparity

Minnesota reimburses nursing homes in metropolitan areas higher than those in rural areas, but deciding who is rural and who is metro isn't as clear cut as it seems.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) is sponsoring a bill (HF912) that aims to settle that matter. The bill was approved by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Jennings would like to see Chisago, Isanti, Sherburne, and Wright counties moved into the metro category, which would mean more money for nursing homes to pay higher salaries in those counties. The bill also would allow the commissioner of human services to negotiate higher rates with nursing facilities that have high operating costs relative to their per diem payments.

Jennings said the Twin Cities population has pushed out into areas once considered

rural, causing an already severe labor shortage to become critical.

He explained that a nursing home employee in Chisago County could drive 10 minutes south on Interstate 35 into Washington County and earn two to three dollars more per hour.

While supportive of the idea, lawmakers on the committee questioned if the bill would solve the problem or create new ones.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) said the proposal may simply extend the problem to another tier of counties.

Jennings conceded the likelihood that the move could "create another level of unfairness further away out of the Twin Cities," but he said he didn't know any other way to begin attacking the problem.

Two years ago he investigated the cost of boosting all Minnesota counties into the higher reimbursement category, but the price tag was \$60 million, Jennings said.

Seventy-five percent of the state's nursing home beds are in counties with the higher funding level.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) said upping reimbursements for the four counties mentioned in the bill would mean less money for other rural counties where the wage disparity is extreme.

The bill will be heard next in the Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Council changes sought

A bill that would modify the membership of the State Advisory Council on Mental Health and update the council's reporting requirements was approved March 8 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Sponsored by Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), the bill would add a representative from the Mental Health Consumer/Survivor Network of Minnesota to the council. It also would require the council to report on its activities to the Legislature, in addition to the executive branch.

The council recommends policies, programs, and services for people with mental illness, and it helps develop innovative ways to provide and pay for those services.

The bill (HF740) moves to the floor of the House.

Testing innovative program

A pilot program aimed at revolutionizing the way services are provided to the state's citizens with developmentally disabilities has been so successful, funding for it should be continued.

That's what Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) told the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee March 9. His bill (HF429) would provide \$280,000 in funding over the next biennium for the Region 10 Quality Assurance Pilot Project.

The project is a two-year-old joint venture between Olmsted and Winona counties. It provides client-centered services rather than traditional regulatory or institutional-based programs.

A committee of local stakeholders works with county and state officials, as well as with a team of volunteers, to identify how best to meet needs and plan implementation strategies.

Far less emphasis is put on minimal performance standards and license specifications for services and more effort is focused on meeting everyday needs.

"I continue to be astounded by the mutual commitment of parents, advocates, counties, and providers to initiate real quality assurance and progress for people with developmental disabilities," said Frank J. Anderson Jr., chair of the Region 10 Quality Assurance Commission. "I have never, in any situation, seen such determination, time, and commitment by any group of people."

Bradley said he has long believed there has to be a better way to provide services and this may be it. He said it may even be an effective method for providing services for the elderly, as well.

At least five other counties in southeastern Minnesota are considering joining the experimental effort.

Bradley's bill will travel to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Homes in the community

A bill that would provide \$225,000 to Mount Olivet Rolling Acres in Victoria to implement a plan to help mentally disabled residents move to homes in the community was approved March 9 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Wayne Larson, executive director of the facility, said the plans have been approved by Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services, but a legislative OK is needed for the funding.

Any moves by residents from the facility to private homes would be voluntary.

The bill (HF480), sponsored by Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), moves to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Sharing administrators

Two nursing homes in southeastern Minnesota would be able to share administrators under a bill the House passed March 11. The vote was 127-0.

The bill (HF454), sponsored by Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall), allows common management of facilities if they have a total of less than 150 beds, are located within 75 miles of each other, and the administrator divides time between the facilities in proportion to their number of beds.

Under current law, only homes under common ownership can share an administrator.

The bill goes to the governor.



INSURANCE

Liquor liability coverage

A bill that would raise the requirements of insurance coverage for liquor stores and bars was approved March 9 by the House Commerce Committee.

The insurance, known as dram-shop liability coverage, is required of those businesses in case an accident victim claims that the accident was caused, at least in part, because the business sold liquor to someone who was already intoxicated.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville), sponsor of the bill (HF747), said the minimum limits for dram shop insurance haven't been increased since 1982.

Greg Felling of Minneapolis testified in support of the bill. Felling's father was killed in an accident involving a drunk driver. He said his family settled out of court for only \$50,000.

"I believe it would increase the financial responsibility of the insured and that public safety would be enhanced," he said.

McElroy described another instance in outstate Minnesota involving a woman who was unable to keep her house and put her children through school after her husband was killed by a drunk driver. The driver had been served at three different bars and was found to have a blood-alcohol concentration of 0.34 percent, McElroy said. Each establishment carried the minimum requirement for insurance.

Opponents of the bill say it would negatively affect rural areas, because most metro-area liquor stores and bars carry higher liability than state law requires.

Jim Farrell, executive director of the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association, said many businesses in small towns are already having trouble paying for insurance. And dram shop insurance isn't required of nonprofit

organizations or groups that have temporary licenses for special events, which means the liquor store or bar would be the target in a lawsuit, even if the person got drunk at a special event.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R- Stillwater) offered, and the committee accepted, an amendment that would require those organizations that carry temporary licenses to purchase dram shop liability coverage.

The bill moves to the House floor.



LAW

Court reporters for hire

The House passed a bill March 8 that would end the practice of freelance court reporters signing exclusive contracts to provide legal depositions for companies. The vote was 126-3.

The contracts are used by large companies, such as insurance firms, that frequently need the services of court reporters. Under such deals, the company agrees to use the court reporter exclusively and the court reporter provides services at a reduced rate. The practice is used as a way to reduce overall litigation costs.

The bill (HF346), sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), would make such contracts illegal and would give judges the authority to invalidate illegal depositions done under such contracts. Under the bill, court reporters could only be retained on a case-by-case basis.

Supporters of the bill claim that court reporters need to provide services that are neutral and fair, and that this practice casts doubts on the impartiality of the reporter.

The bill goes to the Senate.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Residency rules repealed



Minneapolis and St. Paul will not be able to require city employees to live within city limits, under a bill signed into law March 4. The new law became effective March 5.

The measure repeals laws that allowed those cities to make residency a condition for employment.

Proponents of the proposal, sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), argued that residency requirements make it more difficult for those cities to hire and retain qualified employees.

Stanek, who works as a Minneapolis police

officer, said residency requirements also violate people's basic right to choose where they live.

The Legislature passed measures allowing residency requirements for Minneapolis in 1993 and for St. Paul in 1994. People hired since the requirements took effect have been required to live in the city (after a grace period to allow time to find housing).

The Senate bill was sponsored by Sen. Steven Novak (DFL-New Brighton).

HF133*/SF107/CH260



SPORTS

Reprieve for stud users



The governor signed a bill March 4 to repeal an approaching statewide ban on metal traction devices — or studs — for snowmobiles.

Stud use remains illegal on paved trails. Damage to those trails caused by illegal use of studs prompted the 1998 law banning studs on all public lands as of July 1, 1999.

But the new law, effective March 5, repeals that law, which also included a requirement

that snowmobilers buy a \$50 sticker to use studs until the ban was to take place.

Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), sponsor of the bill, said the special fee and pending ban have caused parts of the state to suffer from lost tourism revenue, and the repeal will help bring some tourism dollars back to the state.

Hackbarth is also sponsoring a separate bill (HF928) that would address the issue of repairing the paved trails damaged by illegal stud use.

Sen. LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF6*/SF40/CH4

New stud plan

A bill that would require snowmobilers to buy a \$10 sticker to use metal traction devices — or studs — was approved March 9 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Under the bill (HF928), proceeds from the \$10 fee would be used to repair damage to public paved trails.

State law passed in 1997 prohibits snowmobiles with studs from paved trails. The \$10 fee is designed to pay for damage caused by those who illegally drive snowmobiles with studs on paved trails.

A 1998 law banning the use of studs on all public lands was repealed effective March 5.

The \$10 fee would be charged only to Minnesota residents to avoid discouraging tourism in the state.

Bill sponsor Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) said the fee would be waived in certain cases, such as for public safety officers.

The bill now moves to the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

CC ski fees heading north

Fees for cross-country ski passes would increase under a bill (HF842) approved March 9 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji), sponsor of the bill, said those fees are too low to adequately maintain the current trails in the state, and much of the grooming and maintenance is done by volunteers.

The bill would make the fees \$2 for a daily pass, \$9 for an annual pass, and \$24 for a three-year pass. The current fees are \$1, \$5, and \$14, respectively. The bill would also remove reduced prices for married couples, which are now \$7.50 for an annual pass and \$21 for a three-year pass.

Under current law, passes are required for

Hooded hunter



Rosie, a hawk, is perched on a chair as the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee considers a bill March 10 that would exempt trappers from wearing blaze orange. Rosie's owner, Dan Orth of Woodbury, testified that the color blaze orange frightens the birds when they're in the field hunting.

skiers between the ages of 16 and 64, and Fuller's bill would make the fees apply to everyone 16 or older.

The bill now moves to the Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.



TAXES

Property tax woes

Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul) doesn't much like the state's property tax system.

He told the House Taxes Committee March 5 that the best course of action would probably be to throw a hand grenade into the middle of it and blow it up.

"It's an insult," Milbert said. "We reward people who don't take care of their property, and we ring up the people who do."

But he's not optimistic things are going to change significantly or quickly because of what he called "institutional momentum."

To deal with one of the three areas of the tax puzzle he believes is most out of whack, Milbert is sponsoring a bill (HF200) that would tweak the limited market value law already in place, scheduled to sunset in 2002.

The impact of limited market value is to stem increases the market value that is used to compute property taxes.

Under current law, increases in assessments of residential, farm, and seasonal-recreational residential market value are limited to 10 percent of the previous assessment or 25 percent of the difference between the current and previous assessments, whichever is greater.

Milbert's bill would expand limited market value to all classes and would change the computation formula to limit increases in market value.

Milbert said the state can control class rates and levies, but has little control over market value.

"If you can't control all three, you can't control property taxes," Milbert said.

House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) said the state might be better off if citizens, and not the Legislature, could control the market value.

Milbert said that sounds good, but that the fact is that the economy is so dynamic right now that the value of farm land is going up while commodity prices for items grown on the land is at near-record lows.

The net impact of the upward spiral of property taxes is that a number of Minnesota residents are being forced out of their homes, according to Dick Wray, director of Minne-

sota Seasonal and Recreational Property Owners Association.

"If you had hard figures on how many people have been forced to sell their homes because they couldn't afford to pay the property taxes, you'd blow the lid off this issue," Wray said.

Limited market value was first enacted in 1973 to deal with rapidly increasing property taxes. In 1979, the concept was challenged constitutionally, but the law was upheld in 1980 by the Minnesota Supreme Court.

From 1980 to 1992, limited market value disappeared from statute. It was revived in 1993.

Milbert sponsored similar legislation last session, introducing the lower cap on market value as an amendment to a tax bill on the House floor. It was adopted by the House but later dumped in a conference committee.

The bill could be considered for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Taxes on tree trimmers

The severe storms of last spring and summer taught a lot of people a lot of things. They taught some people that the state's sales tax code can have some very long tentacles.

Donald Asleson of Minneapolis told the House Taxes Committee March 9 that it cost him \$3,800 to have trees removed from his property after two of the worst storms. The damage wasn't covered by insurance.

To make matters worse, he said, there was a 7-percent sales tax added to the final bill.

Asleson contacted Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls). Skoglund told the committee he

had been surprised to learn that tree removal after a major storm was subject to sales tax.

"The state gets a windfall whenever there's a windfall," Skoglund said.

He is sponsoring a bill (HF809) that would exempt tree and stump removal if the affected tree is on residential property, the trimming or removal is necessary because of storm damage, and the residential property owner is uninsured for the loss.

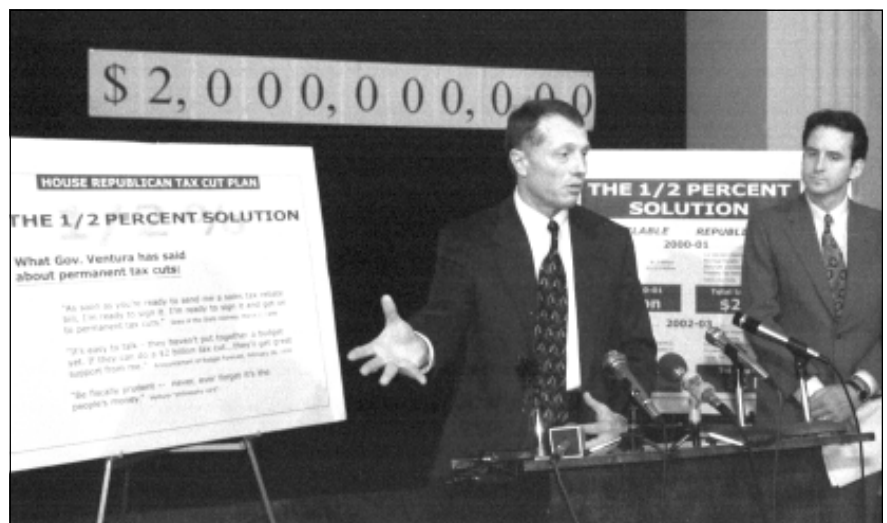
Skoglund's plan would administer the exemption as a tax refund. Sales tax would have to be paid on the service, and the property owner would have to file a refund claim with the Minnesota Department of Revenue documenting that the tax was paid and that the work met the conditions of the exemption.

The bill is similar to a sales tax exemption for tree damage included in a budget surplus rebate bill (HF1) currently in a House-Senate conference committee. The major difference in the two plans is the effective date. Skoglund's bill would be retroactive to Dec. 31, 1996, while the other proposal would extend the exemption back to March 1, 1998.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the taxes panel, said he shared Skoglund's shock in discovering tree removal after a storm was taxable. He said he supports the bill, but he questioned whether the state could legally exempt uninsured property owners while not exempting insurance companies who would pay someone to complete the work for their policy-holders.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Tax compromise offered



House Speaker Steve Sviggum extends a hand, saying he's ready to shake on an agreement for a sales tax rebate if Gov. Jesse Ventura and Senate leaders will agree to a 0.5-percent across-the-board income tax reduction. He was joined at the March 11 news conference by Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty.

The road to a tax break

Where will counties find money to repair roads and bridges in the coming years? Possibly, they'll do it with the help of a sales tax break.

That's the gist of a bill sponsored by Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) that calls for a sales tax exemption for county purchases of gravel, equipment, and heavy motor vehicles.

Molnau told the House Taxes Committee March 9 that a similar exemption was extended to townships last year.

County officials told the committee their first choice would be a comprehensive exemption from sales tax for all county expenditures, but they also expressed support for the break for road-related purposes.

They noted that because the state has not hiked the gas tax since 1988, counties have had to rely on property taxes to fund road and bridge maintenance.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) said he would like to see the bill require that the actual savings be deposited in a dedicated fund specifically for roads and bridges.

The amounts counties would save in sales taxes under the bill range from \$550,000 in St. Louis County to \$18,000 in Cook County.

Each of the seven metro counties would realize between \$350,000 and \$450,000 in savings.

Counties would not pay sales tax for purchases of snowplows, dump trucks, and other motor vehicles used exclusively for road and bridge maintenance. Cars, vans, and pickup trucks, regardless of their use, would not be included in the exemption.

Overall, the exemption Molnau is proposing would result in a \$14 million dip in state tax collections.

The bill (HF671) was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Truckers seek tax cut

A bill that would exempt certain trucking materials from state sales tax was considered March 9 in the House Taxes Committee.

Under the plan, trucks, truck tractors, trailers, and related parts and accessories used for the interstate hauling of goods would qualify for the exemption.

The bill (HF1099), sponsored by Rep. William Kuisle (R-Rochester), would encourage trucking firms to update their fleets with newer, more environmentally friendly vehicles, supporters told the committee.

Kuisle said that under existing law, all vehicles and the associated parts and accessories used in interstate commerce are exempt from the motor vehicle sales tax.

Instead, interstate carriers pay the general sales tax on a pro-rated basis on their equipment. The amount paid is based on the carrier's share of total miles driven in Minnesota, derived from the form they submit for motor vehicle registration purposes. The bill would eliminate that tax.

Thirty states already exempt interstate trucks from sales tax.

The state would lose about \$3.8 million revenue annually if the bill were to become law.

The measure was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

The tax on health nuts

Consumers who buy certain healthy, all-natural drinks pay sales tax. But those who purchase sugar-laden, preservative-filled beverages such as Tang and Kool Aid don't pay the tax.

That disparity doesn't make a lot of sense to many whole-foods sellers and consumers who testified March 9 before the House Taxes Committee in support of a bill that would exempt vitamins, minerals, and other dietary supplements from sales tax.

The bill (HF422) is sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls.).

Elizabeth Archerd, member services director of the Wedge Community Co-op in Minneapolis, said it's not fair to tax an item based on the "delivery method," or the goals of the consumer when buying it.

For example, the herb rosemary when sold fresh or dried for cooking is not taxed. However, dried rosemary capsules, which deliver a rich source of antioxidants, are taxed. She said the same is true for ginger, garlic, and broccoli sprouts, among other things.

And she noted the tax exemption was also needed to keep Minnesota retailers competitive with "e-tailers" — companies selling health foods over the Internet, which are not required to charge sales tax.

If adopted, the bill could result in a dip in tax revenues collected of more than \$12 million over the next biennium.

An almost identical bill (HF681), sponsored by Rep. Mike Jaros (DFL-Duluth), was also considered. Both measures were laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Business tax shift sought

A proposed change in the way Minnesota taxes its 10,000 multi-state businesses could result in thousands of additional jobs in the coming years, according to proponents.

It could also force some companies to raise

the price of goods and services they sell, according to critics.

Those were the conclusions of people who testified March 9 before the House Taxes Committee.

The bill (HF703), sponsored by Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth), would end the practice of taxing corporations on a three-factor weighted formula — sales, payroll, and property — and would instead base the tax on sales only.

The net impact would be that corporations that manufacture products in Minnesota and sell them in other states would benefit. Those with home operations in other states would be pinched.

Supporters of the idea said it would be an excellent way to provide an advantage for Minnesota to attract high-wage manufacturing jobs.

According to Minnesota Department of Revenue estimates, the bill would cost the state \$110 million in the next biennium. However, supporters say that amount would be nearly offset in additional personal income tax collections from more workers.

Skeptics on the committee asked where any new industries attracted to the state through the tax revamp would find workers, given the extremely tight labor market. They also questioned whether a boost in manufacturing jobs would lead to an even greater shortage of affordable housing and urban sprawl.

A spokesman for the Minnesota Citizens League said his group supports the idea because the potential jobs wouldn't be in the retail sector where expansion generally means more competition for existing businesses and low-wage positions.

The Minnesota Business Partnership, Minnesota Taxpayers Association, and the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce also expressed support.

Testifying against the proposal was a representative of AT&T, a company headquartered in New Jersey but with substantial sales in Minnesota.

"For companies like mine, the cost of doing business in Minnesota will increase and these additional costs may eventually be reflected in the prices for goods and services we sell, directly shifting the additional cost of the tax increase back to Minnesota citizens," said Teresa Lynch, government affairs coordinator for the telecommunications company.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.



TRANSPORTATION

Paying for Hwy. 55 raid

Local and state law enforcement officials approached lawmakers March 10 asking for funding to offset costs of the Dec. 20, 1998, investigation and raid on the protest effort in the Highway 55 corridor in Minneapolis.

The request was considered by the House Transportation Finance Committee.

Two hundred and twenty-five state troopers and 431 Minneapolis police officers participated in the attempt to remove a group of people protesting the re-route and expansion of Highway 55.

Protesters had been camped out at the site for several days, and some chained themselves to houses in an attempt to ward off bulldozers waiting to raze the homes in areas designated for construction.

"We walked away with no one getting hurt," said William Wilen, an investigator with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office. "That was our goal."

In an operation ordered by then-Gov. Arne Carlson, officers arrested 34 people. A total of about \$378,000 was spent by the groups involved in the investigation, with the Minneapolis Police Department spending \$165,000 on overtime pay and barricades.

However, Minneapolis Police Chief Robert Olson told lawmakers that he is not seeking a specific amount from the state and would leave the decision to lawmakers on how much they would allot to the department.

The Hennepin County Sheriff's Office is requesting \$56,000 and the Minnesota State Patrol is asking for \$149,000.

Committee chair Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) said she was concerned about approving the request because of the possibility of setting a precedent of state aid to local law enforcement.

"This is something that we've not dealt with on this scope before," she said.

The requested funds are not yet in the form of a bill, and were not included in Gov. Jesse Ventura's original budget recommendations.

Lawmakers did not take any action on the request.

School bus seat belts

A bill that would provide aid to school districts that choose to put seat belts in school buses was approved March 11 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

Under the bill (HF935), if a school district chose to install seat belts, it would have to

train students and parents to use them. And the Minnesota Department of Public Safety would be required to develop a seat belt standard for districts to follow.

Parents would also be able to opt out of seat belt use for their children, but would have to notify the school of their choice.

The use of seat belts in school buses has long been an issue of controversy because studies have differed on whether seat belts would improve or endanger the safety of students in the event of a crash.

Olson's bill does not specify grant amounts, but it would require a local, dollar-for-dollar funding match from the district.

Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake) is the bill's sponsor. The measure now moves to the House Civil Law Committee.

De-politicizing road repair

A measure aimed at streamlining the process through which transportation projects are selected for state funding was approved March 11 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

The bill (HF698), sponsored by Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), would create a 15-member major transportation projects commission made up of the governor, legislators, and gubernatorial appointees.

Its duties would be to review all projects with estimated price tags of more than \$5 million and to recommend certain projects be approved by the Legislature for construction. The Minnesota Department of Transportation would submit a list of projects every year to the commission.

The commission would be required to prioritize the list of pending projects and submit it to the governor and the Legislature.

However, the Legislature would be barred from passing bills for projects not on the commission's approved list. This provision aims to de-politicize transportation projects and avoid situations of lawmakers competing for money to fund projects within their districts.

In addition, the transportation department would be prohibited from going ahead on any major project without legislative approval.

The bill moves to the House Transportation Finance Committee.

Paperwork for plates

A bill that would reduce the steps required to obtain disability license plates was approved March 9 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) is sponsoring the legislation (HF165/SF460*).

The measure would affect anyone who applies for a set of disability license plates for a vehicle that has been modified for permanent use by a person with a disability.

It would do away with the current requirement that people must provide additional proof of their disability by a physician's statement or other means to obtain the special license plates.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

Safer motorcycling

The House passed a bill (HF766) March 11 that would allow motorcycles to display a blue rear brake light. The vote was 129-0.

Under current state law, only emergency vehicles, snowplows, and road maintenance vehicles can display the blue light.

Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights), the bill's sponsor, said the blue light would improve safety for riders by increasing the visibility of motorcycles on the road.

The bill moves to the Senate.

Minnesota State Agencies

(Area code 651)

Administration	296-6013
Agriculture	297-2200
Children, Families and Learning	582-8200
Commerce	296-4026
Corrections	642-0200
Economic Security	296-3644
Employee Relations	297-1184
Job Information	296-2616
Finance	296-5900
Health	215-5803
Human Rights	296-5663
Toll Free	1-800-657-3704
Human Services	296-6117
Labor and Industry	296-6107
Military Affairs	282-4662
Natural Resources	296-6157
Pollution Control Agency	296-6300
Public Safety	296-6642
Driver and Vehicle Services ...	296-6911
Fire Marshal	215-0500
Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division	296-6159
State Patrol	297-3935
Public Service	296-5120
Revenue Taxpayer Assistance	296-3781
Toll Free	1-800-652-9094
Trade and Economic Development	297-1291
Office of Tourism	296-5029
Transportation	296-3000
Veterans Affairs	296-2562
State Information	296-6013

Gerlach hammers home plans to give taxes the ax

By Grant Martin

If Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley) ever runs for president, he can boast of actual experience with his finger on the button.



Rep. Chris Gerlach

Gerlach, who served as a captain in the Air Force from 1988 to 1993, commanded a nuclear missile crew in a control center in South Dakota.

"Actually, the myth is that it's a button," he said. "There are many buttons. But it's actually a key."

Gerlach and his crew worked 24-hour shifts in the underground, shock-resistant facility, where his team was responsible for upkeep and maintenance of both the control center and the nuclear missiles.

"Of course, the purpose of being there is that should you get the orders to launch, you decode the messages, you go through all the launch procedures, and you have a nuclear war," he said.

Gerlach's military career began during the cold war when the Soviet Union was referred to as the "evil empire," and ended after the fall of the Iron Curtain. So he spent his last years in the Air Force actually deactivating nuclear weapons.

One of his favorite pastimes while in the service was participating in political discussions. He said there were good debates because officers in the military tend to be well-educated and politically knowledgeable.

"It's also a very conservative group, so we often had to try to find some people to disagree with," he said.

Gerlach currently lives in Apple Valley with his wife, Shelli. He works as a telecommunications sales representative.

The youngest in a family of six children, Gerlach grew up in the district he now serves. His parents moved into one of the first housing developments in Apple Valley.

Although his parents attended a few precinct caucuses, Gerlach said that his family wasn't very political.

"Politics was never an issue in my family," he said. "Nobody ever discussed politics."

Gerlach stumbled into the political arena following several less-than-stellar grades in calculus at the University of St. Thomas. Realizing that his computer science ambitions wouldn't become a reality, he started looking for a new major.

"I decided that I would jump ship on the computer science and switch over to political science, which I loved," he said. "It was one of the best decisions I ever made."

When he returned to Minnesota in 1993 following his service in the Air Force, Gerlach became active with several local political campaigns, including managing former Rep. Eileen Tompkins' 1994 campaign for the House. And in 1996, he worked on Phil Gramm's presidential campaign in Minnesota.

Gerlach said those experiences taught him a good deal about politics that wasn't covered in the classroom.

"A great portion of it is about personalities and people," he said. "The academic study of political science is devoid of that. To be successful in politics you have to understand people."

When Tompkins decided not to run in 1998, Gerlach decided to run for her seat, and in November he won his first elected position.

Gerlach said he will focus on the issues that he "hammered on" during the campaign — crime, education, and, most importantly, taxes.

"The tax burden in Minnesota is outra-

geous at all levels — be it income tax, sales tax, property taxes. You name it," he said.

Gerlach said that Minnesota ranks 17th in the nation in wages before taxes. After taxes are taken out, he said, the state ranks 43rd.

"To me, that's outrageous," he said.

To that end, Gerlach is a co-sponsor of a House Republican permanent income-tax reduction proposal. He is also a co-sponsor on a larger tax cut plan, which calls for a 1-percent across-the-board cut.

"If I was issued a magic wand when I got this office, I would wave it and do that," he said.

Gerlach also said that the Legislature needs to curb its appetite on spending.

"It's funny because you walk in and it says 'No Solicitations,'" he said, referring to a sign on the front door of the State Office Building. "That's all that goes on here. People are asking for money. This place is designed for that."

Gerlach readily admits that he isn't a "policy wonk." He said that he realizes that his strengths lie in connecting people to the political process. And, he said, those skills are important for the Legislature.

"There is a handful of policy wonks, and there's a handful of people people," he said. "Altogether, collectively, it works."

District 36A

1995 population: 38,400

Largest city: Apple Valley

County: Dakota

Location: south suburban metro

Top concern: "The biggest thing is tax cuts. All through the campaign I hammered on that. I think that was clearly a significant portion of why I won by the margin I did."

— Rep. Chris Gerlach

Frequently called numbers

(Area code 651)

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol 296-0271

Voice mail/order bills 296-2343

Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate

110 Capitol 296-2887

Index, House

211 Capitol 296-6646

Information, Senate

231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House

175 State Office Building 296-2146

TTY, Senate 296-0250

Toll free 1-888-234-1112

TTY, House 296-9896

Toll free 1-800-657-3550

Lawmaker's agenda built on northern economic concerns

By Paul Wahl

Each Sunday, Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack) leaves his home in the quiet woods of northern Minnesota and journeys to the din and hubbub of St. Paul to represent the people of District 4B.



Rep. Larry Howes

He brings with him a great awareness of the voters he represents, and he also brings along a belief in common sense and fundamental values.

"I'm just an average guy doing an average job," said Howes, who has been involved in Republican politics for the past decade.

Among his credits are a stint as chair of the 8th Congressional District for U.S. Sen. Rod Grams' campaign and a variety of political jobs to which he attributes a great number of blisters on his feet.

"I've worked parade routes in 50 percent of the towns in the 8th Congressional District for one candidate or another," Howes said.

Last year, when party leaders began to look for a House candidate from Howes' district, he initially did not even consider running because he was the district's party chair. But when no viable candidate came forward, Howes said he'd run if the people encouraged him.

They did. He did. And he won.

"I think really the reason I won is that I didn't try to pretend to be someone I wasn't,"

Howes said. "I pretty much told people what you see is what you get. I'll come down here as a freshman, but I don't believe I'll be a rookie."

Howes said all his years working for the party prepared him for what the legislative process entails.

"It's taken me less time to understand the majority process than the incumbents—nothing against the incumbents," he said. "It's just that for so long they've been in the minority, so they tend to feel they need to talk incessantly to get their bill passed when all they have to do is sit down, shut up, and vote."

Howes serves on the House Commerce Committee, Health and Human Resources Policy Committee, and the environment and natural resources finance and policy committees.

Representing his district means working on bills that impact its three major endeavors: tourism, hunting, and logging.

"I believe Cass County is the lowest county in the state with regard to manufacturing jobs," Howes said. "In fact, it's one of the lowest in the country."

Tourism in Cass County consists primarily of mom-and-pop resorts. Howes has worked on several proposals aimed at providing tax relief and extending the number of days resorts can operate and still qualify for a reduced property tax rate.

The district also has a large number of hunters, so he's sponsoring a bill that would offer a lifetime hunting and fishing license.

Howes is also trying to convince his fellow legislators to increase state funding for the Mississippi Headwaters Board, which oversees issues relating to the river's northernmost 400 miles.

He explained that the river is under federal jurisdiction, but the U.S. Forest Service has allowed this board to take the lead in a variety of environmental issues.

"They're watching us to see how we do the job," Howes said. "As long as we continue to do a good job, they'll stay out of there. Anytime the locals can do the job, the big guy doesn't have to come to town."

So far, Howes has found his work in the House challenging, but he said the quality of the staff, both partisan and nonpartisan, has lightened the load and earned his respect.

"Just because you author a bill doesn't make you a hero, doesn't make you important," Howes said. "It simply means you're the vehicle for all these wonderful people who work down here to do their job. And if they do their job well, your bill gets passed and it helps the people of your district."

District 4B

1995 population: 35,734

Largest city: Park Rapids

Counties: Itasca, Cass, Hubbard, Wadena

Location: north-central Minnesota

Top concern: "I am here representing 35,000 people. That's why I'm here. They've called on me to vote for them, and that's what I'm doing."

— Rep. Larry Howes

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

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Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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 (651) 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 committee, topic, author, file number, and other categories. The office can also give you the current status of legislation.

Senate Information Office

231 State Capitol (651) 296-0504

The Senate Information Office is responsible for all information about the Senate, including the committee schedule, bill status, legislator information, and the distribution of bill copies.

Senate Media Services

B-44 State Capitol (651) 296-0264

Senate Media Services, a bipartisan office, produces television programs, multi-media productions, scriptwriting, photography and graphics. It offers live coverage of the Senate floor sessions and some committee hearings.

Bill Introductions

HF1484-HF1896

Monday, March 8

HF1484—Anderson, I. (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Unicameral legislature with four-year terms provided, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF1485—Howes (R) **Taxes**

Deep Portage environmental learning center construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF1486—Workman (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Prohibition against certain metals in products repealed.

HF1487—Wenzel (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Minimum fire state aid eligibility expanded to post-1993 relief associations.

HF1488—Chaudhary (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Housing pilot project established in Hilltop, and money appropriated.

HF1489—Chaudhary (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Military bonus program established for members of the national guard or reserve components ordered to active duty, and money appropriated.

HF1490—Mullery (DFL) **Crime Prevention**

Hennepin and Ramsey counties community service crime prevention grants authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1491—Larsen, P. (R) **Transportation Policy**

Annual overweight permit for firefighting equipment authorized.

HF1492—Larsen, P. (R) **Transportation Policy**

Pavement ends sign required for highways.

HF1493—Ozment (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Public waters wetlands classification modified.

HF1494—Olson (R) **Civil Law**

Inmate actions challenging rehabilitation program expenditure levels modified to include employee assignments.

HF1495—McElroy (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Payment of commissions provided after employee termination, and certain fees prohibited to applicants or employees.

HF1496—Kubly (DFL) **Agriculture & Rural Development Finance**

Family farm advocates and agriculture information centers appropriated money.

HF1497—Ness (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 466, Dassel-Cokato, appropriated money for a technology grant.

HF1498—Lindner (R) **Transportation Finance**

Metropolitan Council appropriated money for express bus service between Rogers and downtown Minneapolis.

HF1499—Workman (R) **Commerce**

Recreational vehicle guests included in regulations governing hotels and guests when staying at hotel.

HF1500—Larson, D. (DFL) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Unnecessary Metropolitan Council financial report eliminated.

HF1501—Larson, D. (DFL) **Transportation Policy**

Vehicle weight inspection regulations modified.

HF1502—Rhodes (R) **Crime Prevention**

Bias crimes provided additional penalty enhancements.

HF1503—Fuller (R) **Civil Law**

Attorney fees awarded in certain municipal contract cases.

HF1504—Winter (DFL) **Agriculture Policy**

Agricultural cooperative member protections required and certain actions prohibited.

HF1505—Carruthers (DFL) **Taxes**

Nonprescription drugs and residential fuels exempted from sales tax.

HF1506—Howes (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Trade and economic development tourism appropriations provided.

HF1507—Skoe (DFL) **Transportation Policy**

Certain motor vehicle written application requirements eliminated.

HF1508—Kelliher (DFL) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Mercury reduction provided and money appropriated.

HF1509—Mahoney (DFL) **Crime Prevention**

Asian-Pacific violence prevention grants authorized and money appropriated.

HF1510—Erhardt (R) **Commerce**

Filing fees modified for securities issued by open end management companies and unit investments trusts.

HF1511—Carruthers (DFL) **Taxes**

General sales tax rate reduction provided.

HF1512—Entenza (DFL) **Education Policy**

Area learning centers modified to include programs for children who speak a language other than English, grant program established, and money appropriated.

HF1513—Carruthers (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Basicskills intervention programs funding created, and money appropriated.

HF1514—Daggett (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Perham business technology center appropriation provided.

HF1515—Daggett (R) **Taxes**

Certain assisted living facility property tax exemption provided.

HF1516—Daggett (R) **Commerce**

Detroit Lakes additional liquor license authorized.

HF1517—Haas (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Licensed family child care providers exempted from certain voluntary standards, permanent age groups established, and rule advisory group established.

HF1518—Mariani (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Community resources program appropriation provided.

HF1519—Mahoney (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Senior citizen drug program expanded, endowment fund created, and money appropriated.

HF1520—Buesgens (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

Murphy's Landing; historical educational programming grants authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1521—Howes (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Sustainable lakes educational program appropriation provided.

HF1522—Larsen, P. (R) **Transportation Policy**

Cities authorized to establish speed limits for streets under their jurisdiction.

HF1523—Vandever (R) **Transportation Policy**

School zone speed limit of 25 miles per hour established.

HF1524—Davids (R)
Commerce

Financial transaction card regulation provided, and minimum payment disclosures required.

HF1525—Skoe (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy

Gross income definition modified under the MinnesotaCare program.

HF1526—Tuma (R)
Higher Education Finance

Minnesota promise scholarship and intervention investment program established, and money appropriated.

HF1527—Kubly (DFL)
Taxes

Granite Falls multipurpose center construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF1528—Skoe (DFL)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance

Wheat and barley scab disease research funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF1529—Nornes (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 542, Battle Lake, technology grant authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1530—Finseth (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance

Potato aphid research appropriation provided.

HF1531—Finseth (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance

Seed potato inspection appropriation provided.

HF1532—Jennings (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Chisago County authorized to convey and privately sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF1533—Howes (R)
Taxes

State payments to counties containing Indian gaming casinos increased.

HF1534—Olson (R)
Transportation Policy

School bus and driver traffic regulations modified.

HF1535—Dawkins (DFL)
Civil Law

Creditor remedies enforcement suspended during time of jury service.

HF1536—Holsten (R)
Commerce

Direct shipment law modified relating to liquor, permits required for common carriers and delivery agents, and certain criminal penalties increased.

HF1537—Westrom (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

University of Minnesota defined as a governmental unit relating to joint powers agreements.

HF1538—Vandever (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Townships authorized to create capital reserve funds.

HF1539—Davids (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Olmsted County regional trail appropriation provided.

HF1540—Larson, D. (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Employee transfer provided between Metropolitan Council and other political subdivisions.

HF1541—Mullery (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Group long-term care coverage provided for members and annuitants of public employees pension funds and other eligible persons.

HF1542—Carruthers (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Facilities grant authorized to Independent School District No. 286, Brooklyn Center, and money appropriated.

HF1543—Hausman (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Uniform Municipal Contracting Act procedure and definitions update provided.

HF1544—Hausman (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Governmental units exempted to jointly or cooperatively contract.

HF1545—Van Dellen (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Prompt payment required by health plan companies of proper claims submitted by patients and health care providers.

HF1546—Holberg (R)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance

Grant provided for an organization to develop and administer a residential program for women leaving prostitution, and money appropriated.

HF1547—Bishop (R)
Higher Education Finance

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities capital improvements authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1548—Ness (R)
Taxes

Meeker County authorized to impose aggregate production tax.

HF1549—Buesgens (R)
Crime Prevention

Fire investigator licensure required.

HF1550—Ozment (R)
Transportation Policy

Highway right-of-way claims of loss liability governed.

HF1551—Ozment (R)
Transportation Policy

Transportation state contracts provisions modified, departmental technical corrections provided, and funding amounts modified.

HF1552—Ozment (R)
Crime Prevention

DWI; driver's license revocation and reinstatement provisions modified, and waiting period required for limited driver's license after certain violations and convictions.

HF1553—Ozment (R)
Crime Prevention

Department of Corrections provisions modified relating to conditional release, restitution, and rehabilitation, sentence clarification provided, and reports required.

HF1554—Ozment (R)
Crime Prevention

Department of Corrections authorized to contract with Department of Human Services to conduct criminal history background checks for job applicants for juvenile corrections facilities.

HF1555—Ozment (R)
Crime Prevention

Court-ordered screening required prior to making dispositional orders for out-of-home placement in certain juvenile cases.

HF1556—Ozment (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Civil service pilot project extended in the Housing Finance Agency.

HF1557—Ozment (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Child labor law violation penalties increased.

HF1558—Ozment (R)
Agriculture Policy

Board of Grain Standards provisions and duties modified, rulemaking authorized, and definitions clarified.

HF1559—Ozment (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Cost allocation system modified for the metropolitan disposal system.

HF1560—Ozment (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Design-build construction method authorized for certain state agency contracts.

HF1561—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Metropolitan Council authorized to offer early retirement incentive.

HF1562—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy

Developmental disabilities provisions modified, consolidated standards intent clarified and expanded to include respite sites, medication administration clarified, and family support program provisions modified.

HF1563—Entenza (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy

Child support procedures and requirements modified, certain clarifications made, account created, and money appropriated.

HF1564—Entenza (DFL)
Commerce

Commissioner of commerce enforcement authority provided, service of process and residential building contractors and remodelers regulated, and criminal penalties provided.

HF1565—Anderson, B. (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Eligibility expanded for certain state military service.

HF1566—Leppik (R) Health & Human Services Policy Clean Indoor Air Act provisions modified.	HF1577—Lindner (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Training for people with disabilities appropriation provided to Advocating Change Together, Inc. (ACT).	HF1588—Skoglund (DFL) Transportation Policy Metropolitan area transit and paratransit capital expenditures financing provided.	HF1599—Dehler (R) Education Policy Minnesota career and technical education leadership council established.
HF1567—Seifert, M. (R) Health & Human Services Policy Regional emergency response training center in Marshall bonds issued, and money appropriated.	HF1578—Boudreau (R) Health & Human Services Policy Certain group residential housing facilities maximum reimbursement rate exception provided, sunset removed on eligibility for certain state programs, and money appropriated.	HF1589—Skoglund (DFL) Transportation Policy Annual financing of metropolitan area transit and paratransit capital expenditures provided.	HF1600—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Policy Tobacco settlement money disposition provided, Minnesota families foundation established, health-related endowment funds created, and money appropriated.
HF1568—Boudreau (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Certain state building code authority, enforcement, and inspection provisions transferred to commissioner of administration.	HF1579—Dehler (R) Crime Prevention Sheriffs outside of municipalities permitted to consent to the furnishing of firearms to minors under 14 years of age.	HF1590—Mahoney (DFL) Crime Prevention Warrant authority of alcohol and gaming agents clarified.	HF1601—Tuma (R) Higher Education Finance Database access program for libraries and schools modified, and Higher Education Services Office appropriation provided.
HF1569—Boudreau (R) Education Policy Site council recommendations provided for board appointments, provisions clarified relating to the Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and Blind, and money appropriated.	HF1580—Hasskamp (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Crosslake, and bond sale authorized.	HF1591—Dawkins (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy State employment affirmative action provisions modified.	HF1602—Abeler (R) Health & Human Services Policy Prescription drug coverage for the senior drug program clarified, medical assistance eligibility and income provisions modified, and other health care provider provisions clarified.
HF1570—Tingelstad (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Teacher retirement survivorship interest assigned to estate.	HF1581—Hasskamp (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided Nisswa, and bond sale authorized.	HF1592—Mullery (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Penalties provided for violations of employment agency provisions, and licensure and registration provisions clarified.	HF1603—Daggett (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Landfill cleanup program obsolete accounting and reporting requirements repealed.
HF1571—Harder (R) Civil Law Covenant marriages provided.	HF1582—Biernat (DFL) Education Policy Education and job training assistance provided for newly arrived immigrants, and money appropriated.	HF1593—Mulder (R) Health & Human Services Policy Loan forgiveness program established for certain pharmacy students established, sole community pharmacy financial assistance authorized, and drug therapy management pilot project established.	HF1604—Gunther (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided Good Thunder, and bond sale authorized.
HF1572—Dawkins (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs St. Paul tax increment financing district extended.	HF1583—Anderson, B. (R) Crime Prevention Firearm report requirement repealed.	HF1594—Anderson, B. (R) Crime Prevention Felony penalties provided dissemination of child pornography.	HF1605—Hilty (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Hinckley, and bond sale authorized.
HF1573—Gray (DFL) K-12 Education Finance Minnesota adolescent parenting grant program provided, and money appropriated.	HF1584—Swenson (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Separate turkey hunting license selection provisions modified.	HF1595—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Policy Review and complaint procedures modified relating to health plans.	HF1606—Murphy (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Twin Lakes Township, and bond sale authorized.
HF1574—Kalis (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided city of Blue Earth, and bond sale authorized.	HF1585—McElroy (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Definitions modified relating to state employment, and certain pilot project administrative procedures redesigned.	HF1596—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Policy Planning and transition grant program established for providers of older adult services, and money appropriated.	HF1607—Smith (R) Crime Prevention Peace officers of law enforcement agencies of federally recognized tribes included in Board of Peace Officers Standards and Training licensure provisions.
HF1575—Storm (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for North Mankato, and bond sale authorized.	HF1586—Swenson (R) Agriculture Policy Certain land authorized to be enrolled in more than one state or federal conservation program.	HF1597—Paulsen (R) Taxes Sales tax on health club memberships repealed.	
HF1576—Winter (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Tracy, and bond sale authorized.	HF1587—Cassell (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Department of Labor and Industry data privacy provisions modified.	HF1598—Daggett (R) Environment & Natural Resources Finance Ottertail County solid waste recovery center operation appropriation provided.	

<p>HF1608—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Policy Omnibus health and human services bill including data classification, modifying maternal and child health provisions, modifying the Minnesota Health Care Administrative Simplification Act, and providing penalties.</p>	<p>HF1618—Bakk (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Tofte, and bond sale authorized.</p>	<p>HF1628—Kelliher (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Metropolitan transit system operation performance audit schedule changed.</p>	<p>HF1638—Tuma (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Design-build contracts authorized, and exempt rules provided.</p>
<p>HF1609—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Policy Long-term care provisions and nursing facilities payment rates modified.</p>	<p>HF1619—Bakk (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Castle Danger area in Silver Creek Township, and bond sale authorized.</p>	<p>HF1629—Otremba (DFL) K-12 Education Finance Average per pupil requirement for debt service equalization reduced.</p>	<p>HF1639—Chaudhary (DFL) Taxes Income tax credit allowed for children, and money appropriated.</p>
<p>HF1610—Nornes (R) Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Child care improvement grants modified, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF1620—Greenfield (DFL) Health & Human Services Finance Community health clinic grant programs appropriated money.</p>	<p>HF1630—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Policy Commissioner of Human Services data access expanded, county retention of overpayments modified, photographic evidence provisions clarified, and federal waiver allowing administrative disqualification for medical assistance requested.</p>	<p>HF1640—Chaudhary (DFL) Taxes Income tax credit allowed for children, and money appropriated.</p>
<p>HF1611—McGuire (DFL) Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Student eligibility criteria clarified under basic sliding fee child care assistance, counties prohibited from paying parents directly, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF1621—Osskopp (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Judicial review provisions modified relating to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency decisions, and incinerator monitor requirements modified.</p>	<p>HF1631—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Policy Protocol established for occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens in certain settings, and criminal penalties imposed.</p>	<p>HF1641—Juhnke (DFL) Transportation Policy Vehicles carrying milk exempted from seasonal weight restrictions under certain circumstances.</p>
<p>HF1612—Westfall (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Dilworth, and bond sale authorized.</p>	<p>HF1622—Gerlach (R) Commerce Contracts regulated for architects, engineers, surveyors, landscape architects, geoscientists, and interior designers.</p>	<p>HF1632—Ozment (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Cannon Falls, and bond sale authorized.</p>	<p>HF1642—Fuller (R) Crime Prevention Sanctions conference procedure established to impose probation sanctions for violations, and judicial districts requested to develop procedures and forms.</p>
<p>HF1613—Storm (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Tenant screening fees limited.</p>	<p>HF1623—Chaudhary (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Economic development assistance provided to Fridley, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF1633—Otremba (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Patient rights and protections provided to health care enrollees.</p>	<p>HF1643—Huntley (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for western Lake Superior sanitary district biosolids management project, and bond sale authorized.</p>
<p>HF1614—Tuma (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Northfield, and bond sale authorized.</p>	<p>HF1624—Cassell (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Minnesota association of resource conservation and development appropriation provided.</p>	<p>HF1634—Otremba (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Long Prairie housing and redevelopment authority authorized to issue bonds to renovate the Hotel Reichert building regardless of ownership.</p>	<p>HF1644—Knoblach (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Water quality rules changes implemented.</p>
<p>HF1615—Kielkucki (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Plato, and bond sale authorized.</p>	<p>HF1625—Skoglund (DFL) Crime Prevention Trigger locks required on the transfer of certain pistols and semiautomatic military-style assault weapons, and criminal penalties imposed.</p>	<p>HF1635—Otremba (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Senior citizen drug program eligibility expanded, and funding cap removed.</p>	<p>HF1645—Knoblach (R) Education Policy Truancy prevention pilot program provided, and money appropriated.</p>
<p>HF1616—Bakk (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Ely Department of Revenue building renovation appropriation provided.</p>	<p>HF1626—Ness (R) Commerce Poultry litter included as renewable energy resource relating to biomass electricity production.</p>	<p>HF1636—Otremba (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Comprehensive advanced life support training program established, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF1646—Boudreau (R) Civil Law Certain relatives provided child visitation rights.</p>
<p>HF1617—Bakk (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Schroeder Township, and bond sale authorized.</p>	<p>HF1627—Osskopp (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Wastewater funding provided for Lake City, and bond sale authorized.</p>	<p>HF1637—Otremba (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Definition of gross income modified under the MinnesotaCare program, and MinnesotaCare asset requirement repealed.</p>	<p>HF1647—Wejcman (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy MFIP exit level increased, and money appropriated.</p>
			<p>HF1648—Wejcman (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Medical assistance income standard increased for persons who are aged, blind, or disabled.</p>

HF1649—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Commissioner of Human Services authorized to approve University of Minnesota student parent MFIP program.

HF1650—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Day training and habilitation providers reimbursed for days the provider was closed due to severe weather.

HF1651—Wolf (R)
Commerce
Minnesota retail electric competition act requiring transition to competitive industry, restructuring plans required, unbundling of services required, civil remedies provided, and money appropriated.

HF1652—Huntley (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Wastewater funding provided for north shore area planning and design for the western Lake Superior sanitary district, and bond sale authorized.

HF1653—Huntley (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Wastewater funding provided for Pike Lake project in the Western Lake Superior sanitary district, and bond sale authorized.

HF1654—Osskopp (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Open competition provided for state telecommunications services, state competition with the private sector prohibited, and other conforming changes provided.

HF1655—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Minnesota commission serving deaf and hard-of-hearing people appropriation provided.

HF1656—Dawkins (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Rent escrow and tenant remedy actions expanded to include improper and retaliatory notices.

HF1657—Dawkins (DFL)
Civil Law
Mandatory expungement of certain eviction cases required, and discretionary expungement allowed in other cases.

HF1658—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Prompt payments required by health maintenance organizations and non-profit health service plan corporations of certain claims made by home care providers, error reporting required, and penalties established.

HF1659—Rifenberg (R)
Jobs and Economic Development Policy
Wastewater funding provided for Lewiston, and bond sale authorized.

HF1660—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nonprofit organization employees performing duties incidental to research exempted from the unlawful practice of medicine.

HF1661—Tuma (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 392, Le Center, provided a technology integration grant.

HF1662—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Omnibus human services bill, affecting medical assistance, general assistance, MinnesotaCare, and other state medical programs.

HF1663—Pelowski (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Wastewater funding provided for Rollingstone, and bond sale authorized.

HF1664—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Medical assistance reimbursement proposals required for mental health and other treatment in children's residential treatment programs, rehabilitation services, and targeted case management services for vulnerable adults.

HF1665—Munger (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Amphibian research funding appropriation provided.

HF1666—Kelliher (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Lake of the Isles flood mitigation appropriation provided.

HF1667—Westrom (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Design and engineering appropriation provided for Minnesota river trail from Appleton to the Milan Beach on Lake Lac Qui Parle.

HF1668—Abrams (R)
Civil Law
Lien established for commercial real estate broker commissions.

HF1669—Tuma (R)
Commerce
Accountant licensure requirements modified.

HF1670—Rukavina (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Electronic monitoring of employees regulated, and criminal penalties provided.

HF1671—Kelliher (DFL)
Civil Law
Statutory definition of family expanded.

HF1672—Dawkins (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Enterprise zone incentive grants authorized for certain purposes by Minneapolis and St. Paul.

HF1673—Pawlenty (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Minnesota Zoological Gardens appropriated money for operating costs of the children's farm.

HF1674—Harder (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Windom economic development grant provided.

HF1675—Wolf (R)
Commerce
Auto glass repair and replacement regulated, and certain rebates and incentives restricted.

HF1676—Swenson (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Minnesota River basin appropriation provided.

HF1677—Carlson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Metro homework hotline grant authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1678—Kelliher (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
MFIP eligibility provisions modified, exit plans allowed, child support arrearage forgiveness policies required, and TANF block grant funds transferred to decrease case loads and for the basic sliding fee child care program.

HF1679—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Ways & Means
Fiscal biennium changed to begin with even-numbered years, and legislative approval required for federal money expenditures.

HF1680—Clark, K. (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Voluntary registration programs established for general, specialized, and health care interpreters, pilot training program for interpreters developed, and money appropriated.

HF1681—Winter (DFL)
Commerce
Purchase agreements required to permit rescission by seller in event of damage to property prior to closing.

HF1682—Jennings (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Commercial driving school vehicles used exclusively in driver education and training exempted from registration taxes.

HF1683—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Organization of the House of Representatives provided for in the case of a tie vote for house officer.

HF1684—Holsten (R)
Commerce
Stillwater additional on-sale liquor licenses authorized.

HF1685—Greiling (DFL)
Education Policy
Task force on transitional issues affecting State Board of Education powers and duties recommendations implemented.

HF1686—Carlson (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
Higher education state grant calculation modified.

HF1687—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Child welfare provisions modified.

HF1688—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Adult mental health day treatment and consolidated chemical dependency treatment fund requirements modified.

HF1689—Olson (R)**Civil Law**

Parental and guardian liability increased for property damage done by minors, and liability of parents and guardians provided in court-ordered restitution cases involving minors.

HF1690—Rhodes (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Occupational regulatory coordinating council established, and duties identified.

HF1691—Westfall (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Public facilities authority appropriation provided.

HF1692—Ozment (R)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Chub Lake scientific and natural area appropriation provided.

HF1693—Mares (R)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Public employment technical and administrative changes provided.

HF1694—Stanek (R)**Family & Early Childhood****Education Finance**

Crime prevention grants authorized to cities of the first class, and money appropriated.

HF1695—Seagren (R)**Family & Early Childhood****Education Finance**

Adult education support services set aside provided, and money appropriated.

HF1696—Mariani (DFL)**Family & Early Childhood****Education Finance**

Early childhood and family education, ECFE, revenue increased, and money appropriated.

HF1697—Nornes (R)**Family & Early Childhood****Education Finance**

Male responsibility and fathering grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF1698—Jennings (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Snowmobile speed limit prescribed in urban districts, and cities authorized to establish speed limits greater or less than prescribed limit.

HF1699—Rostberg (R)**Family & Early Childhood****Education Finance**

Grant program established to promote, recruit, and train young people to be caregivers to at-risk youth, and money appropriated.

HF1700—Paulsen (R)**Taxes**

Metropolitan revenue distribution altered to provide distribution to counties based on uncompensated health care costs.

HF1701—Tunheim (DFL)**Taxes**

Lake of the Woods and Koochiching counties authorized to expend certain taxes in any township.

HF1702—Wagenius (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Duplicative toxic chemical release reporting requirements eliminated, and obsolete provisions removed.

HF1703—McElroy (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Camp Heartland center grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1704—Smith (R)**Civil Law**

Regulation and causes of action by political subdivisions against firearms industry limited.

HF1705—Fuller (R)**Environment &****Natural Resources Finance**

Beltrami, Marshall, and Roseau counties; certain ditch assessments paid, and money appropriated.

Wednesday, March 10**HF1706—McCollum (DFL)****State Government Finance**

National World War II memorial fund contribution provided and money appropriated.

HF1707—Haake (R)**Crime Prevention**

Sex offender registration requirement use in plea negotiations prohibited.

HF1708—Seifert, J. (R)**Commerce**

Fire insurance property and liability provisions modified, and FAIR plan coverage regulated.

HF1709—Mullery (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Sand, gravel, and other similar loads height and weight limitations modified.

HF1710—Molnau (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Policy**

Carver wastewater revolving fund loan provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1711—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Medical assistance 12-month continuous eligibility provided to children ages 2 through 18.

HF1712—Buesgens (R)**Commerce**

Political subdivision public right-of-way management authority modified.

HF1713—Holberg (R)**Crime Prevention**

Convicted sexually psychopathic and sexually dangerous offenders provided indeterminate sentencing.

HF1714—Goodno (R)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Pharmacists to pharmacy technicians ratio waivers granted by the board of pharmacy and ratio requirements modified.

HF1715—Paymar (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Minnesota center for crime victim services created, powers and duties transferred, and grants-in-aid authorized.

HF1716—Osskopp (R)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Public employee definition modified.

HF1717—Hasskamp (DFL)**Taxes**

Lawful gambling, pull-tabs, tip-boards, and combined receipts tax rates reduced.

HF1718—Krinkie (R)**Commerce**

Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and Bloomington extended on-sale liquor hours authorized; and hours restriction exemption provided.

HF1719—Skoglund (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

DWI; alcohol-related restriction violation occurring while driving a motor vehicle provided gross misdemeanor penalty.

HF1720—Tuma (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Dental practice act technical change provided.

HF1721—Kelliher (DFL)**Taxes**

Residential homestead first tier property valuation limit increased, education homestead credit rate increased, and general education levy reduced.

HF1722—Trimble (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Policy**

St. Paul Dale Street shops, Maxson Steel, and the former Stroh Brewery capital redevelopment activities grant provided; and money appropriated.

HF1723—Dempsey (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Children's Museum's Ready?Set.Read! program grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1724—Rukavina (DFL)**Local Government &****Metropolitan Affairs**

Mountain Iron tax increment financing district established and exemption provided.

HF1725—Boudreau (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Home visiting programs to promote child safety and healthy development established, county program operation and evaluation requirements provided, and money appropriated.

HF1726—Bradley (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Health record access regulated and patient definition expanded to include surviving children.

HF1727—Holberg (R)**Civil Law**

Rideshare program data classification provided.

HF1728—Seifert, J. (R)**Commerce**

Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience, and Interior Design fees and continuing education provisions modified; and penalties increased.

HF1729—Tunheim (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Policy**

Williams wastewater treatment grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1730—Skoglund (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

DWI; offender's right to an independent alcohol concentration test while in custody eliminated.

HF1731—Skoglund (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

DWI; shortened license revocation period for first-time offenders with an alcohol concentration of 0.20 or more prohibited.

HF1732—Mulder (R)**Taxes**

Agricultural property school district tax credit provided and money appropriated.

HF1733—Skoglund (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Preliminary breath test results permitted as admissible evidence in cases involving implied consent test refusal.

HF1734—Winter (DFL)**Commerce**

Uniform farm and equipment dealers warranty reimbursement act adopted.

HF1735—Winter (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Telecommunications access grant program made permanent, additional funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF1736—Luther (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) local elected official retirement annuity eligibility modified.

HF1737—McCollum (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Laser assault defined and criminal penalties imposed.

HF1738—Mulder (R)**Commerce**

Wind power provisions modified.

HF1739—Winter (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 505, Fulda, operating capital fund supplement provided, and money appropriated.

HF1740—Erhardt (R)**Taxes**

Property tax refund schedule modified.

HF1741—Tunheim (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Commercial vehicles with projecting loads required to display rear red strobe lamps.

HF1742—Clark, J. (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Flandrau State Park adjacent landowner losses reimbursed and money appropriated.

HF1743—Jennings (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) military service credit purchase authorized for a certain Rush City School District employee.

HF1744—Workman (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Metropolitan Council made an elective body and candidate contributions regulated.

HF1745—Knoblach (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Adult foster care provider respite care supplementary payments provided.

HF1746—Erickson (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Bear hunting with dogs allowed.

HF1747—Westfall (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Agricultural chemical response reimbursement eligibility expanded.

HF1748—Haas (R)**Commerce**

Franchise definition expanded and modified related to motor vehicle franchises, and right of first refusal upon assignment or sale of marketing premises created.

HF1749—Kielkucki (R)**Commerce**

No-fault automobile insurance coverage limits modified.

HF1750—Kielkucki (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 108, Norwood, air quality and building improvements provided, and money appropriated.

HF1751—Goodno (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Community dental clinics start-up grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1752—Wagenius (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Lead fishing sinkers and jigs replacement research grants authorized, Department of Natural Resources consultation and reports required, and money appropriated.

HF1753—Jennings (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Teacher training improvement collaborative pilot program established, public college and school district involvement provided, and money appropriated.

HF1754—Jennings (DFL)**Commerce**

Public utilities conservation improvement requirements modified and program analysis required.

HF1755—Greiling (DFL)**Education Policy**

Teacher preparation program requirement issues resolved through formal hearings.

HF1756—Westerberg (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Metropolitan area foreign trade zones commission grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1757—Haas (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Health insurer and health maintenance organization regulations simplified.

HF1758—Molnau (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Mayer wastewater revolving fund loan provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1759—Juhnke (DFL)**Agriculture & Rural Development Finance**

Turkey respiratory disease control and prevention research funded, and money appropriated.

HF1760—Anderson, B. (R)**Transportation Policy**

I-94 and Trunk Highway No. 55 improvements included in the statewide transportation plan and improvements program.

HF1761—Dempsey (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Red Wing Bench Street project wastewater revolving fund loan provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1762—Storm (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 508, St. Peter, disaster relief facilities grant authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1763—Storm (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

St. Peter community center replacement assistance grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1764—Mulder (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Leota sanitary district wastewater revolving fund loan provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1765—Peterson (DFL)**Civil Law**

Actions for damages due to sexual abuse delayed discovery rule clarified.

HF1766—Buesgens (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Spring Lake Township wastewater revolving fund loan provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1767—Haas (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Dental assistant licensure created.

HF1768—Huntley (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Minor parent living with an adult Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) benefits eligibility requirement clarified and money appropriated.

HF1769—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Senior citizen drug program eligibility expanded and money appropriated.

HF1770—Fuller (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Senior nutrition meals provided increased funding and money appropriated.

HF1771—Kuisle (R)**Taxes**

Agricultural tax relief provided through offer-in-compromise program and income tax exemption provided.

HF1772—Kuisle (R)**Transportation Policy**

Passenger motor carrier provisions modified, conforming changes provided, and money appropriated.

HF1773—Dawkins (DFL)**Family & Early Childhood Education Finance**

Youth works program legislative report required and money appropriated.

HF1774—Bakk (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Gitchie-Gami trail constructed along Lake Superior in Lake and Cook counties, and money appropriated.

HF1775—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Urban agricultural high school planning grant authorized and money appropriated.

HF1776—Cassell (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Lake Mary wastewater revolving fund loan provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1777—Cassell (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Ida wastewater revolving fund loan provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1778—Gunther (R)
Commerce
State government telecommunications pricing plan and public utilities commission oversight provided.

HF1779—Wagenius (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Closed landfill cleanup program expanded, statewide closed landfill insurance settlement process participants provided liability release, and money appropriated.

HF1780—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Soil and water conservation districts general services allocation provided and money appropriated.

HF1781—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Soil and water conservation districts technical support grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1782—Westfall (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Erosion and sediment control and water quality cost share grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF1783—Winter (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Feedlots; phosphorus land application limits required.

HF1784—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
DeafBlind Services Minnesota appropriated money.

HF1785—Kubly (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 2534, Bird Island-Olivia-Lake Lillian, technology grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1786—Sviggum (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 203, Hayfield, technology grant authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1787—Dawkins (DFL)
Civil Law
Foster sibling visitation with a child formerly in foster care provided.

HF1788—Kalis (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Faribault County nursing facility spend-up limit exemption provided.

HF1789—Schumacher (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Benton County bonds principal for mixed municipal solid waste facility environmental response costs provided and money appropriated.

HF1790—Solberg (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Steel mill construction challenge grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1791—Solberg (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Itasca County railroad and public highway improvements, and Nashwauk wells and wastewater treatment facilities funded; bonds issued; and money appropriated.

HF1792—Pugh (DFL)
Education Policy
School district agreements time period limitation eliminated.

HF1793—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Minnesota Health Data Institute health plan companies performance report required, requirements established, and money appropriated.

HF1794—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Peoples, Inc. deaf and hard-of-hearing services grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1795—Daggett (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 2155, Wadena-Deer Creek, pupil count corrected and money appropriated.

HF1796—Kelliher (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Forest assessment provisions and reporting requirements modified under the forest resource management plan.

HF1797—Kelliher (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Unit forest resource plan requirements modified and public notice provided.

HF1798—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Nongame wildlife account private contributions matched and money appropriated.

HF1799—Osthoff (DFL)
Commerce
Motor vehicle glass repair and replacement regulated for insurance purposes.

HF1800—Bishop (R)
Judiciary Finance
Dodge-Fillmore-Olmsted, Arrowhead Regional, Ramsey County, and Hennepin County community corrections agencies productive day initiative programs appropriated money.

HF1801—McElroy (R)
Commerce
Uniform principal and income act adopted.

HF1802—Entenza (DFL)
Civil Law
Child abuse and maltreatment provisions modified.

HF1803—Kelliher (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Metropolitan regional parks system operation and maintenance funded and money appropriated.

HF1804—Folliard (DFL)
Education Policy
Licensed K-12 teacher staff development training opportunities and additional salary provided.

HF1805—Munger (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
St. Louis, Carlton, and Lake counties joint powers agreement implemented; and money appropriated.

HF1806—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Snowmobile gasoline use percentage determined for tax refund purposes.

HF1807—Carlson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
St. Cloud State University; Minnesota highway safety center grants provided to improve traffic safety education in elementary and secondary schools.

HF1808—Molnau (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
United Nations trade point development previous appropriations transferred to the Minnesota World Trade Center.

HF1809—Jaros (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Seaway Port Authority of Duluth allowed to be known as the Duluth Seaway Port Authority.

HF1810—Jennings (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Survivors of public safety officers killed in the line of duty provided health coverage and money appropriated.

Thursday, March 11

HF1811—Ness (R)
Higher Education Finance
Technical college credential awards clarified and standardized assessments limited.

HF1812—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Sales within a political subdivision determined for the purpose of local sales taxes.

HF1813—Van Dellen (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
State-aid offset qualified housing district definition expanded to include low-income owner-occupied housing.

HF1814—Clark, K. (DFL)
Judiciary Finance
Gender fairness in the courts task force recommendations implemented and money appropriated.

HF1815—Fuller (R)**Agriculture & Rural Development Finance**

Beaver damage control program authorized activities clarified and money appropriated.

HF1816—Larsen, P. (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Retired teacher income limit increased for the purpose of retirement annuities received after resuming teaching service.

HF1817—Kahn (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Federal empowerment zone designation grant provided to the Metropolitan Council and money appropriated.

HF1818—Mares (R)**Transportation Policy**

Recreational vehicle additional combinations authorized by permit.

HF1819—Ness (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

County inventory and dump ranking required, cleanup grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF1820—Ness (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Dassel wastewater treatment system expansion grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1821—Harder (R)**Taxes**

Brown County property tax credit provided for tornado damaged property and money appropriated.

HF1822—Erhardt (R)**Taxes**

Residential homestead second tier property tax class rate reduced, and homestead and agricultural credit aid adjustment provided.

HF1823—Erhardt (R)**Taxes**

Native prairie definition and property tax exemption modified, and conservation land management activities credit created.

HF1824—Fuller (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Ambulance services; first responder provisions modified, emergency medical technician and instructor certification provided, training program approval required, fees and misconduct reports provided, and criminal and civil penalties imposed.

HF1825—Osskopp (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Pull-tab dispensing machines authorized in premises licensed for off-sale liquor, progressive bingo prizes modified, and maximum tipboard prizes specified.

HF1826—Dorman (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 241, Albert Lea, K-12 student success program grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1827—Storm (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 508, St. Peter, declining pupil unit aid provided.

HF1828—Howes (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Minnesota Power building in Park Rapids purchase for use as a Department of Natural Resources office building authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1829—Erhardt (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Edina nursing home moratorium exception authorized.

HF1830—Stanek (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Minneapolis Police Relief Association authorized fund disbursements modified.

HF1831—Swenson (R)**Agriculture Policy**

New ethanol plant using heat from a municipal cogeneration facility ethanol producer payments authorized and money appropriated.

HF1832—Swenson (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

All-day kindergarten students pupil weight increased.

HF1833—Krinkie (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Office of Technology provisions modified.

HF1834—Reuter (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Electronic payments to state agencies authorized.

HF1835—Boudreau (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Suicide prevention program established and money appropriated.

HF1836—Fuller (R)**Taxes**

Manufactured homes located on real property purchased under contracts for deeds tax liability removed.

HF1837—Fuller (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Automatic external defibrillators purchase and study funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF1838—Davids (R)**Commerce**

Public supplemental pension and deferred compensation plans investments availability expanded.

HF1839—Van Dellen (R)**Taxes**

Printing activities sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF1840—Fuller (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Emergency medical services complaint investigations appropriated money.

HF1841—Davids (R)**Commerce**

Insurance compliance self-audit privilege established.

HF1842—Swenson (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Glencoe area health center employee privatization pension benefit accommodation provided.

HF1843—Olson (R)**Education Policy**

Students unable to read by the end of third grade prohibited from enrolling in fourth grade.

HF1844—Clark, J. (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

New Ulm authorized to impose an additional sales and use tax, voter approval required, and bonding authority provided.

HF1845—Seifert, M. (R)**Education Policy**

Registered sex offenders considered ineligible to become school board member candidates.

HF1846—Osskopp (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Goodhue-Pioneer trail extended to the city of Bellechester.

HF1847—Cassell (R)**Higher Education Finance**

Community and technical colleges student associations combined, and Higher Education Services Office and board of trustees of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Student Advisory Council membership modified.

HF1848—Goodno (R)**Crime Prevention**

DWI; enhanced gross misdemeanor provisions repealed, and gross misdemeanor and mandatory sentencing provisions expanded.

HF1849—Entenza (DFL)**Commerce**

Electronic financial terminal surcharge prohibited.

HF1850—Tomassoni (DFL)**Governmental Operations Policy**

Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) unrequested leave credit purchase authorized for a certain Alexandria School District member.

HF1851—Larsen, P. (R)**Judiciary Finance**

Camp Ripley weekend camp program for first- and second-time juvenile offenders and youth at risk appropriated money.

HF1852—Stanek (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Asian-American juvenile crime intervention and prevention program grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1853—Mares (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Public employees police and fire plan and local police and fire consolidation account provisions modified.

HF1854—Wejcman (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases targeted case management, outreach, and prevention services grants provided; and money appropriated.

HF1855—Gray (DFL)**Education Policy**

Businesses and other organizations encouraged to donate materials to families for child reading and school skills development.

HF1856—Jennings (DFL)
Commerce
Currency exchange fees regulated.

HF1857—McGuire (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Child care resource and referral programs, and child care development grants provided; and money appropriated.

HF1858—Rhodes (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Crisis intervention hotline pilot project established for the metropolitan area Hmong community and money appropriated.

HF1859—Mullery (DFL)
Commerce
Financial institution fees and charges regulated, and lifeline checking accounts required.

HF1860—Mullery (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Consecutive sentencing authorized for offenders who commit additional crimes while awaiting sentencing on previous crimes and guidelines consistency required.

HF1861—Mullery (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Parenting leave requirements extended.

HF1862—Mullery (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Juveniles adjudicated delinquent for illegal pistol possession provided enhanced penalties.

HF1863—Johnson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Substitute teacher state-paid medical benefits provided and money appropriated.

HF1864—McGuire (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Minnesota Family Investment Plan (MFIP) and basic sliding fee child care assistance program consolidated, and projected costs forecasted and recognized in the fund balance.

HF1865—Pawlenty (R)
Civil Law
Stay-at-home nursing mothers excused from jury duty.

HF1866—Kubly (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Senior citizen drug program participation extended to persons with disabilities.

HF1867—Holsten (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Stream protection and improvement loan program established and money appropriated.

HF1868—Van Dellen (R)
Education Policy
School district residents authorized to participate in district sponsored shared time, cocurricular, and extra-curricular activities.

HF1869—Van Dellen (R)
Taxes
City local government minimum per capita aid amount established.

HF1870—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Minnesota land use map maintained and updated, and money appropriated.

HF1871—Lieder (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 600, Fisher, school building remodeling provided, and money appropriated.

HF1872—Harder (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Fox Lake; Martin County wastewater treatment project grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1873—Mullery (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Suicidal persons admitted for emergency care prohibited from possessing firearms and firearm temporary custody by peace officers authorized.

HF1874—Mullery (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Nellie Stone Johnson bust placement in the state capitol required.

HF1875—Abeler (R)
Education Policy
State Board of Education reinstated and member election provided.

HF1876—Kelliher (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minneapolis police officers authorized to terminate active service and be rehired with public employees police and fire retirement plan coverage.

HF1877—Molnau (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Public employees labor agreements and compensation plans ratified, vacation and sick leave transfers provided, and special mediator per diem provisions and arbitrator listing procedures modified.

HF1878—Mares (R)
Crime Prevention
High risk juvenile sex offender release community notification provided, end-of-confinement review assessments required, and law enforcement disclosure guidelines and model policy development provided.

HF1879—Dawkins (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Neighborhood Development Center, Inc. targeted business district microenterprise and equity loan grants provided, conditions imposed, and money appropriated.

HF1880—Paulsen (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Hennepin County authorized to convey tax-forfeited land bordering public water and wetland.

HF1881—Wolf (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Optional form of school district organization provided and school boards authorized to contract for district services.

HF1882—Hausman (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Pedestrian-control traffic signal display period prescribed.

HF1883—Jennings (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Volunteer firefighting paid leave provided.

HF1884—Pugh (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Referendum revenue allowance maximum and voter-approved referenda state aid increased, and money appropriated.

HF1885—Kuisle (R)
Agriculture Policy
Pollution Control Agency feedlot authority transferred to the Department of Agriculture.

HF1886—Krinkie (R)
Transportation Policy
Seven-county metropolitan area regional rail authorities abolished.

HF1887—Solberg (DFL)
Civil Law
Sport shooting ranges liability protections provided.

HF1888—Jennings (DFL)
Civil Law
State and political subdivisions prohibited from bringing certain suits against firearms or ammunition manufacturers.

HF1889—Mullery (DFL)
Civil Law
Occupational safety and health law violators prohibited from state contract awards, construction project written safety and health plans required, and civil and criminal penalties provided.

HF1890—Mahoney (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Criminal offender rehabilitation requirements exemption provided for the licensing of taxicab drivers.

HF1891—Mullery (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Limited driver's license issuance without waiting period authorized and conforming provisions provided.

HF1892—Mullery (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Summer youth employment programs appropriated money.

HF1893—McGuire (DFL)
Judiciary Finance
Crosswalk safety awareness campaign continued and expanded, and money appropriated.

HF1894—McGuire (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Perishable food definition modified for the purposes of open dating.

HF1895—Boudreau (R)
Higher Education Finance
Asian-Pacific American mental health graduate program student grants established, and money appropriated.

HF1896—Van Dellen (R)
Commerce
Fireworks definition modified, and sale and distribution of certain fireworks authorized.

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

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MONDAY, March 15

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF1654 (Osskopp) Open competition provided for state telecommunications services, state competition with private sector prohibited, and other conforming changes provided.

HF1366 (Buesgens) Advisory group established to make recommendations on strategies to address the needs of students who fail to meet the requirements of the state's high school graduation rule.

HF1565 (Anderson, B.) Eligibility expanded for certain state military service.

HF987 (Davids) Intergovernmental advisory council for technology established, Intergovernmental Information Systems Advisory Council abolished, funds transferred, and money appropriated.

Note: Meeting will continue 30 minutes after session in 500S State Office Building.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF1688 (Goodno) Modifying state-operated services; changing adult mental health day treatment and consolidation chemical dependency treatment fund requirements.

HF1608 (Goodno) Omnibus health and human services bill including data classification, modifying maternal and child health provisions, modifying the Minnesota Health Care Administrative Simplification Act, and providing penalties.

HF1600 (Goodno) Tobacco settlement money disposition provided, Minnesota families foundation established, health-related endowment funds created, and money appropriated.

HF738 (Larsen, P.) Medical education and research trust fund provisions modified to include psychologists and advisory committee expiration date extended.

JOBS & ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: HF663 (Daggett) State project wage payment provisions modified.
Other bills to be announced.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF446 (Kuisle) Passenger automobile registration tax depreciation rate decreased, and motor vehicle sales tax revenue allocated.

HF39 (Lieder) Motor vehicle sales tax proceeds dedicated to roads and public transit, passenger automobile registration tax rate reduced, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF698 (Workman) Major transportation projects commission established and report required.

HF1806 (Howes) Snowmobile gasoline use percentage determined for tax refund purposes.

HF1053 (Opatz) Disability parking regulatory provisions modified, certain vehicle registration fee credits abolished, and local ordinances regulating long-term parking authorized.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF377 (Goodno) Abortion notification data reporting required and civil penalties imposed.

HF1038 (Boudreau) Employment and training data classification provisions modified.

HF1555 (Ozment) Court-ordered screening required prior to making dispositional orders for out-of-home placement in certain juvenile cases.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue 15 minutes after session or at 3 p.m. in Basement Hearing Room, State Office Building.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: HF595 (Holsten) Petrofund reimbursement reductions standard of proof provided, above-ground storage tank upgrade or closure reimbursed, and contaminated land cleanup regulated.

HF1013 (Holsten) Dark house and fish house licensure requirement exemption provided to occupied shelters left on the ice less than a day.
HF1277 (Bishop) Wastewater treatment provisions modified and money appropriated.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HF1096 (Seifert, M.) Assigned family responsibility definition modified relating to student grants-in-aid, and grant stipends prorated for part-time students.

HF1103 (Goodno) Moorhead State University

capital improvements provided, bond issuance authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1363 (Storm) Higher education student share reduced, and child care grant program modified.
HF1686 (Carlson) Higher education state grant calculation modified.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF347 (Sviggum) Independent School District No. 2125, Triton, health and safety revenue authorized.

HF405 (Johnson) School district deferred maintenance equalized discretionary aid and levy created, and money appropriated.

HF574 (McCollum) Independent School District No. 622, North St. Paul- Maplewood-Oakdale, provided alternative facilities bonding and levy program authority.

HF655 (Anderson, B.) School district maximum effort debt service levy definition and loan repayment account modified.

HF697 (Rhodes) School district alternative facilities bonding and levy program space requirement reduced.

HF894 (Tingelstad) School district facilities management funding authorized, local matches required, and money appropriated.

HF895 (Tingelstad) School district facilities maintenance management and housekeeping procedure created.

HF772 (McElroy) Building space average age threshold reduced relating to school district alternative facilities bonding and levy program qualifications.

HF799 (Tingelstad) Education facilities funding provisions modified and money appropriated.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF167 (Wenzel) State-paid agricultural property taxes provided, and money appropriated.

HF401 (Mulder) Agricultural land general education levy exemption provided and general education aid increased.

HF1313 (Storm) Manufactured home parks property tax class rate decreased.

HF1361 (Mulder) Certain agricultural property eliminated from the property tax base for new debt service levies for Independent School District No. 2689, Pipestone-Jasper.

HF1515 (Daggett) Certain assisted living facility property tax exemption provided.

HF1732 (Mulder) Agricultural property school district tax credit provided and money appropriated.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: HF1318 (Sykora) State agency child care assistance program duties clarified, program integrity and fraud investigation provided, and money appropriated.

HF880 (Mulder) Child care and early childhood education programs consolidation plan developed.

HF1362 (Mulder) At-home infant child care program provisions modified, and money appropriated.

HF1292 (McGuire) Child care assistance administration technical and conforming changes provided.

HF876 (Mariani) African immigrant and refugee community child care development grants provided, and money appropriated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF931 (Larsen, P.) Local units of government cooperation and combination tax plan provided.

HF1224 (Holberg) Cedar Lake area water and sanitary sewer district established.

HF1382 (Fuller) Bemidji authorized to exercise power of eminent domain for acquisition of certain trust fund land.

HF1399 (Erhardt) Municipal tax increment financing district creation limited.

HF1478 (Holsten) City annexation area division into urban and rural service districts authorized for the purpose of property taxation.

HF1724 (Rukavina) Mountain Iron tax increment financing district established and exemption provided.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: HF73 (Larsen, P.) Year 2000; local government units mutual aid authority clarified, health department required to collect and disseminate information regarding possible problems and solutions, immunity provided, and money appropriated.

HF1626 (Ness) Poultry litter included as renewable energy resource relating to biomass electricity production.

HF1778 (Gunther) State government telecommunications pricing plan and public utilities commission oversight provided.

HF1384 (Wolf) Energy conservation improvement program provisions modified relating to public utilities.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

Immediately following session

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF710 (Holsten) Farmed cervidae hunting on licensed shooting preserves authorized.

HF1101 (Mulder) Owner notification required for drainage surveys, and petition signature requirement increased.

HF1299 (Howes) Minnesota Conservation Corps fees deposited in a special revenue fund for corps projects and administration.

HF1404 (Swenson) Swan Lake migratory waterfowl refuge designated and refuge provisions modified.

HF955 (McCollum) Ramsey and Washington

counties regional trail development around Silver Lake funded, and money appropriated.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

30 minutes after session

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF1339 (Gerlach) Public employer hiring freeze imposed.

HF1446 (Rhodes) Office of environmental assistance, public service department, transportation regulation board, and departments of administration, public safety, and corrections reorganization codified.

HF777 (Rest) Political subdivision created, corporations expiration delayed, and task force established.

HF1168 (Gerlach) Election law clarified and simplified.

HF1183 (Seifert, J.) Secretary of State service of process, notice requirements, and business organization names regulated; and conforming changes provided.

7 p.m.

COMMERCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF870 (Haas) Small employer alternative health insurance benefit plan provided and pilot project authorized.

HF359 (Wolf) Public Utilities Commission subcommittees established and commissioners designated, petitions deemed approved unless set aside for affirmative action, investigation and contingency revolving fund created, and money appropriated.

HF358 (Wolf) Coin-operated and public pay telephones deregulated, and telecommunication provider anticompetitive activity administrative penalties assessed.

HF950 (Daggett) Telephone sales calls regulated, remedies provided, and money appropriated.

HF1564 (Entenza) Commissioner of Commerce enforcement authority provided, service of process and residential building contractors and remodelers regulated, and criminal penalties provided.

TUESDAY, March 16

7 a.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF979 (Lindner) Landlords authorized to apportion utility payments among units.

HF1298 (Storm) Bridges program; rental housing assistance program for persons with a mental illness or families with an adult member with a mental illness appropriated money.

HF1156 (Rhodes) Metropolitan area voluntary inclusionary housing policy incentives provided, policy defined, and money appropriated.

HF1495 (McElroy) Payment of commissions provided after employee termination, and certain

fees prohibited to applicants or employees.

HF1243 (Sykora) Special assessment rate for the workforce investment fund lowered, and provisions governing the fund modified.

HF1051 (Gunther) Employment and training program information collected by the commissioner of economic security.

HF1577 (Lindner) Training for people with disabilities appropriation provided to Advocating Change Together, Inc. (ACT).

HF1429 (Holsten) Stillwater historic territorial prison wall fortified, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1557 (Ozment) Child labor law violation penalties increased.

HF1256 (Clark, K.) Youthbuild program appropriated money, and youth employment program provisions modified.

7:30 a.m.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF1065 (Mulder) New Life Treatment Center directional signs erected along Pipestone County State-Aid Highway No. 18.

HF187 (Mares) Century College directional signs required on both sides of I-694 before its intersection with Trunk Highway No. 120.

HF1294 (McElroy) Prorated motor vehicle license fees authorized after dealer transfer.

HF1161 (Dempsey) Port authorities authorized to retain state commercial navigation project lease and management contract revenues.

HF367 (Reuter) I-35W and I-394 lane restrictions modified.

HF442 (Reuter) Freeway metered ramp study required and money appropriated.

HF1095 (Tingelstad) Authorized newspaper delivery vehicles allowed to operate on left half of roadway under certain circumstances.

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF770 (Abeler) Essential community provider status application deadline removed.

HF802 (Bradley) Unlicensed child care provider permanent expansion provided.

HF863 (Tingelstad) Putative fathers' adoption registry, communication and contact agreements, and post adoption report requirements and procedures modified.

HF965 (Boudreau) Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) student Hepatitis B immunization required.

HF968 (Tingelstad) Plumbers required to give bond to the state and provisions modified.

HF1566 (Leppik) Clean Indoor Air Act provisions modified.

Member bills.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF868 (Hackbarth) Crimes constituting theft modified to include situations involving rental personal property or equipment.

HF717 (Seifert, J.) Housing calendar consolidation program extended outside the second and fourth judicial districts.

HF1272 (Abrams) Court administration costs in specified judicial districts funded by the state, court employee collective bargaining provisions

established, taxes imposed, and money appropriated.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: HF1471 (Krinkie) Legislative approval required for fee increases, expiration dates provided for certain fees, and conforming changes made.

Department of Administration budget presentation.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: Public Safety Training Center report overview.

HF1288 (Seifert, M.) Marshall regional emergency response training center construction provided and money appropriated.

HF357 (Skoglund) Camp Ripley Work Program scope expanded to include chemically dependent or convicted domestic abuse offenders.

HF637 (Paymar) Camp Ripley Work Program scope expanded.

HF848 (Paymar) Prior incarceration credit provided for offenders sentenced to the Camp Ripley Work Program.

HF998 (Nornes) Camp Ripley Work Program eligible offender sentencing discretion provided and judges greater use of local correctional resources authorized.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue at 3 p.m. in 5 State Office Building.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF16 (Pawlenty) Public school students entitled to an education without serious classroom disruption, and remedy provided.

HF1366 (Buesgens) Advisory group established to make recommendations on strategies to address the needs of students who fail to meet the requirements of the state's high school graduation rule.

HF923 (Seifert, J.) School and libraries providing Internet access required to restrict harmful material from minors, and school district Internet use policies adopted.

HF1569 (Boudreau) Site council recommendations provided for board appointments, provisions clarified relation to the Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and Blind, and money appropriated.

HF1875 (Abeler) Reinstating the State Board of Education and providing for the election of members to the state board.

HF1685 (Greiling) Task force on transitional issues affecting State Board of Education powers and duties recommendations implemented.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue at 2:30 p.m. in Basement Hearing Room, State Office Building.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF1427 (Rostberg) Natural resources software and intellectual property sale and licensure authorized; and youth snowmobile

operation, drivers license safety designations, nongame wildlife checkoff, and forestry development project provisions modified.

HF1621 (Osskopp) Judicial review provisions modified relating to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency decisions, and incinerator monitor requirements modified.

HF1644 (Knoblach) Water quality rules changes implemented.

HF1508 (Kelliher) Mercury reduction provided and money appropriated.

HF1692 (Ozment) Chub Lake scientific and natural area appropriation provided.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Governor's budget request for the Agriculture Utilization Research Institute.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: To be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF73 (Larsen, P.) Year 2000; local government units mutual aid authority clarified, health department required to collect and disseminate information regarding possible problems and solutions, immunity provided, and money appropriated.

HF700 (Davids) Fire protection notification required in contracts for the sale of newly constructed residential dwellings.

HF186 (Mares) Cochlear implant health plan coverage required.

2:30 p.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: Continuation of 10 a.m. meeting.

HF1603 (Daggett) Landfill cleanup program obsolete accounting and reporting requirements repealed.

HF1779 (Wagenius) Closed landfill cleanup program expanded, statewide closed landfill insurance settlement process participants provided liability release, and money appropriated.

HF1477 (Rostberg) Environmental improvement pilot program modified and made permanent.

HF1798 (Ozment) Nongame wildlife account private contributions matched and money appropriated.

HF1486 (Workman) Prohibition against certain metals in products repealed.

HF1521 (Howes) Sustainable lakes educational program appropriation provided.

HF1624 (Cassell) Minnesota Association of Resource Conservation and Development appropriation provided.

HF1415 (Finseth) Gray wolf management provided and criminal penalties imposed.

HF1702 (Wagenius) Duplicative toxic chemical

release reporting requirements eliminated, and obsolete provisions removed.

3 p.m.

WAYS & MEANS

Room to be announced

Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: HF142 (Pawlenty) Subsequent controlled substance conviction definition expanded to include convictions subsequent to a stay of adjudication.

HF143 (Pawlenty) Domestic assault enhanced penalty provisions expanded to include malicious punishment of a child convictions.

HF960 (Seagren) Human services commissioner authorized to sell surplus state land to the Bloomington housing and redevelopment authority.

4 p.m.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF144 (Seifert, M.) Joint county drainage authority membership modified.

HF431 (Howes) Tax-forfeited land sale and rental proceeds apportionment provision eliminated.

HF1097 (Kuisle) Municipal bid minimum dollar amount increased for public bid solicitation.

HF1544 (Hausman) Governmental units exempted to jointly or cooperatively contract.

HF1543 (Hausman) Uniform Municipal Contracting Act procedure and definitions update provided.

HF1369 (Rostberg) Uncashed checks of a political subdivision exempted from uniform disposition of unclaimed property act.

HF1538 (Vandeveer) Townships authorized to create capital reserve funds.

HF1276 (Ozment) Watershed management organization board membership modified.

HF1540 (Larson, D.) Employee transfer provided between Metropolitan Council and other political subdivisions.

HF1293 (Marko) Washington County taxpayer's personal information disclosure provisions expiration date extended.

5 p.m.

Legislative Commission on Pensions & Retirement

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF410 (Entenza) Correctional employees retirement plan service credit provided.

HF435 (Milbert) MSRS; service credit purchase authorized for a certain member.

HF1080 (Boudreau) Rice County correctional employees public employees police and fire plan coverage ratified.

HF1179 (Mares) Teachers Retirement Association and first class city teacher retirement fund association service credit purchase authorized for military service, out-of-state teaching, and maternity leaves.

HF589 (Mares) Qualified tax-sheltered annuity vendors expanded for the purpose of employer contributions.

HF227 (Osskopp) State fire marshal special Minnesota State Retirement System benefits provided.

HF1180 (Mares) MSRS, PERA, and TRA

retirement annuity formula computation provisions modified.
 SF 650 (Pogemiller) Teacher plans; extension of "Rule of 90" and benefit accrual rate increase.
 HF436 (Mares) State Patrol Retirement Fund and Public Employees Retirement Association early retirement provisions modified, and certain consolidations provided.
 HF569 (Mares) Correctional employee retirement fund early retirement provisions modified.
 HF1077 (Mares) Minneapolis employees retirement fund death-while-active survivor, and disability and long-service survivor provisions clarified and modified.
 HF471 (Knoblach) St. Cloud Police Consolidation Account special one-time postretirement adjustment provided.
 HF845 (Mares) Higher education faculty and other state employee retirement and related benefits modified.
 HF115 (Ness) Willmar and Litchfield; volunteer rescue squad relief associations and service pensions authorized.
 Others items designated by chair.

6 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

500S State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: Continuation of 7 a.m. meeting.

WEDNESDAY, March 17

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: HF1426 (Tingelstad) Well notification fees, advisory council on water supply systems and wastewater treatment facilities terms, rural hospital grant provisions, and health professional student loan repayment provisions modified.
 HF1440 (Boudreau) Intermediate care facilities payment rate determination modified, local system needs planning process required, and statewide advisory committee established.
 HF1449 (Wilkin) Persons with mental retardation day training and habilitation rate variance criteria modified.
 HFXXXX (Boudreau)
 HF1562 (Goodno) Developmental disabilities provisions modified, consolidated standards intent clarified and expanded to include respite sites, medication administration clarified, and family support program provisions modified.
 HF1609 (Goodno) Long-term care provisions and nursing facilities payment rates modified.
 HF1660 (Bradley) Nonprofit organization employees performing duties incidental to research exempted from the unlawful practice of medicine.
 HF1554 (Ozment) Department of Corrections authorized to contract with Department of Human Services to conduct criminal history

background checks for job applicants for juvenile corrections facilities.
 Member bills.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: HF1243 (Sykora) Special assessment rate for the workforce investment fund lowered, and provisions governing the fund modified.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: HF1349 (Swenson) Population threshold for municipal state transportation aid eligibility abolished.
 HF939 (Workman) Trunk highway fund expenditures, traffic fines, and forfeited bail allocated; union contractor preference prohibited; prevailing wage rate modified; and transportation project delivery task force created.
 HF571 (Westrom) Trunk highway contract documents required to express measurements in the English system only, and commissioner prohibited from requiring otherwise for county contracts.
 HF1004 (Goodno) DWI; maximum allowable blood alcohol level lowered for hunting, handling explosives, criminal vehicular operation, and operating a motor vehicle, recreational vehicle, or watercraft.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: HF764 (Smith) Grandparent visitation rights expanded, procedures specified, and mediation required.
 HF1787 (Dawkins) Foster sibling visitation with a child formerly in foster care provided.
 HF1646 (Boudreau) Certain relatives provided child visitation rights.
 HF177 (Mulder) Partial-birth abortions prohibited, and criminal and civil penalties provided.
 HF178 (Boudreau) Abortion informed consent required and civil remedies provided.
Note: If necessary, meeting will continue 15 minutes after session or at 3 p.m. in Basement Hearing Room, State Office Building.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: HF928 (Hackbarth) Snowmobile metal traction device use on paved public trails prohibited, sticker required, and money appropriated.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: HF1036 (Seifert, M.) Agricultural education expansion feasibility studied by Southwest State University and money appropriated.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: HF83 (Murphy) School district debt service equalization eligibility modified.

HF362 (Davids) Department of Children, Families and Learning provided an alternative facilities design grant, and money appropriated.
 HF504 (Skoe) White Earth Reservation Pine Point School Facility and community center provided, and money appropriated.
 HF628 (Fuller) Independent School District nos. 38, Red Lake; 115, Cass Lake; 299, Caledonia; and 306, LaPorte, maximum effort capital loans approved; bonds issued; and money appropriated.
 HF616 (McElroy) School district general obligation debt allowed for special assessment prepayment.
 HF1400 (Stang) Independent School District No. 740, Melrose, health and safety revenue accelerated grant payment authorized, and money appropriated.
 HF1406 (Solberg) Independent School District No. 4, McGregor, energy improvements levy authorized, and money appropriated.
 HF1542 (Carruthers) Facilities grant authorized to Independent School District No. 286, Brooklyn Center, and money appropriated.

Canceled

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt
Agenda: Canceled.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth
Agenda: HF1091 (Westrom) Minnesota Marketplace grant provided and money appropriated.
 HF1558 (Ozment) Board of grain standards provisions and duties modified, rulemaking authorized, and definitions clarified.
 HF808 (Ness) Bovine paratuberculosis diagnosis data classification provided, Board of Animal Health executive secretary name changed to executive director, and sale of cattle limitations repealed.
 HF978 (Harder) Agricultural water quality and quantity management initiative funded, and money appropriated.
 HFXXXX (Harder) Changing veterinary practice requirements.
 HF893 (Dorman) Agricultural warehouse provisions modified and clarified.
 HF1586 (Swenson) Certain land authorized to be enrolled in more than one state or federal conservation program.
 HF1747 (Westfall) Agricultural chemical response reimbursement eligibility expanded.
 HF543 (Peterson) Cooperatively owned livestock processing plant development program established and money appropriated.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: HF961 (Pawlenty) Ramsey Action Program grant provided for the family asset program and money appropriated.
 HF1467 (Sykora) Early Childhood and Family Education, ECFE, children and family support

programs provided, and money appropriated.
HF1386 (Mulder) Early Childhood Family Education, ECFE, revenue increased, expectant parent activities included, and money appropriated.

HF1017 (Howes) American Indian youth prevention program grants established and money appropriated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF313 (McElroy) Nonvoting members allowed to serve on the Metropolitan Council, Transportation Advisory Committee membership expanded, metropolitan agencies and council merger studied, local government grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF1377 (McElroy) Dakota County Housing and Redevelopment Authority renamed, and powers of the Dakota County community development agency provided.

HF850 (Swenson) Regional development commission planning grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1287 (Dorn) Mankato area growth management and planning study grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1403 (Buesgens) Scott County; Blue Lake wastewater treatment plant consumptive groundwater use permit approved.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: HF1651 (Wolf) Minnesota retail electric competition act requiring transition to competitive industry, restructuring plans required, unbundling of services required, civil remedies provided, and money appropriated.

HF329 (Folliard) Misleading business name or telephone number advertisement prohibited.

HF988 (Jennings) Public utility commissioners advisory selection process created and ex parte communication regulated.

HF1184 (Knoblach) One call excavation notice system damage provisions modified.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

Immediately after session

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF981 (Holsten) Deer, bear, elk, and moose tag requirements modified.

HF971 (Mulder) Rock County; private conveyance of surplus state land authorized.

HF502 (Osskopp) Wabasha County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

4 p.m.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: To be announced.

5 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF1091 (Westrom) Minnesota Marketplace grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1558 (Ozment) Board of Grain Standards provisions and duties modified, rulemaking authorized, and definitions clarified.

HF808 (Ness) Bovine paratuberculosis diagnosis data classification provided, Board of Animal Health executive secretary name changed to executive director, and sale of cattle limitations repealed.

HF978 (Harder) Agricultural water quality and quantity management initiative funded, and money appropriated.

HFXXXX (Harder) Changing veterinary practice requirements.

HF893 (Dorman) Agricultural warehouse provisions modified and clarified.

HF1586 (Swenson) Certain land authorized to be enrolled in more than one state or federal conservation program.

HF1747 (Westfall) Agricultural chemical response reimbursement eligibility expanded.

HF543 (Peterson) Cooperatively owned livestock processing plant development program established and money appropriated.

6:30 p.m.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Continuation of 10 a.m. meeting.

THURSDAY, March 18

7 a.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF689 (Lindner) Payment of wages upon discharge provisions modified.

HF1182 (Kuisle) County economic development authorities authorized.

HF798 (Anderson, B.) Injured employees civil remedies provided in cases of employer safety violations.

HF553 (Carruthers) Volunteer firefighters allowed unpaid leave to perform duties.

HF1123 (McCollum) St. Paul flood mitigation holding pond grant provided.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue 30 minutes after session in 500S State Office Building.

7:30 a.m.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: Trains and planes.

HF573 (Stang) Excess rail bank land conveyance authorized.

HF1215 (Pelowski) Southern rail corridor grade crossing minimum safety standards provided.

HF919 (Kuisle) Right of first refusal extended to railroad right-of-way property leaseholders and interest notice required.

HF556 (Rukavina) St. Louis and Lake counties regional rail authority required to grant an

easement across its right-of-way in Lakewood.
HF849 (Haake) Minor and intermediate use airports defined for metro expansion and upgrade purposes, and reliever airport sound abatement council established.

HF1472 (Mulder) Special number plates for collector aircraft provisions modified.

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF539 (Huntley) MFIP face-to-face orientation exemption provided for minor parents.

HF944 (Mariani) Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) sanctions modified.

HF1393 (Jennings) Human services technical changes and statutory cross-references provided.

HF1392 (Jennings) Minnesota Family Investment Fund, MFIP, provisions modified relating to earned income disregard, food stamps, and employment services; food assistance to legal noncitizens continued, and TANF administrative cap proposed.

Member bills.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Minnesota Board of Public Defense budget presentation, including public defense corporations and the Indian Legal Assistance Program.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Department of Administration budget presentation continued.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF1480 (Fuller) Bureau of Criminal Apprehension facilities constructed in St. Paul and Bemidji, and money appropriated.

HF1553 (Ozment) Department of Corrections provisions modified relating to conditional release, restitution, and rehabilitation, sentence clarification provided, and reports required.

HF1554 (Ozment) Department of Corrections authorized to contract with Department of Human Services to conduct criminal history background checks for job applicants for juvenile corrections facilities.

HFXXXX (Ozment) Department of Corrections.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue after session in Basement Hearing Room, State Office Building.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF1129 (Carruthers) School boards required to allow home school students to fully participate in extracurricular activities.

HF1468 (Olson) School districts required to provide remedial instruction to students failing minimum core course requirements, and cost reports required.

HF1227 (Entenza) School guidance counselor to student ratio established.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue after session in 200 State Office Building.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF1437 (Ozment) Sustainable forest resources act repeal date modified.

HF1774 (Bakk) Gitchie-Gami trail constructed along Lake Superior in Lake and Cook counties, and money appropriated.

HF1455 (Hausman) Riparian forest management provided.

HF1796 (Kelliher) Forest assessment provisions and reporting requirements modified under the forest resource management plan.

HF1797 (Kelliher) Unit forest resource plan requirements modified and public notice provided.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

Canceled

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Canceled.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: To be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF1708 (Seifert, J.) Fire insurance property and liability provisions modified, and FAIR plan coverage regulated.

HF906 (Jennings) Uninsured motorist recovery of noneconomic detriment damages limited.

HF1079 (Paulsen) Tour boat liquor license season extended.

HF793 (Seifert, J.) Lien and right of detainer created for reasonable charges for a rented replacement motor vehicle retained for one being serviced.

1:45 p.m.

Subcommittee on Financial Institutions Workforce/ COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF727 (Davids) Real property loans, private mortgage insurance (PMI), and lending practices regulated; prepayment penalties prohibited; escrow account interest required; and mortgage originators and servicers net worth requirements repealed.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

Immediately following session

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: Continuation of 10 a.m. meeting.

7 p.m.

COMMERCE

316 State Capitol

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF1506 (Howes) Trade and economic development tourism appropriations provided.

HF1263 (Olson) Board of electricity required to adopt rules authorizing sign contractor special licenses.

HF1124 (Smith) Bleacher safety requirements provided, penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF1622 (Gerlach) Contracts regulated for architects, engineers, surveyors, landscape architects, geoscientists, and interior designers.

FRIDAY, March 19

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley,

Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Member bills.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: HF10 (Pawlenty) School stability initiative for homeless children established under the housing finance agency, and money appropriated.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF1607 (Smith) Peace officers of law enforcement agencies of federally recognized tribes included in Board of Peace Officers Standards and Training licensure provisions.

HFXXXX (Goodno) DWI provided gross misdemeanor.

Note: If necessary, meeting will continue after a short lunch break in Basement Hearing Room, State Office Building.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: To be announced.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: To be announced.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Class size, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

HF3 (Seifert, J.) Early elementary class size reduced, and money appropriated.

HF1207 (Dorman) General education basic formula allowance increased, pupil unit weightings increased, learning and development revenue expanded, class size reduction provided, and money appropriated.

HF1117 (Seagren) K-12 education bill providing funding for general education, special programs, lifework development, facilities and technology, education excellence, nutrition, libraries, prevention, and lifelong learning.

HF1166 (Chaudhary) Elementary class size reduction program established, referendum equalization revenue formula provided, and money appropriated.

HF1353 (Carlson) School district referendum equalization revenue increased, class size reduction program established, and money appropriated.

HF1407 (Folliard) Early elementary class size reduction program funded and money appropriated.

HF11 (Abeler) General education basic formula allowance inflationary increase provided, and money appropriated.

HF69 (Rest) General education basic formula allowance increased, and money appropriated.

HF554 (Chaudhary) General education basic formula allowance inflationary increase provided and money appropriated.

HF902 (Winter) General education formula allowance inflationary increase provided; special education, interactive television program, bus purchase levy, and graduation rule implementation funded; declining pupil aid created, and additional days repealed.

HF1187 (Johnson) General education basic formula allowance increased, training and experience revenue restored, and money appropriated.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

400S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Department of Administration budget presentation continued.

Office of Technology budget presentation.

11:45 a.m.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: To be announced.

12 noon

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building

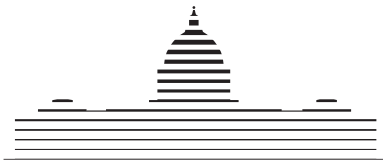
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Continuation of 10 a.m. meeting.

Name Pronunciation Guide

1999 Minnesota House of Representatives

Abeler, Jim	ABE-ler	Holsten, Mark William		Ozment, Dennis	AHZ-ment
Abrams, Ron		Howes, Larry		Paulsen, Erik	
Anderson, Bruce		Huntley, Thomas		Pawlenty, Tim	paw-LENTY
Anderson, Irv		Jaros, Mike	YAHHR-ohs	Paymar, Michael	
Bakk, Thomas (Tom)	BOCK	Jennings, Loren Geo		Pelowski Jr., Gene	
Biernat, Len	BE-AIR-nat	Johnson, Alice M.		Peterson, Doug	
Bishop, Dave		Juhnke, Al	JUNK-ee	Pugh, Thomas W.	PEW
Boudreau, Lynda	boo-DROH	Kahn, Phyllis		Rest, Ann H.	
Bradley, Fran		Kalis, Henry J.	KAH-liss	Reuter, Doug	ROOT-er
Broecker, Sherry	BROKE-er	Kelliher, Margaret Anderson	KELL-a-her	Rhodes, Jim	
Buesgens, Mark	BISK-ens	Kielkucki, Tony	keel-COO-ski	Rifenberg, Michelle	RIFF-en-berg
Carlson, Lyndon R.		Knoblach, Jim	NOB-lock	Rostberg, Jim	
Carruthers, Phil	ka-RUH-thers	Koskinen, Luanne		Rukavina, Tom	roo-ka-VEEN-a
Cassell, George	CASTLE	Krinkie, Philip		Schumacher, Leslie J.	SHOE-mocker
Chaudhary, Satveer	CHAW-dree, SUT-veer	Kubly, Gary W.	KOO-blee	Seagren, Alice	
Clark, James T.		Kuisle, William	KWEEZ-lee	Seifert, Jim	SY-fert
Clark, Karen		Larsen, Peg		Seifert, Marty	SY-fert
Daggett, Roxann	DAG-et	Larson, Dan		Skoe, Rod	SKOY
Davids, Gregory M.		Leighton, Rob	LAY-ton	Skoglund, Wes	SKOHG-lund
Dawkins, Andy		Lenczewski, Ann	len-CHESS-key	Smith, Steve	
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Dempsey, Jerry		Lieder, Bernie L.	LEED-er	Stanek, Rich	
Dorman, Dan		Lindner, Arlon		Stang, Doug	
Dorn, John		Luther, Darlene		Storm, Julie	
Entenza, Matt		Mahoney, Tim		Sviggum, Steve	SWIG-um
Erhardt, Ron	AIR-hart	Mares, Harry	MAIRS	Swenson, Howard	
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Hilty, Bill		Osthoff, Tom	AHST-hoff	Workman, Tom	
Holberg, Mary Liz		Otremba, Mary Ellen	oh-TREM-ba		



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Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Income and taxes in Minnesota

Percent of total 1996 income paid in state and local taxes by	
Minnesota residents	12.7
Percent paid by the 10 percent who earned between \$11,166 and \$15,828	
(lowest percent paid)	12.0
Percent paid by the 20 percent who earned between \$27,866 and \$45,144	
(highest percent paid)	13.1
Percent paid by the 10 percent who earned more than \$78,618	12.2
Percent of Minnesotans who earned less than \$15,828 in 1996	30
Percent who earned less than \$6,817	10
Percent of total 1996 income that went to sales taxes by Minnesotans earning	
less than \$6,817	4.6
Percent of that income gained from state income-tax return	0.6
Percent of total 1996 income that went to sales taxes by Minnesotans earning	
more than \$78,618	1.2
Percent of that income paid in individual state income tax	5.9
Percent of total state and local taxes received in 1996 from the 10 percent of	
Minnesotans who earned less than \$6,817	1.7
Percent received from the 10 percent who earned more than \$78,618	37.3
Of the 10 percent of Minnesotans with highest incomes, percent that are	
married with children	56
Percent that are married without children (not retired)	27
Percent that are single (not retired)	6
Percent that are retired	9
Percent that are single-parent families	2
Of the 10 percent of Minnesotans with lowest incomes, percent that are	
married with children	3
Percent that are married without children (not retired)	2
Percent that are single (not retired)	45
Percent that are retired	34
Percent that are single-parent families	16

Source: 1999 Minnesota Tax Incidence Study; March 1999; Minnesota Department of Revenue.

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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ March 19, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 11



Session Weekly is a nonpartisan publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Office. During the 1999-2000 Legislative Session, each issue reports daily House action between Thursdays of each week, lists bill introductions and upcoming committee meeting schedules, and provides other information. The publication is a service of the Minnesota House. No fee.

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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • March 19, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 11

Reflections

Eight-hour days began to last longer as members raced to meet the first committee deadline of March 19. Committee chairs were working overtime to get policy bills prepared for discussion on the House floor.

The race continues for the next six weeks — right up until May 17 when legislators must adjourn the first of two years in the 81st biennial session. By law, work must end at midnight of the third Monday following the third Saturday of the fifth month, in an odd-numbered year.

When the House and Senate reconvene in the second year, legislative business must be completed during a time not to exceed a total of 120 days within the two-year period. Only the governor can convene a special session any time during the Legislature's interim period, but he cannot control its duration.

As of the March 19 deadline, members had introduced a record 2,182 bills in the House. Of these, hundreds had moved out of House committees to be heard in the chamber by the full House. Many are yet to be acted on, while some have been re-referred to other committees. Any bills that originated in the House this session will now only be heard in finance committees, Ways and Means, or the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee.

All activity around the Capitol now increases. Lobbyists can be seen on their cell phones talking more to unknown listeners; they also hang out more often at the chamber door, hoping to discuss a bill with a legislator. As the cafeterias get more crowded, it becomes difficult to get in and out during a quick lunch break. Also, staff and members get a bit tired, but understandably so.

March 19 can be considered the halfway mark of this first year of session. By now, new pages in the sergeant's office have learned how to dodge the crowds blocking the hallways and filling the elevators in the State Office Building. And they've learned the names and faces of 134 members. Now, standing and walking for hours is not even a major problem.

Committee deadlines prevail year after year. In spite of increased activity or lack thereof on some bills, everyone's hard work results in new policies for Minnesotans and funding to keep the state in operation.

A second deadline comes up on March 31, when bills that met the first deadline must have their companion file passed out of policy committees in the other legislative body.

The final deadline for this Legislature is April 16. By then, every major funding bill is pieced together with directives or appropriations for issues favored by each caucus in the House and Senate, as well as special projects on the governor's list.

Once the smoke clears on Tuesday, May 18, legislators head home to all corners of the state. One can only surmise that the total number of bills passed, failed, or vetoed during the first five months of 1999, will be worthwhile for every resident in the state of Minnesota.

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Speaker Steve Sviggum leads House Republicans to a meeting in Room 217 in the Capitol.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

Transportation spending . . .

Urge to cut fees, need for funding pressure lawmakers

By Sarah Hallonquist

Efforts to lower Minnesota's license tab fees are beginning to resemble the process of negotiating a potential tax rebate. Everybody has a plan, but none of the plans are the same.

While neither the House nor the Senate has passed a bill yet, committees in both bodies have heard several proposals, including one supported by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

But with the looming possibility of a tab fee reduction, lawmakers on the House transportation committees are clamoring to find a way to fill the gap that would result in the state's highway fund. Currently, less than 1 percent of the state's general fund dollars are targeted toward transportation.

Add those two factors to a multi-billion dollar list of proposed transportation projects for the next two decades, and you get a funding crunch that some legislators see as exacerbating the already contentious process of getting a major transportation project approved.

The House Transportation Finance Committee approved a bill March 17 that would lower tab fees but not in the manner proposed by the governor.

Sponsored by Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester), the plan would lower tab fees for most vehicles and provide a constitutional amendment to make sure transportation funding is secured in the future.

The bill (HF446) would increase highway funding, but at the expense of about \$120 million from the general fund — money usually dedicated to other government agencies. Kuisle's bill now moves to the House Taxes Committee.

The transportation finance panel rejected the governor's plan, which was tacked onto another tab fee reduction bill under consideration.

Ventura wants to change the current system so that motorists would pay no more than \$75 to renew their license tabs each year. Under his plan, vehicle owners would pay the current tax only during the first year of their vehicle's life.

The current registration tax rate is \$10 plus 1.25 percent of the vehicle's suggested retail price. However, when the vehicle is 3 years old, the percentage is dropped to 90 percent and is lowered consistently as the vehicle ages. When a vehicle is more than 10 years old, the motorist pays a flat fee of \$35.



Lawmakers on House transportation committees are studying a number of plans to reduce license tab fees while maintaining funds for highway and transit projects statewide.

Photo illustration by Tom Olmscheid

Ventura would retain the current depreciation schedule for vehicles more than 1 year old, but if the calculation comes to more than \$75, the motorist would only have to pay the \$75.

If the calculation is less than \$75 but more than \$35, than the motorist would pay that amount. That would leave cars more than 10 years old still paying the \$35 flat fee, under the governor's plan.

But both proposals would leave a hole in the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund, a pot that provides money for highway projects statewide.

The governor is recommending a transfer of money from the general fund to cover the losses for the first year. But in subsequent years, the loss to the fund would increase to an estimated \$40.3 million in 2003.

The current highway system is supported largely by a state constitutional amendment that dedicates certain percentages of the gas tax and fees for license plates and tabs to a highway fund.

That fund is divided into three parts: 69 percent goes to the trunk highway fund, 29 percent goes to the county state-aid highway fund, and 9 percent goes to the municipal state-aid street system.

Federal subsidies, driver's license fees, and other miscellaneous funds also support the trunk highway fund. The state can also sell bonds to pay for highway projects.

Kuisle's bill would constitutionally dedicate 50 percent of the proceeds from the motor vehicle sales tax to transportation projects. Thirty percent would go into the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund, and 20 percent would go into a new transit assistance fund. The remaining 50 percent would stay in the general fund, where the all proceeds from the motor vehicle sales now go.

Voters would be asked to approve this provision by voting on a constitutional amendment placed on the November 2000 ballot.

In the 1980s, the Legislature put into law a plan to transfer some motor vehicle sales tax money into the highway fund, but it was not secured with a constitutional amendment. The state did transfer a small percentage of motor vehicle sales tax revenues for a few years, but the Legislature repealed the law when the general fund needed the extra money.

Some lawmakers want to see all motor vehicle sales tax funds devoted to transportation projects. Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) said the Kuisle proposal is a "Band-Aid" on transportation funding. She said she would

rather see the committee ask for 100 percent of motor vehicle sales tax proceeds from the beginning.

"What concerns me is that we settle for too little," Hausman said.

Because the House has been focusing on working out details of a potential income-tax reduction, the success of a cut in tab fees remains an unanswered question in the House Taxes Committee.

Yet another way to raise transportation revenue is to increase the gas tax, but lawmakers have expressed doubts about doing so in light of the state's budget surplus.

The Senate Transportation Committee passed a tab fee reduction plan with a \$60 million provision for light rail funding, which has not been a priority for the House committees this year.

Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), chair of the House Transportation Policy Committee, is sponsoring two bills that would address other aspects of transportation projects. One bill (HF939) would transfer the funding of the Minnesota State Patrol to the general fund, instead of the trunk highway fund.

The other bill (HF698) would set up a major transportation projects commission made up of legislators and a corps of gubernatorial appointees. In an attempt to "de-politicize" the process of getting highway construction projects approved, the commission would have the sole authority to rubber-stamp projects submitted by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Workman said he wants to see the dollars used efficiently for transportation-related projects. But he joins his House colleagues in their worries that transportation funding is not high-profile enough to get attention.

"If we've got good times, and we can't get an increase in funds, what's going to happen in bad times?" said Rep. Bernie Lieder (DFL-Crookston). 🐾

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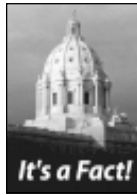
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Railroad heir brought family ethic to House



that would raise district judge salaries from \$9,500 to \$13,500 per year.

The lawyer said that he was particularly concerned that judges make a decent living because he had judicial aspirations of his own.

In his reply, Hill promised that attorney — a fellow named Warren Burger — that he would support an increase but that he wasn't sure he could support the entire amount recommended in the bill.

While Hill may not have realized that his young solicitor would go on to become chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, he was no stranger to prominent Americans.

Hill's grandfather, James J. Hill, made the family fortune in railroads, and the family dominated public life in St. Paul at the turn of the century.

Louis W. Hill Jr. was the first member of the Hill dynasty to become politically active, serving in the Minnesota House from 1937 to 1951.

Although born to wealth and affluence, Hill was required to earn his way into the family business.

He was given his first job as assistant timekeeper, extra gang, for Great Northern Railway in St. Paul in 1927.

Hill adopted that same "common man" philosophy when he began his quest for office in 1937. He campaigned for seven months, pushing every doorbell in his district — the area along Summit Avenue in St. Paul often called the "silk-stocking ward."

But Hill didn't confine his campaigning to those who owned the stately mansions; he was often seen talking with kitchen help, maids, deliverymen, and doormen.

Hill, only 34 at the time, ran as a liberal and was elected in a year when Franklin D. Roosevelt swept to the presidency.

The Yale-educated Hill beat the incumbent, Albert Kueffner, in the primary and

defeated both Daniel D. O'Connell and Kueffner, who ran as an independent, in the general election.

Several pundits of the day wondered whether Hill was running because he had nothing better to do or because he was genuinely interested in public service.

One newspaper noted Hill was "rich enough to be an idler without distinction" but added that if he wanted to follow the family tradition of hard work, "he'll find plenty of it in government."

Hill brought with him to the House a broad background in philanthropic and civic organizations, including work with the Minnesota Historical Society.

His district included the Minnesota Club, which at the time boasted members including such luminaries as Elmer L. Andersen, president of H.B. Fuller Co.; Charles K. Blandin, president of Blandin Paper Co., and William L. McKnight, chairman of the board of 3M.

But Hill's tenure in the House proved to the satisfaction of most that his interests were varied and diverse. Among other causes, he championed setting up game farms for pheasant hunters. And his capacity to grasp the problems of the disadvantaged was large.

Hill's votes reflect a diversity of viewpoints, sometimes staunchly conservative — at least by today's standards — and at other times, quite liberal.

In his waning days in the House, Hill was appointed to the Tuberculosis Facilities Commission. The panel was charged with examining the 12 sanitariums in the state devoted to assisting people recovering from the dreaded disease.

Interestingly, some of the issues surrounding those institutions remain concerns today — adequate funding, rehabilitation programs, reducing the size and intrusiveness of the institutions, and providing adequate benefits and services. Hill expressed an inordinate capacity for care and concern where victims of tuberculosis were concerned.

Hill died April 6, 1995, at his home in North Oaks. He was 92.



Rep. Louis W. Hill Jr.

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Wolf plan moves ahead

The House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee approved a bill March 16 that would establish a statewide wolf management plan.

Supporters say the plan is necessary because the federal government is set to remove the gray wolf from the Endangered Species Act.

A group of 34 citizens representing various interests began meeting as a roundtable in 1997 to discuss ecological issues and other controversial aspects of a wolf management plan.

That roundtable led to a bill (HF1415), sponsored by Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus).

But the bill was amended in the House Agriculture Policy Committee, and some of the original roundtable participants testified against the new version.

Tom Meyers, a regional director for the Minnesota Conservation Federation, urged the environment panel to return the bill to its original text because the changes undermine the consensus of the 34 participants in the roundtable.

"None of us got what we wanted, but every one of us got what we needed at that time. And we all raised our hand and voted yes," Meyers

said. "As it stands, (the bill) breaks the consensus irrevocably."

Others testified that the consensus was already weakened because the group was trying to meet a deadline and they felt pressured to reach an agreement in order to avoid having to accept a plan they liked even less.

Under the bill, illegal hunting of a gray wolf would be a gross misdemeanor and the restitution value of a wolf would be set at \$250.

Also, a trained guard animal could protect livestock from gray wolves, a gray wolf could be killed if it attacked a human or threatened livestock or other animals, and a person could harass a gray wolf if it is within 500 yards of people, buildings, livestock, or other domestic animals. A killed wolf would have to be reported to a conservation officer within 48 hours.

In addition, trapping and hunting procedures would be established if the wolf population exceeds 1,600. Trapping and hunting would not be allowed in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Karlyn Berg testified against the bill on behalf of the U.S. Humane Society. She said the plan should be "ecologically sound, based on responsible stewardship."

"We have always supported taking wolves for (attacking livestock)," she said. "But it shouldn't be allowed if farmers don't follow good husbandry."

Berg said her organization advocates farming practices — including using guard animals — that discourage wolves from attacking, instead of having farmers simply shooting wolves.

Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) defended the amended version of the bill, saying it would give wolves more than one million acres of sanctuary. And the wolf population in Minnesota has exceeded the requirements to come off the endangered list, which has led to more conflicts with people.

"The Endangered Species Act has really done something in Minnesota," he said. "If the number of wolves is already higher than (required to be dropped from list), why would we allow the numbers to continue to grow even further?"

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) proposed an amendment that would restore the bill to the roundtable plan that was introduced, but the committee rejected the proposal.

"We don't legislate by roundtable; we legislate by representative democracy," said Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City).

The bill now moves to the House floor.

Can farmers market?

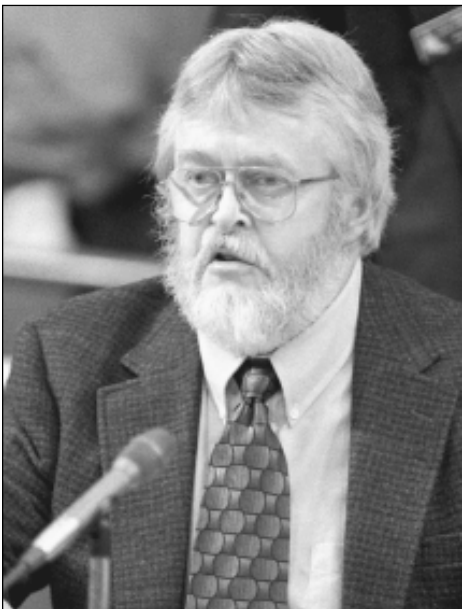
You can grow the greatest product in the world, but if you can't find someone to buy it, it's worthless. That's the logic used by supporters of a marketing program called "Minnesota Marketplace."

A bill (HF1091) that would provide \$950,000 in seed money for the plan over the next two years was approved March 17 by the House Agriculture Policy Committee.

Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake), sponsor of the bill, said the idea is to connect producers with consumers. He told the committee that currently most farmers simply drop their product at the local elevator and let them do the marketing.

Under "Minnesota Marketplace," cooperatives would be formed to find and create produce markets.

Each dollar of state money would be matched by 50 cents of private money. The organization would focus on the needs of west-central and northwestern Minnesota, areas of the state particularly hard-hit by the most recent farm downturn.



Tom Meyers, *left*, regional director for the Minnesota Conservation Federation, expresses concern over a wolf management bill presented March 16 to the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee. Karlyn Berg, *right*, from Humane Society of the United States, testifies in opposition to the bill at the same hearing.

The idea has broad support from growers associations across the state.

Kurt Knutson, president of the Minnesota Barley Growers Association, said it's tough for Minnesota's farmers to compete with foreign markets where agriculture is often heavily subsidized. He said farmers are traditionally good at producing but poor at marketing.

Zachary Fore, a University of Minnesota cropping systems specialist, said farmers today grow a lot of crops that are not profitable. With a concentrated effort on finding markets, that situation could be turned around.

Westrom said he envisions the idea as a pilot project and believes the organization will be self-supporting within five years.

Members of the agriculture panel generally supported the idea, but wanted to make certain this new program wasn't a duplication of other efforts.

Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie) said the state already supports the Agricultural Utilization and Research Institute, which has similar goals.

Knutson said the new organization would have close ties to the institute but would do work that isn't being accomplished anywhere else.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) said the institute is devoted more to technology transfer and not to soliciting markets.

"We need to work collaboratively to get beyond where we are today bringing value-added closer to the consumer," Ness said, adding that the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and other entities would also have to get on board eventually to make it work.

The bill moves to the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee.

ARTS

Prison art challenged

The state usually spends 1 percent of a building's construction budget to buy art, but a bill that would prohibit that money from being spent on art for state correctional facilities won approval from two House committees.

"I believe we as legislators are here to set priorities, and as much as art adds to the ambiance of a prison, I feel this is not a wise way to use state resources," said Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall), sponsor of the bill (HF82).

The bill was approved March 11 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee and March 18 by the House Capital Investment Committee.

A 1984 state law authorizes the appropria-

tion, which is administered through the Minnesota Department of Administration, based on the costs of a new building or alteration project that costs more than \$500,000. The money can be used for art in or around the building.

Seifert said that law allows up to \$890,000 to be spent on art for the state correctional facility being built in Rush City. But, he said, officials for that project do not plan to spend that much money for art.

However, other correctional facilities have used the 1-percent appropriation for art projects. The correctional facility in Faribault has used the money for three different art projects: \$40,000 for five benches sculpted from granite, \$44,000 for a mural and trellis at the entrance of a building for visitors, and \$15,000 for several murals with messages that are designed to encourage inmates to stay out of prison after they are released.

Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown) said that the 1-percent appropriation can be used to connect the hosting community to the prison — like a sculpture in a prison gate — or in public spaces.

"There are other ways of looking at this than just saying no to 1 percent," she said.

"I just think that in a world of priorities, this just isn't a high priority for people," Seifert said.

The bill now moves to the House floor.



BANKING

Banking in Outing



A new law effective March 16 will allow a bank to open a branch office in the small community of Outing, located in southern Cass County.

The law provides an exception to current state law that prohibits banks from operating in townships. Outing is an unincorporated city in Crooked Lake Township.

Minnesota's "home office protection law" allows banks to establish branch offices in cities with a population less than 10,000 only with consent from all the banks that have their home office in that city. Banks are also prohibited from getting around that law by opening in townships just outside city limits.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), House sponsor of the new measure, said First National Bank of Crosby had planned to open an office in Outing, assuming it was an incorporated city. Because Outing has its own post office and zip code, many people don't realize that it has never been incorporated, she said.

Sen. David Ten Eyck (DFL-East Gull Lake) sponsored the proposal in the Senate.

HF248*/SF324/CH7



BUDGET

The cost of government

The House passed a resolution March 15 that would set targets for the price of government over the next four years. The vote was 111-21.

Current law requires that the Legislature pass a concurrent resolution every two years stating revenue targets in relation to personal income for the upcoming two budget periods.

The resolution passed by the House states that the price of government over both the 2000-01 and 2002-03 budget periods shouldn't exceed 17.3 percent of personal income.

The Senate version of the resolution calls for targets of 17.6 percent for 2000-2001 and 17.5 percent for 2002-2003.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), sponsor of the resolution, said that the House version of the resolution would call for \$390 million less in taxes over the 2000-2001 budget than the Senate version.

The concurrent resolution passed in 1997 set the maximum share of personal income collected in taxes at 17.8 percent in 1998-99 and 17.7 percent in 2000-01.

"I think we're showing a very steady decline in the price of government as a percentage of Minnesota's income," Bishop said.

The resolution now goes back to the Senate.



CHILDREN

Defrauding day care

Fraud could be occurring in about 10 percent of state-funded child-care programs in Minnesota, said Dan Haley, director of the Program Integrity Projects Team at the state's Department of Human Services.

Haley testified in support of a bill (HF1318) that would set up a fraud-prevention program aimed specifically at child-care programs. The bill was considered March 15 by the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee.

Child-care fraud can take many forms, including parents falsifying their incomes to qualify for assistance or lying about the cost of child care in order to make a profit from assistance provided by the state government and the federal government.

Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior) is sponsor-

ing the bill, which calls for a statewide application form for all child-care programs. Currently, all 87 counties administer child-care funds and programs using separate application forms, making it difficult for officials to keep track of families in the system.

In addition, the bill would set up penalties for people who intentionally commit child-care fraud. The first offense would result in a three-month suspension from child-care assistance, the second offense would result in a six-month suspension, and the third offense would deny assistance for two years. After a fourth offense, a person would be permanently ineligible to receive child-care assistance.

Haley, whose program already investigates welfare fraud, said his investigators could start working on child-care fraud immediately after the measure becomes law. He said the bill is a "necessary first step in child-care program integrity."

Sykora said the \$350,000 per year that would be spent to investigate child-care fraud would allow programs to recoup much more than that in lost funds. She said she expects child-care programs will continue to grow in Minnesota and that more money would be saved in the long run under her bill.

The committee took no action on the bill, but it will consider the proposal for inclusion in the omnibus family and early childhood education finance bill.

Unlicensed day care

A bill that would extend legal unlicensed day care in Minnesota ran into a nursery full of opposition March 16, but the measure still managed to win approval from a House committee.

The proposal (HF802) would make permanent the state authorization of certain unlicensed day-care operations that the 1997 Legislature allowed on a temporary basis.

Current law allows unlicensed day-care providers to take care of unrelated children if the children are from no more than three other families; there are no more than four unrelated children; there are no more than two children under two years old; and there are no more than five children being cared for at any given time.

Bill sponsor Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) told the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee that the temporary 1997 law was passed in response to concerns about the availability of day care as more parents moved into the labor force in the aftermath of welfare reform.

He also said that previous to 1997 there was

Attention getter



Rep. Carlos Mariani, right, keeps 9-month-old Mary Beth Little occupied as her mother, Gina, a Faribault resident, testifies March 17 before the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee. Gina Little told the committee about the positive effects early childhood education programs have had for her and her children.

no numeric limit on the number of children who could be cared for by an unlicensed operation.

He said without a continuation of the 1997 law, families would be out in the streets looking for child care. He estimated there are between 12,000 and 16,000 legal unlicensed in-home day care operations in the state.

The number of licensed facilities has been decreasing.

Opponents argued that passing the bill would lower standards for child care in the state. They said unlicensed facilities can be operated by people who have not undergone a background check or completed safety and health training. Also, unlicensed providers are not required to be part of ongoing in-service programs.

"None of us know it all," said Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie).

Otremba, who has worked with preschool education programs, said the state should be trying to increase the number of facilities under licensure, rather than sanctioning unlicensed operations.

Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park) noted that even kennels for boarding dogs are licensed.

And Rep. Linda Wejcman (DFL-Mpls) said that if the state is going to require mothers to work under welfare reform, it has a responsibility to assure day care operations are safe.

"It's not hard to get a license," said Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin). "Would you go to an unlicensed doctor or dentist?"

The bill goes to the House floor.



CRIME

DWI bill stalls

Members of the House Transportation Finance Committee rejected a bill March 17 that would lower the blood-alcohol level at which a driver can legally operate a motor vehicle.

The bill (HF1004), sponsored by Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), would cut the legal limit for drunkenness from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent. The lower limit would apply to the operation of automobiles, off-road vehicles, and motorboats. And the bill would apply the new limit to hunting with a firearm or bow.

Proponents argue that the proposed limit is reasonable and that it would result in a reduction in DWI-related fatalities. Opponents say that the bill would focus law enforcement resources on social drinkers, while most problems are caused by chronic offenders.

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, 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 the 0.08-percent level.

A number of factors affect the body's ability to process alcohol, including the duration of drinking, weight, ingestion of food, and gender. A standard drink is a 12-ounce glass of beer, a five-ounce glass of wine, or a one-and-a-half-ounce shot of hard alcohol.

Last year, separate versions of the DWI bill

passed the two bodies of the Legislature but stalled in a conference committee as legislators struggled to work out the difference between the bills.

The House version of the bill would have lowered the standard for legal drunkenness in Minnesota from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent for all drivers. The Senate version passed last year would have applied the lower limit only to repeat DWI offenders.

DNA from more offenders

The list of crimes for which offenders are required to submit DNA samples would be expanded under a bill approved March 13 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Current law requires only sex offenders to submit DNA samples to a statewide database kept by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

The bill would add several crimes not considered sex offenses to the list of crimes for which offenders must submit samples. Those crimes would include murder, assault, kidnapping, and burglary.

Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji), sponsor of the bill, said the proposal is an attempt to gather information on offenders who commit "predatory" crimes.

But Rep. Joe Mullery (DFL-Mpls) said the bill represents an expansion into a sensitive area of privacy rights. He said the original law only authorized DNA samples for sex offenders because of the unique nature of the evidence.

"This bill totally changes the whole concept of that," he said.

Fuller said that keeping DNA on file is no different than keeping fingerprints on file.

"If a person doesn't want their DNA taken, I suggest that they don't commit these crimes," Fuller said.

Frank Dolejsi, director of the forensic science laboratory at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, said that several states are taking DNA samples from criminals other than sex offenders. He said Virginia requires DNA samples from all convicted felons, which includes a much larger list of crimes than those in Fuller's bill.

The bill (HF1328) now goes to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Protecting prison guards

The House passed a bill March 15 that aims to give corrections workers more protection on the job. The vote was 123-7.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Jim

Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), seeks to protect workers from the spread of blood-borne pathogens such as hepatitis and the HIV virus.

It would allow corrections employees to request that an inmate give a blood sample after the employee has had significant exposure to the inmate.

If the inmate refuses to give the sample, the bill would provide for a process through which the corrections worker could obtain a court order to force the inmate to comply.

The test results would be private data to be released only for diagnosis and treatment of the employee. Penalties would be provided for unauthorized release of the test results.

The bill (HF741) now goes to the Senate.



EDUCATION

Blocking porn on Web

Lawmakers considered a bill March 16 that would require all school and library computers to have software filters that block children's access to pornography on the Internet.

The House Education Policy Committee discussed the bill (HF923) but did not vote on it.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury), would also require all school districts to adopt Internet use policies.

Tom Prichard, president of the Minnesota Family Council, said the bill's goal is to protect children and it follows the same argument as restricting children's access to pornographic magazines in stores.

"With just a couple clicks of the mouse, children are able to access the most vulgar, perverse material imaginable," Prichard said.

Bob Meeks, director of governmental relations for the Minnesota School Boards Association, said the bill is not necessary because many schools already monitor Internet use and have adopted policies restricting access to pornographic material.

Judy Bull, a school media specialist in St. Paul, said software filters only block words, not images. In addition, she said many of the filters don't work because they end up restricting access to legitimate World Wide Web sites.

For example, a medical research site might be restricted because it contains the word "sex."

Bull said many of her students use Internet search engines designed specially for children.

The bill does not include an appropriation for schools to buy the blocking software. However, because the state would require schools to purchase software, some lawmakers pressed for state funding to support the initiative.

The measure will be considered by the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

Dealing with disruptive kids

A bill that would allow teachers more authority to remove disruptive students from class was approved March 16 by the House Education Policy Committee.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) is sponsoring the bill (HF16), which is supported by many education organizations including the teachers union Education Minnesota.

The bill would lower the standard for student behavior that constitutes grounds for dismissal or removal from the classroom.

Current law allows schools to dismiss students for conduct that "materially and substantially" interferes with other students' rights to an education or a teacher's ability to teach. Such conduct can include carrying a weapon in school, but there is no clear-cut definition.

Pawlenty's bill would clarify that conduct level as behavior that "significantly" affects the classroom atmosphere. The provision would also extend beyond the classroom into any school function such as recess, a school assembly, or a meeting in a principal's office.

Pawlenty said his bill would put order into the classroom and strengthen teachers' abilities to manage their classrooms.

"We can't just focus on the rights of the disruptive students," Pawlenty said.

But Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) said the bill is only symbolic in nature and it would not have much of an effect on schools.

Several groups cautioned lawmakers against the bill, saying it would make it easier to kick students out of school, which would harm them in the long run.

Claudia Fuentes, a lobbyist with the Urban Coalition, said lowering the threshold for dismissal would disproportionately affect students of color and perpetuate racial biases in schools.

But Pawlenty said that if the bill does become law, schools should not use it as a tool against students. However, he said, the problem of disruptive students is a common complaint from teachers.

"There are real issues affecting real people, and we need to deal with them genuinely," he said.

The bill moves to the House floor.

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



ELECTIONS

Initiative bill gains ground

A bill that would allow citizens to directly place on the ballot proposed changes in state law or in the Minnesota Constitution was approved March 10 by the House Ways and Means Committee and March 17 by the House Rules Committee.

Under current law, only the Legislature, with the governor's approval, can change laws or put a constitutional amendment question on the ballot.

The bill (HF484) would place a constitutional amendment on the ballot for the 2000 general election that would allow voters to choose if they want the power of initiative and referendum.

Such a constitutional change would give citizens the ability to enact an initiative law, repeal an existing law, or put constitutional amendment questions on future ballots by filing a petition.

Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie), the bill's sponsor, said other states have similar initiative and referendum laws, and he said those laws promote higher voter turnout and increased accountability of lawmakers.

Under Paulsen's plan, an initiative would go on the ballot if a petition is signed by 5 percent of the number of voters who voted for governor in the previous election. That threshold would have to be met in three-quarters of the state's congressional districts and on a statewide basis. And a constitutional amendment question would go on the ballot if a petition is signed by 8 percent of those voters.

The requirement regarding congressional districts is designed to make it difficult for an initiative or referendum to be placed on the ballot without support from different regions of the state.

Opponents of initiative and referendum laws say that many measures are too complex to be simply stated on a ballot and voted on without the extensive information, deliberation, and debate that help lawmakers make decisions.

The bill now moves to the House floor.



FAMILY

Making marriage stick

Married couples or couples planning to wed in Minnesota could opt to have a covenant marriage, under a bill approved March 13 by the House Civil Law Committee.

Bill sponsor Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson) said her bill would give couples the

option of having "a deeper, more committed marriage."

The bill would create a new type of marriage called a covenant marriage, and it would provide procedures for entering into such an arrangement.

Covenant marriages would differ from standard marriages in that they would be exempt from the state's no-fault divorce laws.

Under the bill, divorce in a covenant marriage would only be granted in cases of adultery, abandonment, physical or sexual abuse, or when a spouse has committed a felony-level crime and is incarcerated.

Marital counseling would be required before couples could enter into the covenant marriage, under the bill.

Chuck Shreffler of Minneapolis testified in support of the bill. He said that his ex-wife and three children live in Colorado following his no-fault divorce. He said the spouse seeking the divorce has the most leverage under current divorce laws.

"The person who is the least committed in the relationship has the most power," he said, "and I don't think that's right."

Shreffler said all marriages are lifelong commitments and the covenant marriage would simply be "full disclosure" of that fact.

Tom Prichard, president of the Minnesota

Family Council, said that Minnesota's no-fault divorce law makes divorce too easy.

"It's easier to get out of a 30-year marriage than a \$100 business deal," Prichard said.

Prichard said that according to surveys done by his organization, two-thirds of married adults say that marriage is weaker today than 30 years ago and two-thirds of people who are divorced now say they wish they had tried harder to save their marriage.

Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls), a family law professor at Hamline University Law School, said that the provisions dealing with mandatory premarital counseling are a good idea and should be applied to all marriages.

But the current no-fault divorce laws are working well and should be left alone, he said.

"If two parties don't want to remain married, why should the state stand in their way?" he said.

The bill (HF1571) now goes to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Grandparents' rights

The House Civil Law Committee gave initial approval March 17 to a bill that would expand child visitation rights for grandparents.

The bill (HF764), sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), would eliminate current restrictions on when a grandparent can be granted visitation rights to allow courts more discretion in such cases. And the bill would mandate mediation in cases where visitation by the grandparent is contested.

Smith said that the mediation process would take these important issues out of the "cold courtroom" and place them in a setting where compromises can be worked out between the parties in dispute.

Muriel Hinich and Donna Zieska, co-directors of Grandparents Preserving Families, testified in support of the bill.

Hinich said that she hasn't seen her 16-year-old granddaughter for more than ten years. She said the notion of grandparents not participating in the lives of grandchildren would have been outrageous years ago.

"God would strike you dead if you ever said it," she said. "No child should lose their grandparent while (the grandparent) is still alive."

Zieska said she was involved in a six-year dispute over visitation with her grandchild and was finally awarded visitation.

"This would have never happened if we had positive mediation at the start," she said.

But Stephen Arnott, an attorney with the family law section of the Minnesota State Bar Association, said that adding more visitation

Pine Point proposal



Ken Litau, superintendent of schools on the White Earth Reservation, explains the need for state aid to replace the Pine Point School during a March 17 meeting of the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.



GAME & FISH

Hunting preserves approved

A plan to allow a limited number of elk and deer farmers across the state to open fenced-in shooting preserves is progressing through the House, and with it comes a debate over the ethics of hunting versus the interests of the agricultural community.

Farmed cervidae — the biological name for the family of animals including elk and deer — are currently raised on Minnesota farms for fiber, meat, animal byproducts, or as breeding stock.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater) is sponsoring a bill (HF710) that would expand the permitted uses of farmed cervidae to include stocking them on 10 licensed shooting preserves.

The House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee approved the measure March 15.

Shooting preserves would contribute millions of dollars in feed and fencing purchases to their local economies, elk farmer Larry Winter told the committee.

Winter, speaking on behalf of the Minnesota Elk Breeders Association, said that an animal killed by a patron of a shooting preserve would bring in 10 times the dollar value that slaughter would yield.

"We need to have something to do with our aging bulls who are ready for slaughter," he explained. "It's something that's going to keep us alive instead of turning into a butcher facility."

Shooting preserve operators could charge up to \$8,000 per animal or whatever the market would support, Holsten said.

"This is a value-added practice for the farmers," he said. "When these animals' ultimate purpose is to end up wrapped in a bag in the freezer, what difference should it make how they get there?"

Representatives from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, animal rights groups, and even some hunters — an unusual alliance — testified that shooting farm-raised, fenced-in animals is completely different from traditional hunting.

"This would be a canned hunt," said Linda Hatfield of the Humane Society of the United States. "It is cruel, inhumane, and disrespectful to the animal."

The state of Texas allows exotic species hunts of retired zoo animals, Hatfield said, and she fears cervidae shooting preserves would open up the door for those activities in Minnesota.

"I am a hunter, I am a fisher, and I had a venison hamburger for lunch," said Tom



Donna Zieska, left, and Muriel Hinich, co-directors of Grandparents Preserving Families, testify in favor of a bill that would expand grandparent visitation rights. The women addressed the House Civil Law Committee on March 17.

rights to parties other than the parents will result in increased litigation.

He said the current law does a good job of balancing the interests of grandparents and parents in these cases. The current law also allows judges to use their own judgment on which cases to refer for mediation, he said, unlike Smith's bill, which would require it.

"Mediation is not the answer for all disputes," Arnott said.

The committee also gave approval to two additional bills, HF1787 and HF1646, dealing with child visitation for parties other than parents.

HF1787, sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), would allow court appointed guardians to petition judges to allow visitation for foster siblings.

And HF1646, sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), would allow other family members, such as adult siblings, uncles, aunts, or cousins, to petition the courts for visitation rights to the child.

These bills now go to the House floor.



GAMBLING

Gambling bills advance

The House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee approved two bills March 12 that would allow new forms of gambling in Minnesota.

The first was a bill that would allow a card club to operate at a Shakopee horse track and direct a share of the profits to increasing race purses.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), sponsor of the bill (HF1281), said Canterbury Park is trying to compete against tracks in other states that can offer higher purses due to proceeds from other forms of gambling.

"The better horses go to Iowa, and that also means horse farms go to Iowa," he said.

Osskopp estimated that proceeds from a card club would raise the purses at Canterbury by about \$2 million to \$3 million annually. The track's purses are currently around \$4 million, and purses at Prairie Meadows race-track in Iowa total about \$15 million.

The committee also accepted an amendment offered by Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) that would allocate some of the proceeds of the card club to the commissioner of health and human services for a program to help compulsive gamblers.

The committee did not act on a bill (HF1374), sponsored by Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), that would allow slot machines and blackjack at Canterbury Park.

But the lawmakers did approve a bill (HF686) that would allow dice games in bars.

"This is already a legal activity," said Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph) sponsor of that bill.

Under gambling statutes, a private, social bet is not considered illegal, he said. But under liquor statutes, dice are not allowed in bars.

Bar patrons often play dice games, such as "liar's poker," "500 rummy," or "6-5-4" for small stakes or to buy drinks, Dehler said.

Dehler's bill and the measure proposing a card club at Canterbury Park now move to the House floor.

Meyers, a regional director for the Minnesota Conservation Federation. "My concern is the image that this paints of hunters in Minnesota."

Meyers questioned the ethics of advertised, guaranteed hunts, saying they would not provide fair chases.

Wayne Edgerton, an official with the Department of Natural Resources, said he opposes the bill because of the potential negative repercussions it could have upon the public's perception of hunting, especially after a majority of voters in the last election approved a constitutional amendment in support of traditional hunting.

The bill moves to the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee.



GOVERNMENT

Keeping tabs on fees

State agencies would not be able to impose or increase fees without legislative approval, under a bill advanced March 16 by the House State Government Finance Committee.

Under the measure, budget proposals for each state agency would have to list proposed fee changes or new fees, including admission fees to state facilities and charges for goods, services, regulation, or licensure.

Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview), committee chair and sponsor of the bill (HF1471), said many fees are already in statute but that many are established through rules promulgated by state agencies. The bill would enable the Legislature to review all of those fees.

Krinkie said the bill would help solve the problem of temporary fees becoming permanent or being used for purposes other than those for which the fees were originally intended.

For example, Krinkie said, a fee for businesses making Uniform Commercial Code transactions — which is collected by the secretary of state's office — was originally intended to pay for computer upgrades but now goes into the general fund.

The bill would not apply to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

The measure now moves to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Coverage for survivors



Dependents of peace officers and firefighters who are killed in the line of duty will continue to be eligible for health insurance coverage, even if they are not covered at

the time of the person's death, under a law effective March 17.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), allows a spouse who is not covered as a dependent at the time of the death — but was eligible or later became eligible to be covered — to be a dependent on the employer's health plan.

A 1997 law provided health coverage to officers and firefighters and their dependents, because many who were disabled by duty-related injuries were receiving pensions but were not eligible for health-care coverage.

Sen. Randy Kelly (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF49*/SF162/CH12



HEALTH

Abortion information sought

The House Civil Law Committee narrowly approved a bill March 15 that would establish a system for reporting data about certain minors who receive abortions. The vote was 8-6.

The bill (HF377) would require physicians to report information, including age and race, about minors who receive abortions after obtaining a judge's permission instead of parental consent. The statistical data would become public.

Under current law, doctors are required to notify parents or guardians at least 48 hours before performing an abortion on a minor.

But minors can bypass the parental notification by receiving a judge's permission.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), sponsor of the bill, said there is no good documentation to show how so-called "judicial pass through" is working, how often it is used, or what criteria judges use in granting their permission.

Goodno's bill would establish a reporting form that physicians would have to submit annually. The bill also specifies that the statistical data compiled from the reports would be public and outlines a process by which concerned citizens can sue the state to get access to the report.

"We have no idea how many minor girls are going through the bypass," said Jackie Schwietz, a spokeswoman for Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life. "That's what we want to find out."

Goodno amended his bill to provide data privacy protections for minors having abortions and for physicians who perform the procedures.

But some committee members expressed concern that the bill does not provide adequate protection for the judges who rule on such cases because the reports would provide information on specific counties and some counties have only one judge.

The bill, approved earlier by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee, now goes to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Suburban history



Don Wiegert, *standing*, a founding member of the Maplewood Area Historic Society, speaks March 17 before the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee. The committee was considering a bill that would provide funds to relocate historic farm buildings in Maplewood. Also on hand were Maplewood City Councilor Sherry Allenspach, *left*, bill sponsor Rep. Betty McCollum, *second from right*, and Robert Overbey, a member of the Maplewood Area Historical Society.

Tobacco money plans

A proposal for spending the state's windfall from 1998's tobacco settlement was approved March 15 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

The bill (HF1600) would establish four endowments with the money, an idea supported by Gov. Jesse Ventura. Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), sponsor of the bill, said about \$1.3 billion total would be set aside under his proposal.

A Minnesota Families Foundation would be created with \$600 million; a medical education and research costs fund would be established with \$100 million; a health professional education and medical research endowment would be founded with \$350 million; and a local public health endowment fund of \$260 million would be created.

Debate on the bill centered around an amendment — accepted by the committee — that would allow money from the medical education and research endowment to go to research activities that are conducted in non-educational settings. Under the bill, those activities could be sponsored by any Minnesota-based nonprofit organization.

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls) objected to that provision, saying the primary purpose of the endowment in his mind is to educate medical personnel.

Both Greenfield and Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) said Minnesota's educational facilities are the appropriate arena for research, and they reminded committee members that about \$80 million in federal support for those facilities has been cut.

Greenfield said he opposed state funding for medical research because it is the purview of the federal government. Anything the state could contribute would only be "chump change," he said.

But Goodno said the bill doesn't require money be given to entities not engaged in training medical personnel, it only affords eligibility for those organizations. He added that there are entities other than the University of Minnesota and the Mayo Clinic that are doing research.

Earlier this year, the committee approved a separate measure that would dedicate tobacco settlement revenue to eliminating the state's health-care provider tax.

The committee also rejected a different endowment plan earlier this session. That plan was included in a bill (HF223), which is sponsored by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley). The committee approved a heavily amended version of Leppik's bill after it had been stripped of the endowment-related provisions. The version of the bill that emerged

from the committee would provide some funds for grants to help local anti-smoking initiatives.

Goodno's endowment plan now heads to the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Resolution says hands off

Some lawmakers believe the U.S. Congress should not be casting its eyes upon Minnesota's tobacco settlement money.

The House passed a resolution March 15 that aims to tell the federal government just that. The vote was 129-1.

The resolution, sponsored by Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury), would remind federal officials that they were not part of Minnesota's suit and inform them that the federal government has no right to the money.

The federal government has said it may be entitled to a portion of state tobacco settlements as repayment for its share of Medicaid costs.

Breathing room



Stacy Enzmann, a fourth-grader at Crooked Lake Elementary School in Andover, listens as her mother, Connie, testifies March 15 before the House K-12 Education Finance Committee. Connie Enzmann told the committee how her daughter had difficulty breathing while attending school before the building's air intake system was improved. The committee was hearing a bill that would create standard management procedures for such facilities.

But the proposed resolution notes that Minnesota's lawsuit was based on business issues, not health issues. It also would call on Minnesota's U.S. senators and representatives to support legislation — already introduced in Congress — that would prohibit federal recovery of any state tobacco settlement payments.

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls) expressed concern the resolution could actually overstate the case. And he said that can be more damaging at times than understating the argument.

Seifert disagreed and reminded Greenfield of the original grounds under which the case was filed, alleging illegal business practices on the part of tobacco companies and not claiming that their product was defective.

The measure (HF719/SF757*) goes to the governor.

Ambulance volunteers



Volunteer ambulance drivers in Minnesota now have a precise definition in state law, under a new law effective March 16.

The law defines ambulance drivers as volunteers, who as such are not entitled to minimum wage and other workers' protections even if they receive some financial compensation for their services. The need for a definition grew out of a legal debate over wage and hour laws.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) and Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the measure.

HF214*/SF241/CH8

New purchasing plans



Ambulance services will be allowed to participate in shared service purchasing arrangements for supplies, materials, and equipment, under a new state law effective Aug. 1.

Supporters of the legislation said ambulance services need more flexibility in approaching purchases, particularly of expensive items such as vehicles. They also expressed concerns that pending changes in the way federal programs reimburse ambulance services may have a negative financial impact.

Current state law requires government-owned ambulance services to let bids on equipment costing over \$25,000. The new law will allow co-ops to purchase ambulances, the most costly expenditure an ambulance provider faces.

The law was signed March 16 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Rep. Gregory Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy) sponsored the legislation.

HF302*/SF579/CH13

Protection for peer review

Ambulance services and first responders would have the benefit of peer review under a bill the House passed March 11. The vote was 129-0.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), would allow ambulance services to consider controversial incidents without being subject to discovery should a lawsuit arise.

Peer review is used extensively in a number of medical professions to find solutions and to prevent further problems. In many cases, information exchanged in peer reviews is protected from legal discovery. The idea is that the protection will allow a free discourse so medical professionals can learn from each other's experiences and improve service.

The bill would extend that peer review protection to ambulance services and their employees.

The bill (HF463) moves to the Senate.



HIGHER EDUCATION

More aid for students

Students would be responsible for paying for a smaller share of their college education when they receive state grants, under a proposal considered March 17 by the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) is sponsoring a bill (HF210) that would lower to 40 percent the amount a post-secondary student is expected to contribute to his or her education.

Under current law, students who apply for state grants are expected to come up with 47 percent of their educational costs. The remaining 53 percent is made up by federal and state grants and other sources.

Tuma said the cost of college has risen well past the rate of inflation and that his bill is a step toward keeping students' costs down.

His is not the only proposal calling for lowering the student share. On March 17, the committee also discussed a bill sponsored by Rep. Julie Storm (R-St. Peter) that would lower the student's expected contribution to 45 percent. That bill (HF1363) originated from a request from the state's Higher Education Services Office, which doles out the grants.

The committee may consider the bills again

this session for inclusion in the omnibus higher education finance bill.

Helping part-timers

A bill that would make college more affordable for independent and part-time students was considered March 15 in the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) is sponsoring the bill (HF1096), which addresses a growing population of part-time and non-traditional students attending post-secondary institutions.

"A lot of people today need to work to go to school, and that's driving students into part-time [school]," said Morrie Anderson, chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

Anderson told lawmakers that he supports the bill because it would help attract and retain part-time students, a trend of college attendance he expects will continue.

"The system is clearly biased toward full-time students, and I don't know if that's where we should be today," he said.

Seifert's bill has two parts. The first would

reduce the percentage of the expected contribution on which the state's student-aid grant calculation is based for independent students and independent students with children.

The second part of the bill would change how grants are calculated for part-time students. Right now, the state estimates the cost of school attendance based upon the number of credits a student is taking, and financial aid is reduced as the student takes less credits. This often disqualifies students altogether from state grant eligibility because their cost of attendance is too low.

The bill would change that system by requiring the state to reduce grants proportionately according to the full cost of attendance. Many part-time students would be able to receive state grant money or see their grant dollars increase.

The committee may consider Seifert's bill for inclusion in the omnibus higher education finance bill.

Allowing more state aid

A bill that would allow some students to receive financial aid increases was considered March 17 by the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) is sponsoring the legislation (HF1686).

Last year, Congress increased the maximum amount of money college students can receive under a federal Pell Grant from \$2,700 to \$3,000 per year.

However, Minnesota students did not see an increase because the state's own grants to students are based partly on how much a student is awarded in Pell Grant money. When the Pell Grant amount increases, the state grant amount decreases, so the student receives the same amount of aid.

The bill would cap at \$3,000 the Pell amount on which the state bases its own grant adjustment. The cap would not allow students to realize more aid now, but in the case of expected federal increases in Pell amounts, it would allow students granted more than \$3,000 to continue to receive maximum state aid as well.

Carlson said his bill would allow the neediest students to receive Pell Grant increases. He said these students were the target of the federal increases in the first place.

The committee is expected to consider the bill for inclusion in the omnibus higher education finance bill.

Child care funding



Amal Yusef testified for the Somali Women's Association on behalf of a bill calling for funding child care for African immigrants and refugees during a March 15 hearing of the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee.

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Call the House Public Information
Office at (651) 296-2146



HUMAN SERVICES

Law expands eligibility



A new state law will make it easier for people with developmental disabilities to access the Consumer Support Program operated by the Department of Human Services.

Effective March 16, the new law eliminates an income cap for participation in the program.

Under prior law, people were ineligible for the program if their income was equal to or more than the level at which they would be required to pay a parental fee for medical assistance services and county social services. (That would translate to an income level that is the lesser of 150 percent of the federal poverty guidelines or \$30,000 annually.)

The program is generally used to pay for in-home support services received by qualifying individuals.

Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings) and Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the new measure.

HF356/SF73*/CH10



INSURANCE

Coverage for ear implants

A bill that would require health insurers and health maintenance organizations to cover costs related to an implant device that helps people hear was approved March 16 by the House Commerce Committee.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), chair of the committee, said he usually opposes mandates on the insurance industry but that he changed his mind on this bill after hearing the testimony of Julie Ainsworth. Two of Ainsworth's three sons were born deaf but can hear with the help of cochlear implants.

The implant is connected to an external microphone and miniature computer that transmits sounds to the auditory nerve, bypassing the damaged inner ear.

While some insurance plans cover costs of cochlear implant surgery, most plans do not cover post-operative expenses such as speech therapy or implant maintenance, said Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake), sponsor of the bill.

Ainsworth estimated that the surgery costs about \$40,000 to \$50,000. But each part of the implant is fragile, and they often need to be repaired or replaced, which also costs thousands of dollars.

Speech therapy and auditory training are

also necessary, Ainsworth said. Her sons have learned sign language, and they are learning the English language, including reading and writing.

Ainsworth said people who have lost their hearing and then received cochlear implants say the quality of sound produced by the devices is similar to people talking underwater. That plus the fact that her sons could not hear before receiving the implants makes the therapy and training necessary, she said.

"They are so normal, but they work really, really hard just to live their lives," she said.

She suggested that people try watching television with the volume turned down and then imagine similar barriers to every conversation throughout the day.

The bill would require coverage of surgical costs and other expenses related to cochlear implants.

The bill (HF186) now moves to the House floor.



LAW

Real estate rewrite



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a law March 15 that makes several technical changes to the state's real estate laws.

Among other things, the measure eliminates the requirement that owners of registered land have an owner's duplicate certificate of title in order to sell the land.

The law also makes several minor changes to the Common Interest Ownership Act governing housing cooperatives and condominiums. Most provisions of the new law are effective Aug. 1.

The changes were recommended by the real property section of the Minnesota State Bar Association.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure.

HF382/SF343*/CH11



SPORTS

Snowmobile stud solution

A bill that would help pay for snowmobile-stud damage to public paved trails was approved March 17 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

However, committee members disagreed on how much money it will take to repair the damage.

The bill (HF928), sponsored by Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), would require snowmobilers to buy a \$10 sticker to use metal traction devices, or studs. A 1997 law prohibits using the studs on paved public trails, and proceeds from the \$10 fee would be used to repair damage to those trails caused by illegal stud use.

How much will it cost to repair the damage?

Dennis Asmussen, an official from the Trails and Waterways Division of the Department of Natural Resources, said he is confident in the department's \$1.5-million damage estimate. Department staff surveyed the damage last summer and projected the costs at \$15,000 per mile for a 1-inch pavement overlay. The state has a total of 200 miles of paved trails, and about 100 miles have been damaged by snowmobiles with studs.

However, local and county governments have built an additional 100 miles of paved trails. Representatives of the Minnesota Association of Counties estimate the costs of repairing the damage to those trails at \$20,000 per mile, because some areas will require a 1.5-inch overlay.

Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) said that estimate is too high. Bakk said that the engineer who designed the Mesabi Trail in northern Minnesota gave an estimate of \$5,000 per mile for an overlay and \$15,000 per mile to build a new trail.

The state already has some money to pay for trail repairs. A 1998 law required snowmobilers to buy a \$50 sticker to use studs on their snowmobiles, but that law was repealed March 4. Asmussen said \$754,000 had been collected from sales of the \$50 stickers as of March 11.

The state Department of Revenue estimates the \$10 sticker will generate about \$800,000 per year.

Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) questioned the philosophy of the bill, because it would make law-abiding snowmobilers pay for damage caused by lawbreakers.

"Instead of paying for more (conservation officers) to enforce the laws, we're paying to fix the blacktop every year," he said.

The bill now moves to the House Ways and Means Committee.



TAXES

Ventura's tax plan

A bill containing key portions of Gov. Jesse Ventura's tax-relief proposal for the coming biennium drew cheers and jeers March 16 from the House Taxes Committee.

The bill (HF890), sponsored by Rep.

Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) outlines Ventura's plans for tax cuts, tax discounts, farm assistance, and simplifying the state's tax code.

The one-time discount proposals drew fire from both sides of the aisle.

"Why so leery of permanent tax reductions?" Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope) asked Department of Revenue Commissioner Matt Smith.

The governor's proposal calls for an average 6.75-percent cut in individual income tax, targeted to working middle-income families and toward fixing the so-called "marriage penalty."

Also included are proposed one-time income tax discounts of 3 percent in tax year 1999 and 1.5 percent in 2000.

"How many years do we have to have a surplus before we say, 'This is what we will tax and no higher?'" Rest asked. "Enough is enough."

She said the hesitation to make permanent cuts year after year has made the Legislature look ridiculous.

Abrams said he shares those concerns, but that the plan was a result of the governor's advisers being "super-cautious."

Smith said that was the case because "the governor has to be there when things go south."

And Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) said he believes caution is a good thing because the economy tends to go through cycles.

"Prudence is not a bad thing," he said.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby) said she supports the governor's proposal to lower the passenger automobile registration tax and supports his plan to eliminate the June accelerated payment for sales tax paid by businesses.

Other concerns were expressed that the governor's plan to help agriculture has become a political game of one-upping. Ventura had originally proposed spending \$10 million for farm relief, but he has since amended that to \$60 million, with another \$20 million annually over the next three years.

Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester), who is sponsoring the farm support plan favored by the House Republican caucus to provide assistance to all farmers, said the governor's plan to target certain farmers he considers needy is dividing the agricultural community.

Smith said no aid formula is going to be perfect, but he added that not all farmers are in the same financial shape and that's why the governor believes the money should be targeted.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Help for flooded cities

It was two years ago that flooding in the Red River Valley caused millions of dollars in damage. The high waters have gone away, but the affected cities are still struggling to recover financially.

To help the process, Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) is sponsoring two bills that would allow more money for and latitude in existing programs.

The first measure (HF1143) would provide \$1.5 million in additional border city enterprise zone credits for Breckenridge, Dilworth, East Grand Forks, and Moorhead. The credits can be used to reduce any tax to retain existing or attract new businesses.

The second bill (HF1133) would allow those cities and Ortonville to exceed the maximum statutory dollar limits established in 1998 on tax reductions for development projects.

Goodno told the House Taxes Committee March 15 that enterprise zone credits are needed to help the cities battle back from flood damage and to fight off competition for new industry and jobs coming from North Dakota and South Dakota.

He said the competitiveness issue existed prior to the flood but has grown worse in recent months.

He also said the 1998 law addressing tax reductions for development projects was capped at just under \$2 million because of an

"unrealistic" fiscal note provided by the Department of Revenue.

As a result, the program hasn't worked as well as it should. Goodno said the exact details of how the additional revenue would be accounted for haven't been dealt with.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

An affordable option

Owners of manufactured housing parks in Minnesota claim they are providing much-needed affordable housing and that they ought to pay less in taxes.

That was the gist of March 15 testimony before the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee in favor of a bill that would decrease the class rate on manufactured home parks from 2 percent to 1 percent.

The bill (HF1313) is sponsored by Rep. Julie Storm (R-St. Peter).

Steve Riegert, owner of Camelot Park in North Mankato, said the tax break is needed to help keep lot rent rates down. He also said that it is inherently unfair for residents of a home across the street from the park to pay less than his tenants, noting that the park pays a disproportionate share of costs for infrastructure services.

Several committee members expressed concern that the tax break might be used to line the pockets of park owners while lot rents remained unchanged and improvements went uncompleted.

Storm said her bill would require half of the savings to be used for investment in capital improvements or for direct assistance to homeowners for home improvements.

The measure was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Storm's bill is similar to a proposal discussed earlier this session and sponsored by Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar). Hackbarth's bill (HF1064) includes a provision that would replace lost revenue in impacted cities with over \$7 million in Home and Agriculture Credit Aid from state coffers during the next biennium.

Power company seeks break

Two powerful forces intersect on the quiet prairie of Lakefield Junction in southeastern Minnesota — a 42-inch natural gas pipeline and a 345-kilovolt high-voltage electric transmission line.

That means it's considered an ideal location for a gas-fired peak electricity generating facility.

A Nebraska company hoping to develop the

St. Patrick's Day song



Tom Jung of Hastings performs a St. Patrick's Day rendition of "An Irish Lullaby." Jung, who works as an assistant captain in the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Office, led both Irish and non-Irish lawmakers and staff in the sing-along March 17 in the House chamber.

facility outlined its plan March 16 before the House Taxes Committee, which heard a bill (HF887) that would exempt the facility from paying property taxes.

Robert Knudsen, general manager for business development of Tenaska Inc. of Omaha, Neb., said the project will help address an expected nationwide energy shortfall in the next decade.

His company's facility would use six gas turbines to provide electricity to utilities throughout the Midwest to help them meet peak demands.

He said without the tax break, the project probably wouldn't be economically feasible, and the company may be forced to look at what he said are less ideal sites in Iowa or in another state with a more friendly tax outlook.

The project would mean an additional \$575,000 annually to coffers of Martin County and the city of Trimont, according to the bill's sponsor, Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont).

The project would generate only three additional jobs on an intermittent basis, but Knudsen said Martin County and the state would benefit from 150 construction jobs over a two-year period and the long-term business impact in communities across the area.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Farm property taxes

Financially strapped farmers often can't shoulder additional tax burdens, so when rural Minnesota school districts ask voters for more money to build facilities, they're often turned down.

That sets up a battle in many of those communities, with city residents accusing farmers of being anti-education. Farmers counter that they're as much for education as anyone, but they simply can't afford to pay the large assessments on their agricultural property the bond issues bring with them.

"Total farm income was at a 17-percent net loss last year," Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) told the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee March 15. "The farmers are losing money and being taxed on their losses."

Mulder is sponsoring a bill (HF401) that would exempt agricultural homestead property of up to 320 acres from all school district taxes, except for the portion of the tax for the house, garage, and surrounding one acre of land. To be eligible for the exemption, the owner would have to actively farm the property and derive at least \$30,000 in income from farming.

The bill would replace the money lost to

school districts with a state appropriation through the K-12 education budget.

Mulder called it a permanent tax cut for farmers and said it is essential to preserve small farmers and the communities around them.

Keith Eitrem, a board member of the Pipestone-Jasper School District in the southwestern corner of the state, told the committee that voters in his district already turned down a \$23.5 million bond proposal and a similar plan is on the ballot April 13.

Eitrem said the district's high school was built in 1917, doesn't meet code, and isn't upgradable. He said the dilemma is particularly tough for him because he's a banker as well as a school board member.

"I know my farmers can't afford to pay more, yet I know we have to protect the quality of education in our district," Eitrem said.

While most on the panel were sympathetic to the district's plight, several noted that it isn't only farmers who are feeling the crunch.

Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul) said that when a bonding proposal appears on the ballot in his school district, it's the senior citizens that get hammered. He suggested a better solution might be to unlink property taxes and education finance.

Mulder agreed, adding that education funding should mirror the economy and that income tax is the appropriate funding source.

Mulder said until more sweeping reforms are enacted, he wants to see farmers receive help immediately, with an eye toward solving problems both for farmers and educators in the future.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.



TOURISM

The Wilder way



A road named after one of Minnesota's most famous authors is changing its route, under a new law signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Effective March 19, the Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Highway near Rochester is able to be rerouted from a U.S. highway to a county highway.

Currently the specially designated route runs through a mostly commercial area on heavily traveled U.S. highways 14 and 52. After the reroute, it will use a county road and pass by the Olmsted County Historical Society, which is planning to develop exhibits about the famed pioneer author.

The historical center has a log cabin that resembles one in which the Ingalls family lived. Plans for a prairie restoration project are

underway, and the historical society wants to name the prairie in the author's honor.

The Ingalls family did not live in the Rochester area, but Pa Ingalls once worked in Olmsted County. And Laura Ingalls Wilder is known to have traveled through the city many times on her trips to neighboring states.

Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) and Sen. Kenric Scheevel (R-Preston) sponsored the measure.

HF157*/SF379/CH16



TRANSPORTATION

Plan to scrap tests

A bill that would repeal the state's motor vehicle emission testing program is headed to the House floor after being modified and approved March 12 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

The bill (HF7) originally called for eliminating the testing requirements July 1, 2000, but under an amendment offered by the proposal's sponsor, Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View), the date was moved ahead six months to Jan. 1, 2000.

Haake said the earlier date would be most prudent for taxpayers, and that it became feasible after the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency said it expects the Twin Cities will be in compliance for carbon monoxide levels by that time.

The testing program was signed into law in 1988 by then-Gov. Rudy Perpich. It was created in response to a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finding that the seven-county metro area's carbon monoxide level exceeded federal and state standards. The program went into effect in mid-1991 for all vehicles built after 1976.

In 1995, then-Gov. Arne Carlson signed a bill that exempted new cars up to five years old from emissions testing. That measure cut by one-third the number of vehicles required to undergo inspection each year.

Emissions inspections cost \$8 per vehicle and are assessed as part of vehicle registration.

Gov. Jesse Ventura's biennial budget proposal also calls for the repeal of the emissions inspection program, contingent upon federal approval of air quality standards approval. Under the governor's budget, the program would be repealed as of Aug. 1.

For an unofficial list of Minnesota commissioners and appointed agency heads on the World Wide Web go to: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/comm.htm>

Sane lanes saved

Lawmakers on the House Transportation Policy Committee rejected a chance March 16 to put an end to controversial metro-area "sane" lanes.

Sane lanes, otherwise known as high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, operate on two heavily traveled highways in the metro area.

One runs on Interstate 35W between Lakeville and Bloomington, and the other runs on Interstate 394 between St. Louis Park and downtown Minneapolis.

Rep. Doug Reuter's proposal (HF367) would have eliminated those designated lanes, in which carpools and buses travel during peak traffic hours.

Reuter (R-Owatonna) said he thinks the lanes are not being used to their expected capacity. He said drivers of single-occupancy vehicles who see an empty lane while sitting in rush-hour traffic are motivated to break the law and use the HOV lane.

"I just think it's time to admit that something isn't working and correct it," Reuter said.

But Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls) said the HOV lane on I-394 does work.



Glen Carlson, an engineer with the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Traffic Management Center in Minneapolis, testified against a pair of bills that would eliminate the "sane" lanes on interstates 35W and 394, and require a study of freeway ramp lights in the metro area. Both bills were rejected by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

She said it reduces the traffic going into the Lowry Hill tunnel.

Several suburban bus company representatives also argued against the bill, saying the lanes allow buses to make quick trips, which attracts commuters.

Beverly Miller, a staff member at the Minnesota Valley Transit Authority, said bus ridership has increased 7.5 percent in the I-35W corridor with the help of the HOV lane. Eliminating the lane would hurt bus service, she said.

With an estimated population growth of 650,000 by 2020, some lawmakers expressed concern that shutting down HOV lanes would give people the wrong message about promoting mass transit.

"If we believe that we're heading in the right direction, then I don't believe we can block off access to those HOV lanes," said Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska).

Ramp meters find support

A plan to study metered freeway ramps was rejected March 16 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

Rep. Doug Reuter (R-Owatonna) is sponsoring the bill (HF442) that would shut down all meters on freeway ramps for one month to look at how meters affect traffic flow.

"They may work and they may not work," he said. "But we don't know yet."

Reuter said he thinks too many people abuse the meter system and that the money would be better spent on road or bridge repair.

Many lawmakers on the committee disagreed and said they have not heard from many constituents requesting the meter study.

But Rep. Dan Larson (DFL-Bloomington) said his constituents have expressed frustration regarding drivers who don't abide by the meter system.

"The people in my district would probably support life without parole for the violators," Larson said.

Glen Carlson, manager of the Traffic Management Center in the Department of Transportation, said the 400 existing metered ramps cost about \$2.5 million and are proven safety devices.

"The problem is we don't have enough freeway capacity," Carlson said. "The ramp meters are not the problem."

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) also objected to the study because of safety concerns. She said the meters provide protection against accidents and help relieve some congestion on freeways that already have limited capacities.

"I have a difficulty even thinking of turning these (meters) off," she said.

Parking cheats targeted

A bill that would enhance law enforcement officials' ability to crack down on handicapped parking violators was considered March 15 by the House Transportation Finance Committee.

Rep. Joe Opatz (DFL-St. Cloud) is sponsoring the bill (HF1053).

The bill would repeal a \$1 per month credit on registration taxes for vehicles with disability plates, thus bringing in \$644,976 in highway funding over the next two years.

That money would pay for a computer network to list names of anybody holding a disability parking certificate. Currently, law enforcement officials have no way of tracking in a timely manner who might be using a counterfeit, expired, or stolen handicapped parking hang tag.

The new system would cost about \$140,000 to set up and would allow officials to obtain the information 24 hours a day. The bill would also tighten up the process by which disability certificates are issued.

The committee did not take any action on the bill, but lawmakers will consider including it in this year's omnibus transportation finance bill.

City limits on speed

A bill that would let cities set their own speed limits was approved March 18 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

The bill (HF1196) is sponsored by Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth) and is similar to a plan that stalled on the House floor last year.

Under Van Dellen's proposal, all cities and towns would be able to set their own speed limits on residential and other local streets. It would only apply to roads over which cities have jurisdiction.

Van Dellen said the bill would give authority to cities to set lower speed limits in certain residential areas or potentially dangerous routes.

Under current law, city streets have a speed limit of 30 miles per hour, and cities can apply to the Minnesota Department of Transportation to have the limits lowered.

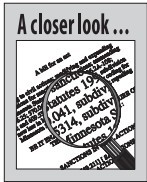
Some lawmakers opposed the bill, saying that differing speeds on county and city roads could confuse motorists and create speed traps.

But Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls) supported the measure. He said many streets in Minneapolis have cars parked on both sides and the city should have the authority to lower limits in those areas to ensure traffic safety.

The bill moves to the House floor.

Bills may ban certain procedure, require waiting period

By Paul Wahl



A pair of controversial abortion-related bills advanced through two House panels March 16 and 17 and are headed for more committee debate.

Both proposals sparked passionate debate, but perhaps the most emotional testimony came on behalf of a measure that would ban so-called “partial-birth” or late-term abortions.

Lawmakers and others are so divided on the issue that they can’t even agree on an exact definition of the medical procedure targeted by the proposal.

The bill (HF177), sponsored by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), uses the term “partial-birth” to describe certain late-term abortions. But opponents of the bill use the phrase “intact dilation and extraction” to refer to the same procedure.

Mulder’s bill would provide civil and criminal penalties for performing such abortions. Under the proposal, a woman receiving an illegal late-term abortion, her spouse, and, if she is under 18, her parents, could sue doctors to recover psychological and physical damages resulting from the procedure. Performing such abortions would also be a felony offense, punishable by up to two years in prison plus fines.

And the procedure would remain legal only in cases necessary to save the life of the mother.

The House Health and Human Services Policy Committee approved the measure March 16 and the House Civil Law Committee gave its approval March 17. Both committees rejected amendments that would have eliminated the criminal penalties and expanded exceptions to the ban to include preserving the health or fertility of the mother or when there is proof of severe fetal anomalies.

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls) offered one such amendment in the health and human services committee and Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) offered a similar one before the civil law panel.

Both Greenfield and Skoglund argued that as drafted, Mulder’s bill would be unconstitutional, saying that similar laws have been struck down in other states.

The U.S. Supreme Court’s *Roe vs. Wade* decision protecting abortion rights remains the country’s highest ruling concerning abortion. A ban on late-term abortions was



Rep. Richard Mulder presents his controversial plan to ban late-term abortions, which won approval from two key House committees March 16 and 17. Mulder is shown here in March 16 testimony before the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

approved by the Congress, but it was vetoed by President Bill Clinton in 1997, essentially leaving the matter up to individual states.

Since then, 25 states have adopted bans. The laws have been challenged in 18 of those states. Only South Dakota, Mississippi, Indiana, Tennessee, Virginia, Oklahoma, and South Carolina have bans on the books that have not been challenged.

But Mulder said his bill would not violate the *Roe vs. Wade* ruling because it does not apply to most abortions. He said that 90 percent or more of so-called “partial-birth” abortions are performed in the fifth and sixth month of pregnancy and often when the mother and baby are in good health.

“My bill bans a procedure,” Mulder told members of the civil law panel. “It does not ban abortions. The procedure is never necessary.”

Exceptions to the proposed ban were a sticking point for many as well. Supporters of Mulder’s bill said that proposed amendments to expand the exceptions only clouded the issue.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) said additional language offered by Greenfield to allow the procedures in order to “preserve the fertility of the female” sounded like a medical loophole.

“Exactly how do you document that?” Haas asked.

But Connie Perpich, an official from Planned Parenthood of Minnesota, said that her group’s concern is that without the expanded language, a woman’s doctor would be prevented from using a full range of medical services in tending to health care needs.

Jeri Rasmussen, a member of the board of the National Abortion Federation, said physi-

cians could find themselves forced to choose between what’s legal and what’s best for a patient if the bill passes. She said that as far as she knows, the procedure is not performed in Minnesota.

In fact, just how often the late-term abortions are performed remains unclear. Mulder said there is no exact known number, but in a recent court case in New Jersey, witnesses said about 1,500 had been performed in that state in one year.

The same two House committees also approved a second bill (HF178) relating to abortion during the same hearings.

Under the proposal, sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), a woman would be prohibited from receiving an abortion unless she voluntarily provides informed consent to the procedure.

To be informed, the woman would have to receive specific information at least 24 hours prior to the procedure.

The information would have to detail the medical risks associated with abortion, risks related to carrying the fetus to term, the probable age of the fetus, the likelihood that the mother could qualify for medical assistance should she have the child, and how the father could be legally forced to help support her and the child.

The bill would also establish civil penalties for any woman, and for the parents of a minor woman, who has an abortion without informed consent.

Informed consent would not be required in medical emergency situations.

A 1998 omnibus health and human services bill that included a ban on “partial-birth” abortions passed the House, but the ban did not make it out of a House-Senate conference committee. And although 75 House members had said they would not support a final omnibus bill without the ban, the last-minute addition of abortion-reporting requirements helped the bill win final passage.

A law requiring doctors and medical facilities to provide the state with information concerning abortions performed went into effect July 1, 1998.

HF177 moves to the House Crime Prevention Committee, and HF178 goes to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee. 🐼

Governor's Desk

CH1-CH17

Bills await governor's action

Once a bill has passed both the House and the Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill. The governor 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 results in the bill becoming law in the first year of the biennium. The timing of these actions is as significant as the actions themselves.

In the first year of the biennium, the important thing to remember is that the governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill. If the governor

doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law with or without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

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 objects. As with all vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

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.mainserver.state.mn.us/governor/>
(select "It's a New Day" and then click on "Legislative Logs")

Key:

CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
1	88	139*	Campaign finance and public disclosure board member qualifications specified	2/17/99	
2	29	26*	Mississippi education center previous grantee changed to the city of Grand Rapids, and condition imposed	2/17/99	
3	107	133*	Minneapolis and St. Paul residency requirements repealed	3/4/99	
4	40	6*	Snowmobile metal traction device use restrictions modified and recreational vehicle rulemaking authority modified	3/4/99	
5	121*	171	Health related licensing board licensees infection control	3/8/99	
6	424*	370	Nonregistered pesticide distribution permitted for certain uses outside the state	3/8/99	
7	324	248*	Crooked Lake detached banking facility	3/15/99	
8	241	214*	Emergency medical services volunteer ambulance attendant definition	3/15/99	
9	464*	536	Carisoprodol classification as controlled substance effective date delay	3/15/99	
10	73*	356	Consumer support program for persons with functional limitations financial eligibility criteria modification	3/15/99	
11	343*	382	Real estate provisions modifications	3/15/99	
12	162	49*	Peace officers or firefighters killed in line of duty spouse health insurance coverage	3/16/99	
13	579	302*	Ambulance services shared service purchasing	3/16/99	
14	301*	74	Health care directive form modification	3/16/99	
15	416	453*	Minneapolis skilled workers and apprentices deferred compensation plan participation	3/18/99	
16	379	157*	Laura Ingalls Wilder historic highway route modification	3/18/99	
17	564	454*	Nursing home administrators sharing authority expansion	3/18/99	

*The legislative bill marked with an asterisk denotes the file submitted to the governor.

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Unofficial list as of 3/5/99

Bill Introductions

HF1897-HF2182

Monday, March 15

HF1897—Clark, K. (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood
Education Finance

Substance abuse intervention in neighborhoods program grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1898—Daggett (R)
Environment & Natural
Resources Policy

Wadena County authorized to privately sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF1899—Olson (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 882, Monticello, technology grant authorized, and money appropriated.

HF1900—Mulder (R)
Jobs & Economic
Development Policy

Historic Pipestone Indian school buildings transfer authorized, pipemaker museum and resident academy restoration planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1901—Broecker (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Ramsey County; Lake Owasso intermediate care facility replacement authorized.

HF1902—Jennings (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Delivery vehicle mounted rear lighting authorized and department of public safety allowable lighting recommendations required.

HF1903—Bakk (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Canada; foreign country incorporated railroads required to install signalized grade crossing protection at all grade crossings in Minnesota.

HF1904—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Ranier authorized to prohibit running railroad locomotive parking within the city.

HF1905—Seifert, M. (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Governor authorized to veto agency rules.

HF1906—Tunheim (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Warroad to Baudette connecting railroad speed limit required.

HF1907—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Canada; railroad entry fee imposed and penalty provided.

HF1908—Tunheim (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Canada; trains entering Minnesota from a foreign country required to be inspected, and penalty imposed.

HF1909—Larson, D. (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
DNL65; Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington counties preschool airport noise insulation provided.

HF1910—Gunther (R)
Jobs & Economic
Development Policy
Housing finance agency home improvement and equity take-out loans, and family stabilization rental assistance provided; community rehabilitation fund use clarified; and consumer-owned housing revolving account established.

HF1911—Mariani (DFL)
Jobs & Economic
Development Finance
Science Museum of Minnesota opening grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1912—Huntley (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Minnesota Family Investment Plan (MFIP) provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF1913—Pugh (DFL)
Commerce
Metropolitan area utility transmission line upgrade siting regulated.

HF1914—Swenson (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 2859, Glencoe-Silver Lake, long-range facility study conducted, and money appropriated.

HF1915—Leighton (DFL)
Jobs & Economic
Development Policy
Workers' compensation third-party liability provisions modified, filing of attorney fee statements required, special compensation fund procedures modified, and alternative cost allocation accounts provided.

HF1916—Solberg (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Itasca County tax increment financing district creation authorized, and taconite mine direct reduction plant and steel mill adjacent power plant development powers provided.

HF1917—Hausman (DFL)
Transportation Finance
Metropolitan and greater Minnesota transit appropriated money.

HF1918—Van Dellen (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 277, Westonka, referendum revenue adjusted.

HF1919—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural
Resources Policy
Preferred waste management practices expanded to include methane gas recovery.

HF1920—Ozment (R)
Crime Prevention
Dakota County community justice zone pilot project established and money appropriated.

HF1921—Dawkins (DFL)
Civil Law
Relative custody and adoption assistance maximums modified to correspond to foster care assistance rates, obsolete AFDC references repealed, and money appropriated.

HF1922—Dawkins (DFL)
Taxes
Individual income tax restructured.

HF1923—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement membership modified.

HF1924—Otremba (DFL)
Environment & Natural
Resources Policy
Todd County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water and wetland.

HF1925—Otremba (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Independent School District No. 786, Bertha-Hewitt, teacher retirement clerical error corrected.

HF1926—Huntley (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Telemedicine network established, interstate telemedicine service regulated, medical assistance reimbursement authorized, grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF1927—Storm (R)
Crime Prevention
Police agency shared information management system established and money appropriated.

HF1928—Bishop (R)
Environment & Natural
Resources Policy
Olmstead County authorized to convey tax-forfeited land bordering public water and wetland.

HF1929—Westerberg (R)
Jobs & Economic
Development Policy
Home ownership pilot project established under the family stabilization program and money appropriated.

HF1930—Van Dellen (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School district referendum allowance maximum increased.

HF1931—Trimble (DFL)
Jobs & Economic
Development Finance
Contaminated site cleanup and development grant program funded, and money appropriated.

HF1932—Jennings (DFL)
Commerce
Rental vehicle insurance coverage regulated.

HF1933—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Day training and habilitation task force established, and new payment and rate structure developed.

HF1934—Bradley (R) K-12 Education Finance Independent School District No. 535, Rochester, special education revenue adjustment grant provided, and money appropriated.	HF1944—Wenzel (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Paul Bunyan state trail route modified.	HF1954—Paymar (DFL) Crime Prevention Crime victim and witness services pilot project grant program established, and money appropriated.	HF1965—Finseth (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy State land drainage benefit payment responsibility transferred to the commissioner of finance and money appropriated.
HF1935—Harder (R) Health & Human Services Finance Approved nursing facility completed projects replacement cost new calculation modified.	HF1945—Wenzel (DFL) Agriculture Policy Meatpacking industry possible illegal practices investigated by the attorney general, report required, and money appropriated.	HF1955—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Finance Regional coordinating boards provisions modified, radioactive material regulatory authority provided, speech pathologist and audiologist fees modified, lead safety provisions modified, penalties provided, and money appropriated.	HF1966—Mulder (R) Commerce Wind energy mandate modified and portion set aside for farmers, wind energy revolving loan account created, utility renewable energy obligations regulated, and money appropriated.
HF1936—Dempsey (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy Hastings Le Duc mansion refurbished, bonds issued, and money appropriated.	HF1946—Ness (R) Agriculture & Rural Development Finance Department of Agriculture appropriated money.	HF1956—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Finance Human services appropriations bill.	HF1967—Tunheim (DFL) Taxes Cities with reduced commercial and industrial property market values provided increased local government aid distributions.
HF1937—Bishop (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs County services districts established, county cooperation required, and boards and advisory committees authorized.	HF1947—Jennings (DFL) Commerce Brewer and wholesaler judicial remedies modified.	HF1957—Haas (R) Health & Human Services Policy Senior drug program annual fee eliminated, qualified Medicare beneficiary asset limit eligibility increased, and study required.	HF1968—Davids (R) Commerce Medicare supplemental insurance federally required changes provided.
HF1938—Anderson, B. (R) State Government Finance Camp Ripley national guard youth camp operation and staffing assistance provided, and money appropriated.	HF1948—Munger (DFL) Transportation Policy Amtrak; passenger rail service connecting the Twin Cities, Duluth, and the Iron Range studied; and money appropriated.	HF1958—Haas (R) Health & Human Services Policy FATHER welfare-to-work demonstration project participants direct child support payments authorized, and money appropriated.	HF1969—Juhnke (DFL) Taxes Agricultural homestead acreage subject to a lower property tax class rate increased, and homestead and agricultural credit and adjustment provided.
HF1939—Howes (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Motorized wheelchairs and devices operated by persons with physical disabilities authorized on nonmotorized state trails.	HF1949—Munger (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Omnibus packaging regulation bill; mandatory recycled content requirements provided, transport packaging regulated, beverage packaging requirements provided, wood waste and product residue marketing plan required, and penalties provided.	HF1959—Bradley (R) Health & Human Services Policy Human services county-based purchasing implementation date and provisions modified.	HF1970—Mares (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS) and Department of Employee Relations (DOER) required to report correctional plan employee count to Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement.
HF1940—Jennings (DFL) Commerce Renewable energy development funding requirements modified and required expenditures specified as recoverable.	HF1950—Johnson (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Citizens advisory council on food, report required, and money appropriated.	HF1960—Gray (DFL) Family & Early Childhood Education Finance Child care system obsolete reports eliminated.	HF1971—Stanek (R) Commerce Minnesota wireless emergency telephone services act adopted.
HF1941—Clark, K. (DFL) Judiciary Finance Substance abuse intervention in neighborhoods program grants provided and money appropriated.	HF1951—Workman (R) Jobs & Economic Development Finance Grimm farmstead restoration grant provided and money appropriated.	HF1961—Otremba (DFL) Taxes Low-income housing tax credit provided.	HF1972—Biernat (DFL) K-12 Education Finance Statewide youth athletic program provided and money appropriated.
HF1942—Bakk (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Policy County natural resources land in lieu tax payments provided inflation adjustment.	HF1952—Abrams (R) Taxes Additional homestead classification qualifications prohibited.	HF1962—Otremba (DFL) Commerce Inherited metabolic disease equal insurance coverage required.	HF1973—McGuire (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Birth information release provided to adopted persons and money appropriated.
HF1943—Bakk (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Cook County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.	HF1953—Reuter (R) Jobs & Economic Development Finance Owatonna infrastructure improvement grant provided and money appropriated.	HF1963—Howes (R) Civil Law State and political subdivisions prohibited from bringing certain suits against firearms or ammunition manufacturers.	HF1974—Kuisle (R) Taxes Transit system and provider purchased motor vehicles and replacement parts sales and use tax exemption provided.
HF1944—Clark, K. (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Cook County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.	HF1954—Reuter (R) Jobs & Economic Development Finance Owatonna infrastructure improvement grant provided and money appropriated.	HF1964—Finseth (R) Environment & Natural Resources Finance Red River basin flood water management grants provided and money appropriated.	

HF1975—Wolf (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
State archaeologist appointment process and position classifications modified.

HF1976—Mahoney (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
St. Paul Stroh's brewery site acquisition and development funded and money appropriated.

HF1977—Lenczewski (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) board of trustees required to reduce spending disparities between campuses.

HF1978—Abrams (R)
Taxes
Tangible personal property awarded as prizes in games of skill or chance considered property for resale.

HF1979—Rostberg (R)
Crime Prevention
Critical incident stress management (CISM), fire assistance support team (FAST) grant program established and money appropriated.

HF1980—Osskopp (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Child support mediation pilot program established, evaluation required, and money appropriated.

HF1981—Lenczewski (DFL)
Taxes
Local government city aid base reduced as aid appropriations increase.

HF1982—McGuire (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Medical assistance coverage of over-the-counter 5-hydroxytryptophan provided.

HF1983—Dorn (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
South central children's project in Blue Earth County appropriated money.

HF1984—Abrams (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Department of revenue sign required.

HF1985—Buesgens (R)
Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle registration suspension authorized when owner fails to file transfer of interest, detachable form required, and money appropriated.

HF1986—Nornes (R)
Transportation Policy
Trunk highway No. 59 designated as Otter Trail Veterans memorial drive.

HF1987—McCollum (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Minnesota River valley birding trail developed and money appropriated.

HF1988—Otremba (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Free of charge health care services provided MinnesotaCare tax exemption.

HF1989—Otremba (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School districts with a substantial enrollment of students eligible for free or reduced priced meals provided additional compensatory revenue.

HF1990—McCollum (DFL)
Taxes
Lawful gambling tax collection date modified.

HF1991—Chaudhary (DFL)
Civil Law
Foster care placement deadline specified and permanency planning time period shortened.

HF1992—Krinkie (R)
Education Policy
Teacher contract qualified economic offer provided.

HF1993—Workman (R)
Transportation Policy
Seasonal road restrictions task force established and study required.

HF1994—Marko (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Family communication initiative grant program established to provide services to families with deaf or hard-of-hearing children, and money appropriated.

HF1995—Mulder (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 303, Lake Benton, fund balance penalty reimbursement provided, and money appropriated.

HF1996—McGuire (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Revision of public waters list authorized to include additional water basins.

HF1997—Dawkins (DFL)
Taxes
Comprehensive low-income tax credit provided replacing the working family tax credit, dependent care tax credit, education credit, and property tax refund; and money appropriated.

HF1998—Rest (DFL)
Taxes
Marriage penalty and property tax provisions modified, income tax rates reduced, alternative minimum tax exemption increased, and constitutional amendment proposed dedicating motor vehicle sales taxes to the highway user trust fund.

HF1999—Paulsen (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Constitutional amendment proposed limiting the scope of the legislature during the second year of each biennial session.

HF2000—Lenczewski (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Medicare supplemental coverage for low-income seniors study authorized.

HF2001—Abrams (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Reapportionment commission established, legislative power to change the number or senators and representatives limited, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF2002—Lenczewski (DFL)
Taxes
Roth IRA conversions excluded from definition of household income relating to property tax refunds.

HF2003—Olson (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Health plan companies required to make health plans available that limit coverage for abortions.

HF2004—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
AIDS prevention program modified to include human papilloma virus prevention.

HF2005—Molnau (R)
Transportation Finance
Transportation revolving loan fund appropriation provided for highways.

HF2006—Chaudhary (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Inmate chemical use and mental health assessment required, treatment required, records maintained, free weights and cable television prohibited, and work assignments and other programs required.

HF2007—Abrams (R)
Taxes
Digital television broadcast equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF2008—Van Dellen (R)
Taxes
Certain homeowners provided additional property tax refund.

HF2009—Hausman (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
St. Paul provided appropriation for natural science education coordinator for Como Park.

HF2010—Paulsen (R)
Commerce
Workers' compensation self-insurance regulated, and reporting and financial requirements provided.

HF2011—Bishop (R)
Higher Education Finance
Southeastern Minnesota regional public safety training center appropriation provided.

HF2012—Harder (R)
Agriculture Policy
Veterinary practice requirements modified and procedures clarified.

HF2013—Hausman (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Work first transitional employment project appropriation provided for refugee and immigrant communities.

HF2014—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Gray wolf management provided, including hunting and trapping provisions, and criminal penalties provided.

HF2015—Finseth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Consolidated conservation lands designated as wildlife management areas by rule.

HF2016—Dawkins (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Miscellaneous property and motor vehicle forfeiture provisions modified.

HF2017—Mahoney (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Administration and health departments directed to adopt newest editions of certain building code standards.

HF2018—Holberg (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Wastewater funding provided for Cedar Lake township in Scott County, and bond sale authorized.

HF2019—Pawlenty (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Board of invention appropriation provided.

HF2020—Holberg (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Wastewater funding provided for New Market/Elko project, and bond sale authorized.

HF2021—Bishop (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Vertical heat exchanger contractor license provided, and training requirements established.

HF2022—Chaudhary (DFL)**Family & Early Childhood Education Finance**

Adult graduation aid formula modified.

HF2023—Krinkie (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Proponents of new or expanded occupational regulation required to provide written reports to legislature.

HF2024—Seifert, J. (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Medicaid facility preadmission screening requirement exemption extended for Dakota, Ramsey, and Washington counties.

HF2025—Chaudhary (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

General community education revenue increase provided, and money appropriated.

Wednesday, March 17**HF2026—Sviggum (R)****Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Small city economic development district use for commercial developments modified.

HF2027—Storm (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

St. Peter permitted to lay fiber dark optic cable.

HF2028—Seagren (R)**Taxes**

Bloomington fiscal disparities contribution adjustment requirement eliminated.

HF2029—Van Dellen (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Plymouth tax increment financing district provided local contribution requirement waiver.

HF2030—Van Dellen (R)**Taxes**

Health care provider tax exemption provided for medical examinations for the purposes of insurance, litigation, and employment.

HF2031—Kubly (DFL)**Taxes**

Renville County authorized to impose an aggregate production tax.

HF2032—Gunther (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Housing finance agency affordable rental investment fund, community rehabilitation fund, and housing trust fund programs appropriated money.

HF2033—Buesgens (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

National Association of Student Councils' 1999 national convention grant provided and money appropriated.

HF2034—Entenza (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Violence prevention through the development of songs, performance, and recorded educational resources grant program established; and money appropriated.

HF2035—Tunheim (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Commercial businesses operating on shoreland permitted to rebuild.

HF2036—Hackbarth (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Anoka County trails previous appropriation provisions modified.

HF2037—Hackbarth (R)**Transportation Policy**

Town roads not providing adequate turnaround space at cul-de-sacs and dead ends improvement remedy provided, and county board spending limit increased.

HF2038—Mullery (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Possession of a pistol with an altered, removed, or absent serial number provided mandatory minimum sentence.

HF2039—Mullery (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Level III sex offenders prohibited from residing within 500 feet of another level III sex offender.

HF2040—Mullery (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Hennepin County supplemental retirement program terms modified.

HF2041—Kuisle (R)**Transportation Finance**

Personal rapid transit planning and design provided and money appropriated.

HF2042—Bishop (R)**Crime Prevention**

Obsolete statutory provisions repealed.

HF2043—Tuma (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR) funding transferred to the medical assistance program.

HF2044—Anderson, B. (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Burial expense reimbursement increased, deceased workers memorial developed, and occupational safety and health (OSHA) penalty provisions modified.

HF2045—Bishop (R)**Judiciary Finance**

Rochester; southeastern Minnesota regional public safety training center development and construction provided, and money appropriated.

HF2046—Hausman (DFL)**Higher Education Finance**

University of Minnesota soccer stadium developed, women's athletic program use specified, and money appropriated

HF2047—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

University of Minnesota rural preventative health care program established, rural medical community information resource system operation provided, and money appropriated.

HF2048—Murphy (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 704, Proctor, ice arena safety improvements authorized through health and safety program.

HF2049—Harder (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Pesticide registration and aquatic pest control licensing provisions modified, fertilizer reporting requirement clarified, and obsolete rules repealed.

HF2050—Skoglund (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

DWI; repeat offender electronic alcohol monitoring requirements modified.

HF2051—Huntley (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Duluth firefighter consolidation account surviving spouse benefit increased.

HF2052—Kielkucki (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Wright County surplus land private sale authorized.

HF2053—Greenfield (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Certified neonatal nurse practitioner medical assistance coverage provided.

HF2054—Wenzel (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Dairy farming task force created and money appropriated.

HF2055—Workman (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Local government service fees authorized.

HF2056—Carlson (DFL)**Education Policy**

University of Minnesota Regent Candidate Advisory Council recommendation process modified.

HF2057—Gleason (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Government airline ticket purchases limited.

HF2058—Carruthers (DFL)**Civil Law**

Pollution Control Agency data classification provided.

HF2059—Folliard (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

First-year teacher induction program grants provided, national board for professional teaching standards certification process participation encouraged, and money appropriated.

HF2060—Fuller (R)
Crime Prevention

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Sauk Centre authorized to accept parole status youth.

HF2061—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Local units of government bonding for conservation easement acquisition authorized.

HF2062—Carruthers (DFL)
Transportation Finance

Hennepin County and west metro area driver improvement pilot project established, and money appropriated.

HF2063—McElroy (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

World Trade Center Corp. eliminated, and assets and liabilities transferred to the Department of Trade and Economic Development.

HF2064—Carruthers (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Fiscal disparities exemption provided to superfund sites developed under a development action response plan.

HF2065—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Third and fifth grade reading, mathematics, and writing tests, and eighth grade basic skills reading and mathematics tests norm references established; and money appropriated.

HF2066—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy

Office of minority health established, and powers and duties specified.

HF2067—Westerberg (R)
Crime Prevention

Extended jurisdiction juvenile offenders in violation of stayed sentences prohibited from receiving time served credit.

HF2068—Jaros (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Teachers retirement association service credit purchase authorized for former Lydia special education co-op teachers.

HF2069—Jaros (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy

Minnesota family investment program (MFIP) transitional standard child only cash grants modified.

HF2070—Sviggum (R)
Taxes

Taconite production permanent tax rate provided and taconite economic development fund distributions increased.

HF2071—Swenson (R)
Transportation Finance

County turnback account appropriated money.

HF2072—Westrom (R)
Transportation Finance

Local bridge replacement and rehabilitation funded, and money appropriated.

HF2073—McGuire (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance

Federal welfare-to-work grant money state match for child care assistance funding provided.

HF2074—Marko (DFL)
Transportation Policy

Driver testing facilities and operations expanded and improved, adult driver license applicants required to hold six month instruction permits, department of public safety publications paid advertisements authorized, and money appropriated.

HF2075—Mahoney (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 625, St. Paul, stability demonstration project established, and money appropriated.

HF2076—Peterson (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Chippewa County; recreational trail resurfaced from Milan to Lac Qui Parle lake and money appropriated.

HF2077—Lieder (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Norman County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF2078—Tomassoni (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

School district public safety revenue provided.

HF2079—Tomassoni (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Statewide medical program established to provided free or reduced-cost health care to veterans.

HF2080—Seifert, M. (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 2167, Lakeview, new school powered by gasification constructed, and money appropriated.

HF2081—Storm (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance

St. Peter tree planting grants provided and money appropriated.

HF2082—Nornes (R)
Health & Human Services Finance

Nursing facility purchase price used in property reimbursement rate determinations.

HF2083—Peterson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Minnesota River valley education district and southwest Minnesota workforce development center program and services colocation grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2084—McCollum (DFL)
Taxes

Individual income tax damages awards exemption provided.

HF2085—Tuma (R)
Taxes

Senior-owned homesteads estimated market value increases prohibited.

HF2086—Peterson (DFL)
Transportation Policy

Super-2 highway; trunk highway nos. 7 and 212 segments reconstructed.

HF2087—Krinkie (R)
Taxes

Property tax use for light rail transit prohibited.

HF2088—Solberg (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Aitkin County Growth Inc. tax payment grant provided and money appropriated.

HF2089—Biernat (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Area learning centers building lease aid provided.

HF2090—Cassell (R)
Education Policy

College and university hazing policy distribution provision modified.

HF2091—Cassell (R)
Higher Education Finance

Farm and small business management programs, and tuition assistance funded; and money appropriated.

HF2092—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Interactive television program funding restored.

HF2093—Erickson (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Urban educator professional development program grants established and money appropriated.

HF2094—Seagren (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Collaborative Urban Educator, southeast Asian teacher licensure, and circles of support in educational leadership programs funded; additional salary authorized for graduates; and money appropriated.

HF2095—Dawkins (DFL)
Taxes

Working family credit based on federal earned income tax credit.

HF2096—Westrom (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Grant County infrastructure improvement grant provided and money appropriated.

HF2097—Solberg (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 316, Greenway, full-day daily kindergarten program grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2098—Solberg (DFL)
Higher Education Finance

Itasca community college facilities construction authorized.

HF2099—Tuma (R)
Health & Human Services Finance

Intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR) services and resident relocation funding modified.

HF2100—Wagenius (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy

Lead testing and child lead poisoning treatment reimbursement by stationary sources emitting large amounts of lead required and civil cause of action provided.

HF2101—Hilty (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Government training service provided an exemption from the solicitation process and money appropriated.

HF2102—Bakk (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Larsmont design project wastewater funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2103—Lindner (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Council on Affairs of Chicano Latino People appropriated money.

HF2104—Schumacher (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Zimmerman wastewater funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2105—Bishop (R)**Ways & Means**

Legislative Advisory Commission review of federal funds purpose changes provided, state finance information submission dates modified and coordinated, and expenditure forecast bonding component provided.

HF2106—Sykora (R)**Family & Early Childhood Education Finance**

Child care basic sliding fee assistance eligibility modified.

HF2107—Kahn (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Iraq; president, Congress, and other national and international officials memorialized to lift the economic sanctions against Iraq.

HF2108—Abeler (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district immunization follow-up activities funded and money appropriated.

HF2109—Boudreau (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 656, Faribault, local levy authorized, fund transfer allowed, and money appropriated.

HF2110—Wolf (R)**Commerce**

Qualified small and medium-sized wind energy facilities renewable energy production incentives provided.

HF2111—Murphy (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Proctor authorized to impose an additional sales tax for construction and improvement projects.

HF2112—Murphy (DFL)**Judiciary Finance**

Carlton County criminal prosecution expenses reimbursement provided and money appropriated.

HF2113—Boudreau (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nursing home services and elderly waiver services prepaid medical assistance eliminated.

HF2114—Davids (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Professional architect, engineer, surveyor, landscape architect, geoscientist, and interior design services bid solicitation process exception provided.

HF2115—Workman (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 112, Chaska, eastern Carver community collaborative project capital planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2116—Howes (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

North ten mile sanitary district wastewater funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2117—Howes (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

East Gull Lake projects wastewater funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2118—Howes (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Longville wastewater funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2119—Rest (DFL)**Taxes**

Dependent care credit, education credit and subtraction, and working family credit inflationary and family size adjustments provided; and money appropriated.

HF2120—Osthoff (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Additional critical habitat license plates purchase provided and money appropriated.

HF2121—Haas (R)**Transportation Finance**

Brooklyn Park; Trunk Highway No. 52 overpass feasibility, cost, and safety studied; and money appropriated.

HF2122—Entenza (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Center for Victims of Torture appropriated money.

HF2123—Tuma (R)**Education Policy**

Advocacy organization representatives allowed to serve as lay advocates; and individual education plan meeting, conciliation conference, and mediation session attendance one-time reimbursement provided.

HF2124—Tuma (R)**Education Policy**

Interagency dispute procedure affecting persons with disabilities ages three through 21 developed and implemented.

HF2125—Clark, K. (DFL)**Taxes**

Cities required to discharge unpaid tax obligations of Neighborhood Revitalization Program nonprofit contractors.

HF2126—Abrams (R)**Taxes**

Fiscal disparities abatement authorized, school district uniform abatement authority provided, and provisions clarified.

HF2127—Abrams (R)**Taxes**

Public debt use limitations and conditions modified and imposed.

HF2128—McElroy (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Board of Boxing abolished and boxing regulation studied.

HF2129—Broecker (R)**Judiciary Finance**

Criminal justice, corrections, and public safety appropriations bill.

HF2130—Anderson, B. (R)**Crime Prevention**

Runaway children in need of protection or services (CHIPS) provided treatment, notice required, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF2131—Howes (R)**Taxes**

County water implementation tax levy and base grant awards increased, and money appropriated.

HF2132—Greiling (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Urban agricultural high school created, planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2133—Finseth (R)**Taxes**

East Grand Forks and Warren provided temporary local government aid increases, and money appropriated.

Thursday, March 18**HF2134—Wenzel (DFL)****Crime Prevention**

Criminal gang prosecution council created, strike force support provided, guidelines developed, and attorney general jurisdiction provided.

HF2135—Holsten (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Natural resources, youth sports, agriculture, and wastewater funding provided; and money appropriated.

HF2136—Holsten (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Bayport storm sewer reconstruction project grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2137—Jennings (DFL)**Commerce**

Telecommunications service regulated.

HF2138—Dempsey (R)**Taxes**

Historic structure rehabilitation expenditures income tax credit provided.

HF2139—Murphy (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Minnesota State Retirement system (MSRS) and state troopers retirement average salary definition modified.

HF2140—Westfall (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Cromwell Township flood damage mitigation funded and money appropriated.

HF2141—Kalis (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

St. Clair; LeSueur River stream bank stabilization grant provided and money appropriated.

HF2142—Tingelstad (R)**Judiciary Finance**

DARE advisory council grant provided and money appropriated.

HF2143—Kahn (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
State travel office feasibility and benefits studied.

HF2144—Kahn (DFL)
Education Policy
University of Minnesota incumbent regents provided exemption from advisory council evaluation requirement.

HF2145—Nornes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Otter Tail County surplus land conveyance authorized.

HF2146—Nornes (R)
Taxes
Fergus Falls community center construction materials and supplies sales tax exemption provided.

HF2147—Nornes (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School district sparsity revenue distance factor increased.

HF2148—Workman (R)
Rules & Legislative Administration
Constitution; sovereignty of the people and states reaffirmed, original intention of the Constitution of the United States restored, and principles provided.

HF2149—Workman (R)
Taxes
Sales, use, and motor vehicle sales tax rates reduced.

HF2150—Workman (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Employee and student political fund solicitation negative checkoffs prohibited.

HF2151—Dehler (R)
Higher Education Finance
University of Minnesota health-related tuition offset trust fund established and funding provided through cigarette tax revenue.

HF2152—Otremba (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Cancer awareness and prevention funded, health data classification provided, and money appropriated.

HF2153—Gray (DFL)
Taxes
Property tax and state aid special taxing districts expanded to include the middle Mississippi River watershed management organization.

HF2154—Fuller (R)
Transportation Finance
Local bridge road approach funding authorized through previous transportation bonding authority.

HF2155—Vandevener (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Elementary school supplemental literacy program grants provided and money appropriated.

HF2156—Reuter (R)
Civil Law
Economic loss arising from the sale of goods regulated.

HF2157—Murphy (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement actuarial cost allocation modified.

HF2158—Swenson (R)
Judiciary Finance
Center for Reducing Rural Violence funding continued and money appropriated.

HF2159—Harder (R)
Taxes
Jackson tax increment financing district duration extended.

HF2160—Reuter (R)
Taxes
Owatonna Pearl Street 911 center construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF2161—Olson (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Traumatic brain injury demonstration project appropriated money.

HF2162—Olson (R)
Commerce
Seat belt use automobile insurance premium reduction required.

HF2163—Olson (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 727, Big Lake, technology grant provided and money appropriated.

HF2164—Jennings (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
County natural resources land in lieu tax payments modified and money appropriated.

HF2165—Holsten (R)
Commerce
Internet, interactive computer services, digital broadband services, and high-speed data and Internet access services regulation restricted.

HF2166—Tuma (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 659, Northfield, community resource center grant provided and money appropriated.

HF2167—Solberg (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
PELRA; retired employees unilateral benefits modifications considered an unfair labor practice.

HF2168—Carruthers (DFL)
Civil Law
Multiple defendants aggregate fault allowed related to comparative negligence.

HF2169—Holsten (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Public trails and park facilities surveyed for accessibility to persons with disabilities and money appropriated.

HF2170—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Board of Water and Soil Resources shoreland protection pilot program created, and money appropriated.

HF2171—Smith (R)
Commerce
Real property titles required to be registered by 2030 and requirements phased-in.

HF2172—Solberg (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission membership increase authorized.

HF2173—Smith (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
State professional unit employee positions classified.

HF2174—Chaudhary (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Columbia Heights tax increment financing district extended and expenditures authorized.

HF2175—Krinkie (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Public safety building safety division established and duties transferred.

HF2176—Workman (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Payments to employees for political purposes regulated.

HF2177—Ozment (R)
Taxes
Agricultural and open space property taxation task force established, study required, and appointments provided.

HF2178—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Sales and use tax revenue portion dedicated to the game and fish fund, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF2179—Krinkie (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Rush City correctional facility operation proposal requests required and facility operator selected.

HF2180—Workman (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Regional rail authority provisions modified, facilities financing provided, intergovernmental agreements and payments authorized, and general obligation bonds issued.

HF2181—Tingelstad (R)
Capital Investment
Anoka County courthouse improvements provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2182—Dempsey (R)
Capital Investment
Minnesota Veterans Home in Hastings improvements provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

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Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

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MONDAY, March 22

8 a.m.

Canceled

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: Canceled.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Department of Human Services budget presentation continued.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: HF918 (Kielucki) Taconite mining grant program appropriated money. Other bills to be announced.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF2041 (Kuisle) Personal rapid transit planning and design provided and money appropriated.

HF1917 (Hausman) Metropolitan and greater Minnesota transit appropriated money.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Department of Administration budget presentation continued.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: SF98 (Knutson) Granting prosecutors discretion not to disclose a victim's or witness' date of birth.

HF2058 (Carruthers) Pollution Control Agency data classification provided.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HF1895 (Boudreau) Asian-Pacific American mental health graduate program student grants established, and money appropriated.

HF1391 (Leppik) Tobacco settlement money disposition provided, health professional education and medical research endowment fund created, and money appropriated.

HF2098 (Solberg) Itasca Community College facilities construction authorized.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF1137 (Greiling) Special education reciprocity agreements developed, special education funding provided, state revenue source provided for court-placed unreimbursed tuition, and money appropriated.

HF1186 (Greiling) Special education revenue and excess cost revenue modified, and pre K-12 special education pupil weighting increased.

HF1220 (Dempsey) Child care and treatment instructional aid provided, placement provisions modified, uniform billing system and approval of education programs provided, and money appropriated.

HF1357 (Carruthers) Limited English proficiency and special education programs two-year lag replaced with one-year lag.

HF1360 (Tomassoni) Special education revenue and excess cost revenue modified, and pre-kindergarten special education pupil weighting increased.

HF826 (Johnson) School year minimum instructional days report provided and money appropriated.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF1700 (Paulsen) Metropolitan revenue distribution altered to provided distribution to counties based on uncompensated health care costs.

HF1515 (Daggett) Certain assisted living facility property tax exemption provided.

HF1952 (Abrams) Additional homestead classification qualifications prohibited.

HF1869 (Van Dellen) City local government minimum per capita aid amount established.

HF167 (Wenzel) State-paid agricultural property taxes provided, and money appropriated.

HF1210 (Gleason) Percentage of rent constituting property taxes increased.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Attachment, bonding and early childhood development presentations by Dr. Byron Egelund, Irving B. Harris professor of child development, University of Minnesota; and Dr. William Bart, professor of educational psychology, University of Minnesota.

Canceled

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: Canceled.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

TUESDAY, March 23

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF770 (Abeler) Essential community provider status application deadline removed.

HF863 (Tingelstad) Putative fathers' adoption registry, communication and contact agreements, and postadoption report requirements and procedures modified.

HF1602 (Abeler) Prescription drug coverage for the senior drug program clarified, medical assistance eligibility and income provisions modified, and other health care provider provisions clarified.

HF1563 (Entenza) Child support procedures and requirements modified, certain clarifications made, account created, and money appropriated. HF1687 (Tingelstad) Child welfare provisions modified.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: To be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: To be announced.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman
Agenda: To be announced.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: Budget presentations by Office of Administrative Hearings and Amateur Sports Commission.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: To be announced.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares
Agenda: To be announced.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: HF1231 (Ness) Telecommunications access grants provisions modified, Minnesota Education Telecommunications Council modified, and money appropriated.
HF1199 (Cassell) K-12 education technical amendments bill.
HF1573 (Gray) Minnesota adolescent parenting grant program provided, and money appropriated.
HF1677 (Carlson) Metro homework hotline grant authorized, and money appropriated.
HF1723 (Dempsey) Children's Museum Ready? Set. Read! program grant provided and money appropriated.
HF1773 (Dawkins) Youth works program legislative report required and money appropriated.
HF404 (Erickson) Advanced placement and international baccalaureate programs funded, and money appropriated.
HF823 (Ness) School district transportation reserved revenue accounts authorized.
HF1459 (Johnson) Learning academy training expanded, library site technology grants eligibility requirements modified, database access program for public libraries and school modified, and money appropriated.
HF1452 (Boudreau) Library for the blind and physically handicapped appropriated money.
HF888 (Erickson) Multicounty, multitype library systems and basic system support grants funded, and money appropriated.
HF1202 (Ness) Minnesota foundation for student organizations funding provided.
HF1914 (Swenson) Independent School District No. 2859, Glencoe-Silver Lake, long-range facility study conducted, and money appropriated.
HF1832 (Swenson) All-day kindergarten students pupil weight increased.
HF1007 (Lindner) Independent School District No. 728, Elk River, year-round school/extended week or day grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1356 (Wenzel) Operational skills instructor funding authorized for Central Lakes College, Brainerd campus.
HF2009 (Hausman) St. Paul provided appropriation for natural science education coordinator for Como Park.
HF1972 (Biernat) Statewide youth athletic program provided and money appropriated.
HF1863 (Johnson) Substitute teacher state-paid medical benefits provided and money appropriated.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: HF656 (Daggett) Tree growth tax law public hunting and fishing requirement exception created for nonindustrial privately owned forest land.
HF723 (McElroy) Employer provided transit benefits income tax credit created.
HF1372 (Harder) Sales and use tax exemption provided for materials and supplies used in expansion of an agricultural processing facility.
HF1322 (Paulsen) Corporate franchise education expenses credit authorized.
HF1136 (Carlson) Higher education income tax credit provided.
HF2007 (Abrams) Digital television broadcast equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness
Agenda: Governor's budget request for Department of Agriculture.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach
Agenda: To be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids
Agenda: To be announced.

2:30 p.m.

Child Care Workgroup/ FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

400N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: Child care issues.

4 p.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: Presentation on the ombudsperson for mental health and mental retardation's budget. Presentation on the ombudsperson for families' budget.
Department of Human Services' budget presentation continued.

6 p.m.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

WEDNESDAY, March 24

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: HF669 (Goodno) Medical Assistance income standard increased.
HF1260 (Tingelstad) Medical Assistance reimbursement rate maximums increased relating to special transportation services.
HF912 (Jennings) Medical Assistance reimbursement geographic groups redefined, nursing facility rate increase negotiations authorized, and money appropriated.
HF332 (Mulder) Rural health clinics and federally qualified health center services cost-based reimbursement continued.
HF1047 (Wejcman) Anorexia; Medical Assistance coverage of anorexics authorized.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: To be announced.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: HF698 (Workman) Major transportation projects commission established and report required.
HF1294 (McElroy) Prorated motor vehicle license fees authorized after dealer transfer.
Other bills to be announced.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: HF478 (Haas) Structured settlement payment rights protected related to tort or workers' compensation claims.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: General education overview and general fund expenditure report, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: To be announced.

Canceled

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt
Agenda: Canceled.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: HF1295 (Clark, J.) Property tax homestead treatment extended to include property leased to family farm corporations. HF1771 (Kuisle) Agricultural tax relief provided through offer-in-compromise program and income tax exemption provided. HF1821 (Harder) Brown County property tax credit provided for tornado damaged property and money appropriated. HF1839 (Van Dellen) Printing activities sales and use tax exemption provided. HF886 (Erhardt) State agency libraries sales and use tax exemption provided. HF1087 (Harder) Farmer income averaging authorized for income tax purposes.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth
Agenda: HF509 (Swenson) Manure digester technology demonstration project shared loans provided, manure waste methane recovery system energy purchase required, rebates provided, and money appropriated. HF1235 (Swenson) Livestock production facilities exempted from ambient hydrogen sulfide standards on days manure is being removed from barns or manure storage facilities. HF688 (Kubly) Hydroponic greenhouses corporate farm law exemption provided.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: HF883 (Nornes) Chemical abuse prevention matching grants provided to community collaborative projects and money appropriated. HF1697 (Nornes) Male responsibility and fathering grants provided, and money appropriated. HF647 (Sykora) Maximum child care assistance reimbursement increased, payment requirements modified, and streamlined system developed. HF1864 (McGuire) Minnesota Family Investment Plan (MFIP) and basic sliding fee child care assistance program consolidated, and projected costs forecasted and recognized in the fund balance. HF1960 (Gray) Child care system obsolete reports eliminated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen
Agenda: HF1290 (Larsen, P.) Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport; Bloomington, Minneapolis, and Richfield airport impact zones

and tax increment financing districts authorized; airport impact fund created; and Metropolitan Council activities permitted.
Other business to be announced.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf
Agenda: To be announced.

4:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

217 State Capitol
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: HF1209 (Boudreau) Child care worker training grants provided, advisory committee created, and money appropriated. HF1610 (Nornes) Child care improvement grants modified, and money appropriated. HF1857 (McGuire) Child care resource and referral programs, and child care development grants provided; and money appropriated. HF2073 (McGuire) Federal welfare-to-work grant money state match for child care assistance funding provided.

5 p.m.

Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares
Agenda: HF1314 (Lenczewski) MSRS general state employees retirement plan service credit purchase for prior temporary employment authorized for a certain person. HF1853 (Mares) Public employees police and fire plan and local police and fire consolidation account provisions modified. HF1483 (Tomassoni) Minimum fire state aid relief association eligibility expanded. HF1487 (Wenzel) Minimum fire state aid eligibility expanded to post-1993 relief associations. HF1444 (Krinkie) Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) provisions modified. HF1842 (Swenson) Glencoe area health center employee privatization pension benefit accommodation provided. HF256 (Kahn) Minneapolis Firefighters Relief Association provisions modified. HF1561 (Mares) Metropolitan Council authorized to offer early retirement incentive. HF1076 (Rifenberg) Volunteer firefighter supplemental retirement benefit maximum increased. HF1830 (Stanek) Minneapolis Police Relief Association authorized fund disbursements modified. SF1886 (Sams) Retirement eligibility for Bertha-Hewitt school district teachers. HF1743 (Jennings) Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) military service credit purchase authorized for a certain Rush City school district employee. HF1302 (Pugh) Teacher earning limitations resumed for returning retirees. Other items designated by chair.

6 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: To be announced.

6:30 p.m.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: To be announced.

THURSDAY, March 25

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: Member bills.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: To be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: To be announced.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman
Agenda: To be announced.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: Budget presentations on public television and public radio.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: To be announced.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares
Agenda: To be announced.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: HF584 (Dawkins) Low-income housing income tax credit provided. HF1961 (Otremba) Low-income housing tax credit provided.

HF1335 (Hasskamp) Sales tax exemption provided for construction materials used in building Hallett Community Center in Crosby.
 HF1334 (Howes) Sales tax exemption provided for equipment and materials used to make improvements to certain resorts.
 HF1485 (Howes) Deep Portage environmental learning center construction materials sales tax exemption provided.
 HF900 (Rest) Working family income tax credit percentages modified.
 HF1997 (Dawkins) Comprehensive low-income tax credit provided replacing the working family tax credit, dependent care tax credit, education credit, and property tax refund; and money appropriated.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Bob Ness
Agenda: Governor's budget request for Department of Agriculture and Minnesota Board of Animal Health.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach
Agenda: To be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids
Agenda: To be announced.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

30 minutes after session

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: HF1858 (Rhodes) Crisis intervention hotline pilot project established for the metropolitan area Hmong community and money appropriated.
 HF948 (Huntley) St. Louis County; statewide adolescent compulsive gambling prevention and education project grant provided, and money appropriated.
 HF910 (Finseth) Rural mental health services grants provided and money appropriated.
 HF818 (Nornes) Residential mental health facility upgrades established and money appropriated.
 HF834 (Boudreau) Adult mental illness crisis housing assistance program created and money appropriated.

FRIDAY, March 26

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: HF756 (Westfall) Clay County nonprofit dental services grant provided and money appropriated.
 HF424 (Westfall) Living-at-home/block nurse program expanded and money appropriated.
 HF1116 (Huntley) City of Duluth appropriated money for a family practice residency program for northeastern Minnesota.
 HF1770 (Fuller) Senior nutrition meals provided increased funding and money appropriated.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: To be announced.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: To be announced.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: HF1547 (Bishop) Minnesota State Colleges and Universities capital improvements authorized, and money appropriated.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: To be announced.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

500S State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkle
Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: HF25 (Pawlenty) Charitable contributions federal income tax subtraction allowed for persons who do not itemize deductions.
 HF108 (Pawlenty) Charitable contribution income tax credit provided.
 HF109 (Pawlenty) Charitable contribution income tax credit provided.
 HF224 (Ozment) Charitable contributions excluded from alternative minimum taxable income.
 HF89 (Rest) Nonprofits provided grants for volunteer assistance to low-income taxpayers, and money appropriated.
 HF1311 (Dawkins) This old house; property tax valuation exclusion for certain improvements application requirements modified.
 HF1505 (Carruthers) Nonprescription drugs and residential fuels exempted from sales tax.
 HF1511 (Carruthers) General sales tax rate reduction provided.

12 noon

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: HF634 (Bradley) Crisis nursery development funding increased and money appropriated.
 HF1146 (Howes) Indian Child Welfare Defense Corporation provided grants to promote Indian Child Welfare Act compliance.
 HF1364 (Koskinen) New chance program appropriation provided in Hennepin County.
 HF1443 (Abeler) Independent living skills training program funded for persons with epilepsy and money appropriated.
 HF1852 (Stanek) Asian-American juvenile crime intervention and prevention program grant provided and money appropriated.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
 Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: To be announced.

Joint FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE/ JUDICIARY FINANCE

217 State Capitol
 Chrs. Rep. Barb Sykora,
 Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: Takeover of the Office of Drug Policy by House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Committee Deadlines

Each year the House and Senate set deadlines by which most bills must be heard in a committee and forwarded through the process. The deadlines weed out some of the thousands of bills introduced each year.

The first 1999 committee deadline is **Friday, March 19**. That means to be considered further, a bill must pass out of all necessary policy committees in its house of origin.

The second committee deadline is **Wednesday, March 31**. By that date, all bills other than those containing appropriations will have to be passed out of all policy committees in the both the House and Senate. To meet the second deadline, bills will have to be acted upon before 4 p.m. March 31.

The third deadline is **Friday, April 16**. All omnibus appropriations bills will have to pass out of a finance committee by that date.

Of course, there are exceptions to the deadlines. The House Ways and Means, Taxes, and Rules and Legislative Administration committees are exempt, as are the Senate Finance, Taxes, and Rules and Administration committees. Also, a bill can be heard after the deadlines if the rules committee in either body allows it.



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Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Competition at the airport

Rank of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport among U.S. airports, in passengers served	13
Rank among world airports	19
Rank of Northwest Airlines among world airlines, in passengers served	5
Number of gates at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport	70
Number controlled by Northwest	53
Number of new gates at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport since 1991	5
Number of those controlled by Northwest	4
Number of new gates planned by 2002	12
Northwest passengers in 1997, in millions	55
Percent of passengers to, from, or passing through Twin Cities in 1998 who flew Northwest	81
Percent in 1975	45
Year U.S. airline industry was deregulated, allowing airlines to set their own routes and prices	1978
Year Northwest began airline service in Twin Cities	1927
Year Northwest began service from Twin Cities to Asia	1947
Year until which Northwest provided the only nonstop service from Twin Cities to destinations outside North America	1997
Percent of passengers at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport who were connecting between two flights, in 1997	55
Percent in 1985	45
Percent in 1980	33
Number of major U.S. airports to which Northwest had no scheduled nonstop competition from Twin Cities, September 1998	16
Number of those airports that are in Los Angeles	3
Number that are in Washington, D.C.	3
Percent decline in average fares at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport from 1990-1998	13
Percent above national average (for 45 similar airports) paid by Twin Cities passengers in 1998	49

Source: *Flight Plan: Airline Competition in Minnesota, 1999, Minnesota Planning.*

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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ March 26, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 12



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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • March 26, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 12

Reflections



One could say it all started in Minnesota.

On March 21, two men touched down in Egypt, miles past the point of completely circling the Earth for the first time in a hot-air balloon.

One of them was Swiss psychiatrist Bertrand Piccard, the grand-nephew of Drs. Jean and Jeannette Piccard of Minnesota. Jean and Jeannette also made aviation history. In 1934, Jean accompanied his wife as she piloted a balloon to a point in the stratosphere that, at 57,979 feet, was higher than had ever been reached before. By so doing, they broke the record held by Jean's twin brother, Auguste. His record of 53,152 feet was set in 1932.

Auguste Piccard also designed a pressurized balloon gondola — and his grandson Bertrand and fellow balloonist Brian Jones drew on that concept for their balloon trip around the earth.

Don Piccard, the son of Jean and Jeannette, still lives just across the state capital's city limits. Like his parents, Don made history. He fondly remembers being the first to cross the English Channel by balloon in 1963.

He said that without the Legislature's funding for the University of Minnesota, his father and others in the aeronautical engineering department could not have invented the plastic balloon that spurred today's hot-air balloon industry.

The sale of land and iron ore in 1933 produced a permanent fund of \$5.6 million for the university. Since the institution is governed by a Board of Regents, as fixed by an act of the 1851 territorial Legislature, the regents' governance cannot be repealed or amended by elected officials.

"Today's space program is based on plastic balloon research programs conducted by General Mills, Raven Industries, and the G.T. Schjeldahl Company in Northfield, and my father's efforts at the University of Minnesota," said Don Piccard.

Jeannette Piccard was named one of Minnesota's Women of Distinction in 1956. Among many other accomplishments, Dr. Piccard was one of the early consultants to NASA's manned Spacecraft Center. Also, she was ordained as the first female priest of the Episcopal church. Prior to that she served as a deacon at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Summit Avenue.

Minnesota and the Piccards have been a major influence on today's balloon flights. In fact, the first air balloon race in the United States was held by Don Piccard at a St. Paul Winter Carnival in 1962. Don Piccard says it's time to bring this annual event back to the state. "Maybe the Legislature can help balloonists once again," he said, noting that modern technology has come full circle. "My cousin's accomplishment last week is not the end of an era, but the beginning, thanks to those who worked with the University of Minnesota to make it happen."

Much like the fictitious Captain Picard of the Starship Enterprise, the Swiss and Minnesota Piccards, with indirect assistance from the Minnesota Legislature, have made it possible "to go where no one has ever gone before."

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Warm sunshine comes through the windows of the Capitol dome during the first week of spring.

—Photo by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

Identity fraud . . .

Growing crime problem demands new legal remedies

By Grant Martin

Victims of identity fraud say they often have a difficult time convincing people that they are truly victims of a crime.

And because merely possessing someone else's identification information — including credit card and bank account numbers — is not technically a crime, law enforcement officials often find themselves unable to prosecute offenders.

But armed with that supposedly private information, criminals can run up credit cards and clear out entire bank accounts, often over the phone or Internet and often without the victim discovering the fraud for weeks or months.

Federal law limits a consumer's liability for credit or banking fraud to \$50, so the real

The House passed a bill passed March 23 that aims to give prosecutors the tools to deal with identity fraud. The vote was 132-0.

The measure (HF112/SF333*) would make it a crime to transfer, possess, or use another person's identity with the intent to commit an unlawful act.

Penalties for the crime would vary depending on the amount of loss incurred and the number of victims involved.

The bill also states that any direct or indirect victim of an identity crime is a victim for purposes of the law and has rights to any court-ordered restitution.

"This bill gives prosecutors the opportunity to prosecute identity theft," said Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), the bill's sponsor.

Bishop said that under current law, police

maiden name — to commit economic fraud. Identity fraud can range from the unauthorized use of a credit card to a complete theft of another person's identity.

Most people agree that identity fraud is on the rise, and many claim that one of the main reasons is the easy access to information via the Internet.

According to a report released in May 1998 by the U.S. Government Accounting Office, officials at the Trans Union Corporation, one of the three main national credit bureaus, reported that fraud inquiries increased from 35,235 in 1992 to 522,922 in 1997.

Secret Service officials also reported an increase in cases investigated by that agency. The agency said that actual losses to both consumers and financial institutions due to identity fraud increased from \$442 million in 1995 to \$745 million in 1997.

Visa and Mastercard place their losses due to fraud in the hundreds of millions of dollars annually. And the U.S. Public Interest Research Group estimates at least 40,000 instances of identity theft each year.

Bishop's bill now goes back to the Senate. The Senate version of the bill has a consumer reporting provision that the House did not include in their bill.

Under that provision, consumer reporting agencies, such as the Trans Union Corporation, would be required to inform the consumer every time a person or business requests a credit report. The reporting agency would also have to provide a name, address, and telephone number of the person or business.

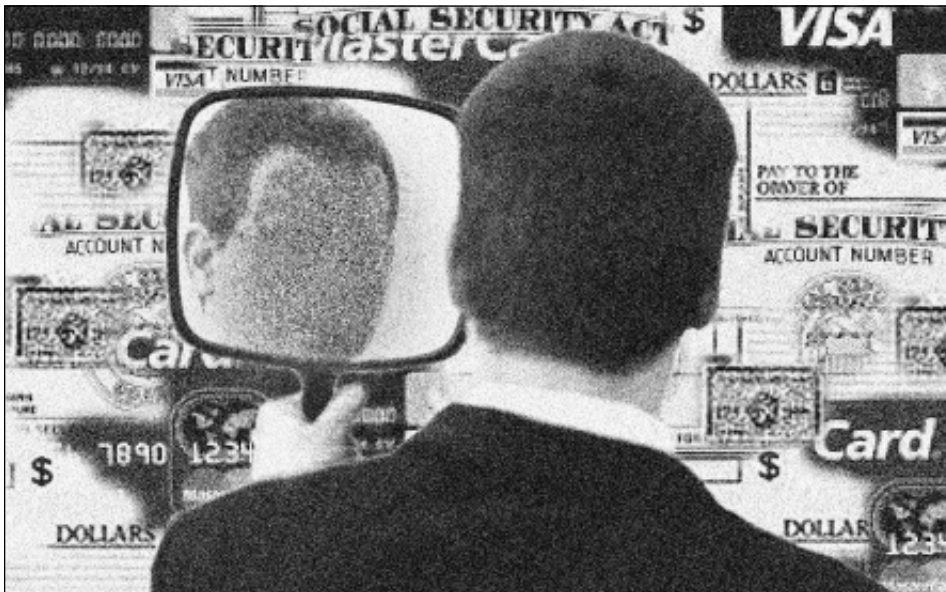
Proponents argue that the consumer would then know each time a credit application is being processed against their credit history.

Critics of this provision argued that it is unnecessary and places too heavy a burden on the consumer reporting agency.

Bishop's bill is similar to a law signed by President Bill Clinton in October 1998. The federal identity theft law makes it a crime to use a person's identity to commit a violation of federal law. The federal law also created a centralized identity theft unit within the Federal Trade Commission.

Proponents of the federal law argue that state laws are also needed to assist local law enforcement and local prosecutors.

During committee hearings on the bill,



Lawmakers are working on measures to combat growing troubles with crimes involving identity theft. Credit card fraud is a common form of such crimes, but law enforcement officials are dealing with a variety of other problems.

—Photo illustration by Tom Olmscheid

victim under the law is the financial institution liable for the loss. Financial institutions often chose not to pursue these cases because their losses don't justify the potential cost of investigating the crimes.

However, people who are identity theft victims often experience problems later, when they apply for loans, credit cards, and jobs. They spend countless hours writing letters and making phone calls in efforts to restore their good credit. Some victims have even been arrested for crimes committed by someone who took their identity.

can arrest people who attempt the illegal transactions, but the ringleaders often go free. He said that his bill would allow prosecutors to charge these individuals just for possessing someone else's identification numbers.

For purposes of tracking identity theft nationally, no standard definition of such crimes exists and no single agency or business tracks these types of crimes.

Typically identity theft means using another person's personal information — name, address, social security number, mother's

prosecutors told lawmakers that Bishop's bill could also be used to prosecute organized check fraud schemes.

In January 1999, Minneapolis police officers arrested several individuals allegedly involved in a check fraud scheme. The suspects were allegedly stealing check routing numbers and other information from the mail and using this information to create counterfeit checks.

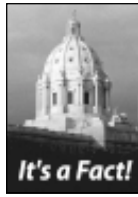
The Crime Prevention Committee approved a bill March 23 that seeks specifically to address the issue of check fraud.

That bill (**HF624/SF441***), sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), would create a new felony level penalty for attempting to pass a fraudulent check worth \$500 or more. The bill would also create a pretrial diversion program for certain check fraud offenders.

Stanek said the pretrial diversion program would separate those offenders with criminal intentions from the offender with poor financial skills.

That bill now goes to the House Commerce Committee.

Official fought freeway route near Capitol



In 1958, 90-year-old George H. Herrold, former chief city planner of St. Paul, made one last stand in his effort to fight what he saw as misguided progress.

A long-time opponent of a planned freeway between downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul — today's Interstate 94 — Herrold sent an open letter to the chairman of the mayor's special committee studying proposed freeway routes.

In the letter, Herrold expressed his disgust at the fact that the leading proposed route would run between the Capitol complex and St. Paul's central business district.

Referring to the planned route as a "serious engineering blunder," Herrold lambasted the state highway department for approving a plan that would divide the city.

"They have never considered the economic effect of splitting the town in two and placing the hundreds of employees of the Capitol and the highway department, for example, outside the commercial and recreational districts," he wrote in the letter.

As the city engineer in 1938, Herrold had begun working on a plan to relieve the congestion developing on city streets between the two cities' central business districts. He proposed creating a multi-lane, tree-lined parkway on St. Paul's St. Anthony Avenue.

But the state and federal governments had a different idea on how best to relieve traffic congestion in the city. They proposed a limited-access freeway along the same route.

Highway officials chose the freeway route based on typical highway design criteria, including geographic considerations and driver surveys. But officials failed to conduct any detailed social science research into the economic effects of the proposed routes.

In 1942, Herrold discovered that his St. Anthony Avenue route was being consid-

ered as the spot for the interstate freeway, and began to lobby against the plan.

He argued that a freeway through the heart of the city would be a terrible idea. He said it would be an unsightly and noisy ditch and that it would be foolish to focus all traffic onto one artery.

Most important, he argued, there were serious social considerations.

"The freeway idea requires the moving of thousands of people, who must give up their homes, churches, schools, neighbors, and valued social contracts, who lose the institutions they have built for their pleasure and profit," Herrold wrote.

Realizing that he might have to accept some sort of freeway between the cities, Herrold began work on a compromise proposal. He noted that St. Paul had already been divided and subsequently developed along its 22 railroad lines. So he designed an alternative route along an existing railroad line one mile north of the planned freeway route.

Herrold said his compromise plan would work just as well and be less intrusive both socially and economically.

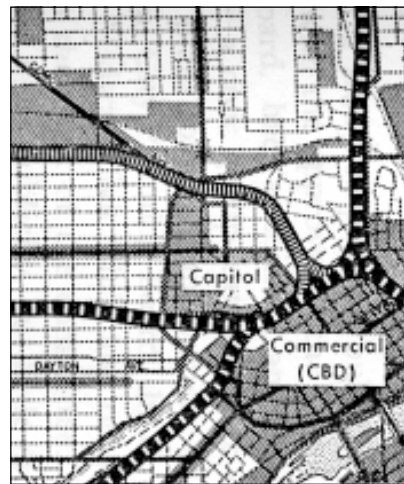
Nonetheless, the city approved the highway department's proposed route in 1947. Herrold retired from his post in 1953, following a 33-year career.

In 1956, the downtown St. Paul business community, which had generally been supportive of the freeway idea, realized that the proposed plan would sever the Capitol area and its consumers from the downtown. They also opposed redevelopment efforts west of the Capitol, saying that would attract business

away from downtown.

The group also hired the national firm of Victor Gruen Associates to evaluate the proposal and make recommendations. Gruen suggested an alternate route that would bypass the Capitol to the north and west.

But city planning officials rejected the



An alternative freeway routing plan in the 1940s would have directed Interstate 94 north of the Capitol.

Continued on page 17

Minnesota State Agencies

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Highlights



CRIME

Defending your castle

A recent court decision has changed the standard for when deadly force can be used to defend your home, and lawmakers want to change it back.

In *Minnesota vs. Carothers*, the state Court of Appeals ruled last year that deadly force can be used only as a last resort and that a resident has a duty to retreat from an intruder if at all possible.

A bill advancing in the Legislature would overrule the *Carothers* decision and would outline in statute when deadly force could be used as self-defense in the home. The House passed the bill March 25. The vote was 121-12.

The bill would specifically state that a resident doesn't have a duty to retreat before using deadly force when an intruder unlawfully enters a residence, as long as the resident believes the intruder intends to cause harm to people in the residence.

Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), the bill's sponsor, said that the court's decision is "misguided."

"If you wake up in the middle of the night to an intruder in your living room, possibly with a gun, you have a duty under the *Carothers* decision to go back upstairs or to the basement," he said. "I think that's ludicrous."

The court's decision runs contrary to the so-called "castle doctrine." That doctrine states that unlike other cases of self-defense where the victim has a duty to retreat if possible, defending oneself against an unlawful intruder inside the home has special status.

The court itself notes in the *Carothers* opinion that most jurisdictions outside of Minnesota apply the castle doctrine to self-defense in the home.

The Minnesota Supreme Court is currently reviewing the Court of Appeal's ruling in the *Carothers* case.

The bill (HF839) now goes to the Senate.

Tribal police proposed

Members of the House Crime Prevention Committee approved a bill March 19 that would allow tribal law enforcement agencies to share authority with local sheriffs on tribal land.

But some tribe members say that the bill might create and legitimize a "goon squad" created to maintain the standing tribal government.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), would outline the conditions under which the tribal law enforcement agency could exercise concurrent jurisdictional authority with the local sheriff.

The bill would also allow tribal police officers to become certified by the state's officer licensing board.

Supporters of the bill said the proposal would help ensure public safety on reservations and that the certification provisions would help the tribal governments recruit and retain qualified police officers.

But Marvin Manypenny, a White Earth tribal member, said the tribal governments haven't worked with the tribal members on establishing and regulating a police force. He said he fears potential abuses by law enforcement personnel.

"Let the tribal leaders work with the people," he said. "They haven't. They have left us out."

Current law authorizes the Mille Lacs Band, the Lower Sioux Indian Community, and the Fond du Lac Band to exercise concurrent jurisdictional authority. Smith's proposal would expand the law to include the other eight tribes in Minnesota.

The bill (HF1607) now goes to the House floor.

Punishment for no-shows

The House passed a bill March 24 that would help prosecutors recoup costs when defendants don't show up for court appearances. The vote was 127-2.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), would allow judges to order defendants who are convicted of failing to appear in court to pay any costs incurred by the county or city attorney.

And the bill would eliminate a requirement that defendants receive notice stating that failure to appear at court is a crime.

The bill (HF732/SF99*) now goes to the governor.

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Protection for search dogs

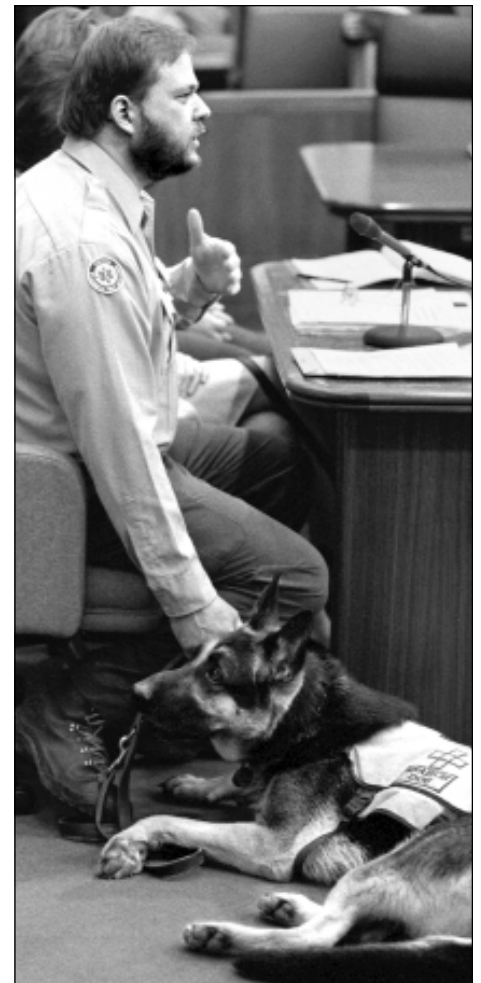
The House Crime Prevention Committee approved a bill March 25 that would impose criminal penalties for killing or harming search and rescue dogs.

Under current law, harming or killing a police dog is a crime that can be punished by up to two years imprisonment.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park), would add search and rescue dogs to that law.

Mark Haskins, a spokesman for Northstar Search and Rescue Dog Association, brought his dog Peshtigo to the committee hearing. He told the committee that the bill is necessary to provide protection for these important dogs.

"If someone harmed or killed this dog, he



Mark Haskins, from the Northstar Search and Rescue Dog Association, testifies in support of a bill that would impose penalties for killing or injuring a rescue dog. Haskins brought his German shepherd Peshtigo before the House Crime Prevention Committee on March 25.

wouldn't be available to do the lifesaving work he is trained to do," he said.

Associations like Northstar are part of a network that provides volunteer services to fire and police departments.

The bill (HF67) now goes to the House floor.



EDUCATION

A counselor shortage

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) said he believes many schools do not have sufficient ratios of guidance counselors to students.

Entenza spoke March 18 on behalf of a bill he is sponsoring that would require school districts to have one guidance counselor for every 250 students by the start of the 2000-01 school year.

Lawmakers on the House Education Policy committee approved the bill (HF1227).

Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park) said she strongly supports having more counselors in schools because it is an old idea with proven success. Too many times, she said, new ideas that are implemented to help students don't work.

However, the Minnesota School Boards Association opposed the bill, saying it would be difficult financially to meet the proposed ratio.

"I'd like to know which elementary and secondary education teachers you'd like us to lay off in order to meet this mandate," said Bob Meeks, director of governmental relations for the association.

But Entenza said that guidance counselors play a crucial role in students' lives and that many schools need more counselors to serve their existing student populations.

"We have ignored this issue," he said.

Entenza said he would work on adding a provision to the bill to provide some aid to schools to help achieve the ratio.

The bill now moves to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

Bigger buses ahead

A bill that would allow larger school buses was approved March 18 by the House Education Policy Committee.

The bill would extend to 45 feet the maximum length of a school bus. Under current law, school buses cannot measure longer than 40 feet. The extension would allow buses to carry more passengers.

Another provision of the bill would require road work vehicles such as snow plows to stop for school buses. Those vehicles are now ex-

empt from such traffic laws and do not have to stop when a school bus extends its stop arm and has its lights flashing.

Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet) is sponsoring the legislation (HF1291).

Swenson's bill would also extend the school bus driver licensing authority held by the state's public safety commissioner. It would allow the commissioner to waive restrictions in some cases where applicants have criminal convictions.

This would apply when an applicant has a past conviction, such as burglary at a young age, but has shown responsible behavior over time as an adult.

The bill moves to the House floor.



ELECTIONS

Initiative bill passed

The House approved a bill March 22 that would allow Minnesotans to choose if they want the rights of citizen initiative and referendum. The vote was 77-51.

Under the initiative process, voters can pro-

pose and place on the ballot for statewide approval changes in state law or in the state constitution. Under citizen referendum, Legislators can submit proposed legislation for voter approval.

Opponents of the bill argued that it could cause Minnesota to become more like California, where special interest groups spend millions of dollars on advertising for initiative or referendum campaigns.

Under current Minnesota law, only the Legislature, with the governor's approval, can change laws or place a constitutional amendment question on the ballot.

The bill (HF484), sponsored by Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie), would place a constitutional amendment on the ballot for the 2000 general election that would allow voters to choose if they want the power of initiative and referendum.

Under the proposed amendment, the Legislature could refer up to three laws per general election to the voters for approval or rejection.

Also, an initiated law or a proposal to repeal an existing law could go on the ballot if a petition is signed by 5 percent of the number of voters who voted for governor in the previous election. That threshold would have to be met in three-quarters of the state's congressional districts and on a statewide basis. And a constitutional amendment question could go on the ballot if a petition is signed by 8 percent of those voters.

A "yes" vote by a majority of voters voting on the question would enact an initiated law, while an affirmative vote by a majority of voters voting in the election would ratify a constitutional amendment. The governor would not be able to veto a voter-approved initiative.

The requirement that a certain number of signatures be gathered in different congressional districts is designed to make it difficult for proposed legislation or constitutional amendments to be placed on the ballot without support from diverse regions of the state.

But the bill's requirements don't go far enough, said Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar). Of the state's eight congressional districts, all except two extend into the Twin Cities metropolitan area, so metro-area voters could potentially place on the ballot, and subsequently approve, legislation that would benefit them at the expense of Greater Minnesota, he said.

Juhnke proposed requiring the signatures from each of Minnesota's 87 counties, but his amendment to do so failed.

"We don't want to put up so many barriers that we can say we have initiative and referendum, but we really don't," said House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan).

Junior lobbyist



Fridley parent Connie Benardy holds her 5-year-old daughter Kyla as she testifies in favor of a bill that would increase per-pupil funding during a March 19 hearing in the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

An amendment was adopted to provide voter information on initiative and referendum issues through the Office of the Secretary of State. Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul) said information on the pros and cons of each proposal on future ballots should be available on the Internet. Printed copies of that information should also be available by mail for people who do not have Internet access, she said.

Another provision that was adopted on the House floor would require petitions to have a disclosure statement if the people collecting signatures are being paid by a company or organization. Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin) offered that amendment.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

2000 primary questioned

A bill that would eliminate the presidential primary in Minnesota was approved March 19 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

The bill (HF1423), sponsored by Rep. Bruce Anderson (R-Buffalo Township), would replace the primary with an informal ballot to be distributed at the precinct caucuses, which are held the first Tuesday in March. On that ballot, participants would indicate their preference for presidential or gubernatorial candidates, and the results would be reported to the Office of the Secretary of State.

Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer spoke in favor of the bill, saying it would save local governments millions of dollars.

Under current state law, a presidential primary is set to be held the first Tuesday in April 2000. Printed ballots will have to be prepared, and all of the state's precincts will have to go through the formal election process. Kiffmeyer estimated that the costs of paying election judges, printing the ballots, and other expenses to be about \$3.5 million.

"I think that \$3.5 million could be better spent somewhere else," she said.

Under the plan, the secretary of state would report the results of the informal preference ballots to the media. Kiffmeyer estimated that to cost about \$8,000, and she said it would accomplish the same goal as the more formal — and more expensive — voting process.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

If you will be visiting the Capitol in the near future, call the Capitol Historic Site Program at (651) 296-2881 to schedule a tour.



ENVIRONMENT

Wolf management plan

The House passed a bill March 24 that would establish a statewide wolf management plan. The vote was 94-37.

The federal government is set to remove the gray wolf from the Endangered Species Act, and the bill (HF1415) would allow people to destroy wolves to protect themselves, their family members, their pets, or other domestic animals from attack.

The bill also would authorize the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to develop a plan to control the wolf population so that it stays at or above the federal requirement, which is 1,400 in Minnesota.

Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus), sponsor of the bill, said the wolf was put on the endangered species list in 1974 but that the wolf population has exceeded the federal requirement to be removed from the list since 1994.

A wolf management roundtable was organized under the DNR, with representatives from various interest groups. The roundtable participants agreed to a compromise proposal, which led to Finseth's bill.

That bill was amended in the House Agriculture Policy Committee, but some House members pushed an amendment on the House floor to revert to the language that came from the roundtable.

"No matter what happens today, some people think the bill goes too far, and there are others who think it doesn't go far enough," Finseth said. "So you won't satisfy everybody."

The amended bill would allow the DNR to institute a trapping and hunting season for wolves if the population is more than 1,600. That provision was not in the original bill. (Trapping and hunting would not be allowed in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.)

Another change would require people to report a killed wolf to a DNR conservation officer within 48 hours. The original bill would have required reporting within 24 hours.

Other provisions of the bill would allow trained guard animals to protect livestock from gray wolves and allow people to kill a gray wolf if it attacked a human or threatened livestock or other animals. A person could "harass" a gray wolf if it came within 500 yards of people, buildings, livestock, or other domestic animals.

Illegal hunting of a gray wolf would be a gross misdemeanor with a fine of \$250 per wolf.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) offered an amendment to restore the bill to the form

that emerged from the roundtable, but the lawmakers voted 87-45 to reject that amendment.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee, was among the supporters of Hausman's amendment. He said the roundtable met many times and had input from various experts on the subject and that the Legislature should support those efforts.

But lawmakers from northern Minnesota said wolves often come in people's yards and near their homes. And they argued people who don't live there don't realize the seriousness of the problem.

Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) described two incidents where wolves attacked children (neither occurred in Minnesota), and he said wolves have become unafraid of humans because they have not been hunted.

"Wolves have no natural predator, and if the population is not managed, that population will continue to increase," he said.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



FAMILY

Funds for fatherhood

Continued funding for grants aimed at encouraging young men to be responsible fathers was considered March 24 by the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee.

Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls) is sponsoring a bill (HF1697) that would provide \$750,000 over two years for male responsibility grants. These grants are available to community programs that focus on teen pregnancy prevention and the importance of fatherhood.

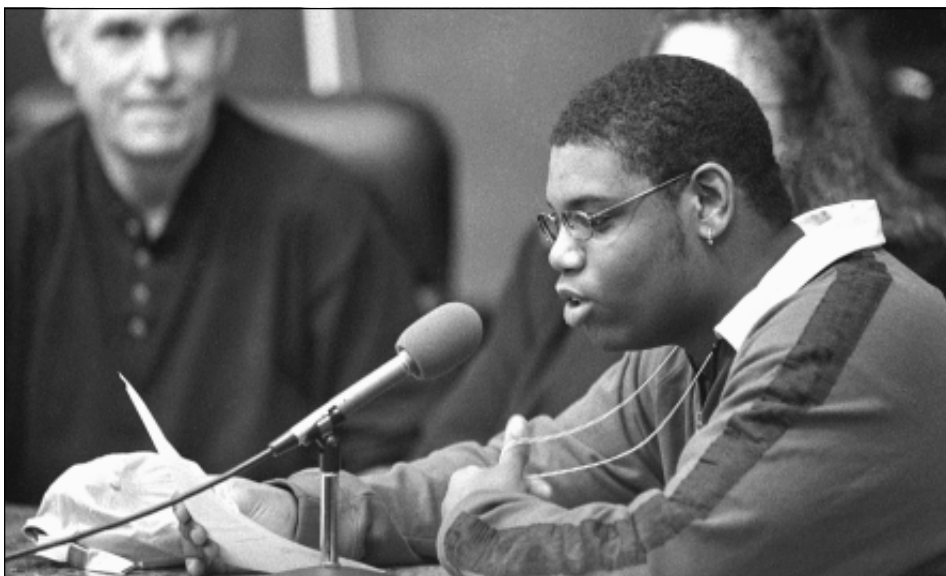
Many of the programs serve men or boys who are fathers of children by teen-age girls, and some also offer education to boys who do not have responsible adult male role models in their lives.

One such program, Dads Make a Difference, trains teen-agers to teach their younger peers about the realities of becoming a parent too early in life and the value of a father's involvement in a child's life.

"If we're going to teach them what sex is, why don't we teach them what goes along with it?" said Dimitris Kelly, a trainer with Dads Make A Difference.

The program is a joint partnership of the University of Minnesota Extension Service and the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Other grant recipients around the state teach young fathers about paying child support, the



Dimitris Kelly, a trainer for the Dads Make a Difference program in St. Paul, describes his job for lawmakers considering a bill that would continue providing state grants for male responsibility and fatherhood training programs.

family courts system, and fathering skills.

Gov. Jesse Ventura proposed eliminating the grants, which the state funded at \$500,000 in the 1998-99 biennium.

Tammy Pust, director of government relations and policy development for the Department of Children, Families and Learning, said the governor does not object to the grants on merit. Rather, she said, he is trying to rid the state's budget of small grant programs.

The committee did not take any action on the bill, but lawmakers will consider it for inclusion in the omnibus family and early childhood education finance bill.



GAMBLING

Voters could choose slots

A bill that would allow voters to decide if a state-operated casino could be opened at a Shakopee horse track was approved March 19 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee. The vote was 11-10.

The bill (HF1374) had originally proposed allowing slot machines and blackjack tables at Canterbury Park. The Minnesota State Lottery would oversee the casino, and a portion of the profits would be used to increase the purses for horse races.

The committee heard several hours of testimony on that proposal March 9 but did not act on it.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), the bill's sponsor, said he decided to amend his bill on the recommendation of another lawmaker and to seek to have the question placed on the

ballot as a proposed constitutional amendment.

"I think it's the Legislature's job to make this decision, but not everyone thinks the way I do," Holsten said.

If the bill becomes law, Minnesota residents would vote on the issue in the 2000 election. If the voters approved the measure, the Legislature would then have to establish the requirements for the casino.

Holsten said the casino would help Canterbury Park attract better horses for races and keep horse farms from moving out of the state. The track's nearest competitor, Prairie Meadows in Des Moines, Iowa, has about 1,000 slot machines and offers purses that are about \$10 million higher than those at Canterbury Park.

Several committee members spoke against the proposal. Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) cited some of the problems caused by compulsive gambling and urged committee members to vote against the bill, even though voters would have a chance to vote against it.

"If you're opposed to something, I don't think you should vote to pass it along for another decision to be made," she said.

The bill now moves to the House floor.



GAME & FISH

Fishing camera controversy

Technological advances in fishing equipment have prompted concern that too many fish are being caught, and a bill approved March 25 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee aims to address that concern.

The bill (HF1029), sponsored by Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook), would expand creel surveys by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource to include information on whether fish are caught while using electronic devices.

Creel surveys are done each year to determine basic information on the fish population. People are asked how many fish they caught, how much the fish weighed, and how long it took to catch them.

The bill would add questions on whether fish were caught using an underwater camera, depth finder, or other electronic device.

Bakk had originally sought to regulate the use of underwater cameras, a new technology that he said could lead to a reduced fish population. Like depth finders and other forms of technology, Bakk said the quality of the underwater camera is likely to advance rapidly. An earlier proposal called for a requirement that people release fish caught while using the camera.

"When a lot of people have [cameras], it'll be too late to do anything about it," Bakk said.

But lawmakers were reluctant to support such limits on the equipment, and the committee accepted an amendment offered by Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) that replaced the bill's original provisions with the measure to expand the survey. Haas said he once tried using the camera and fish swam away from it.

Bakk showed part of a video where a group of ice fishermen caught more than 20 fish using the camera.

But supporters of the technology said the video doesn't tell the whole story.

Jeff Zernov, president of Nature Vision Inc., a company that makes underwater cameras, said the camera was being used in the video for illegally catching small mouth bass in their wintering hole. The fish were found using a radio transmitter, which is also illegal, he said.

Zernov said the company has sold more than 5,000 cameras and that they have been tested by professional fisherman and sports writers.

"There has not been one honest report that it offers anglers an unfair advantage," Zernov said.

Tony Capra, a professional fisherman and producer of a fishing show on television, said the camera has many limitations. It uses a wide-angle lens that distorts the view of underwater images, it cannot be used at high speed, and the water must be clear. And even if the camera helps someone find fish, it doesn't make the fish bite.

"The fish has the final say if it's going to take the bait," he said.

The Department of Natural Resources has formed a committee to study the impact of



Professional fisherman Tony Capra, *left*, testifies against a bill that would restrict use of underwater fishing cameras. Ron Payer, *right*, operations manager of the Fish and Wildlife Division of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, testified in support of the bill, which was amended to call only for increased reporting of the use of such equipment.

technology on fishing, but determining the impact of a particular type of technology would be incredibly expensive, said Ron Payer, operations manager in the department's Fish and Wildlife Division.

The bill now moves to the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.



GOVERNMENT

IRRRB plan advances

Lawmakers who serve on the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) would be replaced by appointed citizens, under a bill approved March 18 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) said the IRRRB's current makeup causes constitutional problems, because legislators are prohibited from holding other public offices.

Sviggum dubbed his bill (HF249) the "If Residents Ran the Range Board" plan.

"(The bill) seeks to bring back credibility to the IRRRB by putting it in the hands of working people from the Range," Sviggum said.

The IRRRB oversees six different accounts that appropriate money for environmental or economic development projects. Under current law, the House Speaker appoints five state representatives to serve on the board, and the Senate Subcommittee on Committees appoints five state senators.

The bill would require the governor to appoint 10 board members who are not legislators. No more than six board members could support the same political party and all would have to live in the Iron Range tax relief area.

Neil Hamilton, trustees professor of regulatory policy at William Mitchell College of

Law, spoke in favor of the bill. He said the board members have similar powers to those of a state agency commissioner, and therefore having lawmakers serve on the board violates the incompatible offices provisions of the state constitution.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), a member of the IRRRB, spoke against the bill.

"The bottom line is this: Every dollar that is spent goes by the governor," Rukavina said. "We do not have the final say on anything."

Rukavina said the board deals with issues unique to the Iron Range. The Legislature established the board in 1941 because of economic problems associated with the cyclical nature of the iron ore industry.

The Legislature also imposed an "occupational tax" on mining that is higher than any other corporate tax, Rukavina said. That tax has contributed to the Permanent Schools Fund, so Iron Range residents have paid disproportionate taxes toward schools, he said, because they also have paid local property taxes that go to schools.

The committee voted 10-8 to approve the bill.

The measure now moves to the House floor.



HEALTH

Abortion ban advances

A controversial bill to ban the so-called "partial-birth" abortion procedure continues its advance through the House committee process.

The House Crime Prevention Committee approved the bill March 19.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), would provide civil and criminal penalties for performing late-term abortions.

Under the proposal, a woman receiving an illegal late-term abortion, her spouse, and, if she is under 18, her parents, could sue doctors to recover psychological and physical damages resulting from the procedure. Performing such abortions would also be a felony offense, punishable by up to two years in prison plus fines.

The procedure would remain legal only in cases necessary to save the life of the mother.

The bill (HF177) now goes to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Covering costly prescriptions

If you're on a fixed or limited income and spend hundreds of dollars per month on medicine, you've got a problem — regardless of your age.

But a bill approved March 19 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee aims to aid many in that fix by expanding eligibility for the state's senior drug program. The measure would remove the age limit for beneficiaries of the Medicare drug program and increase the income limit to 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka), told lawmakers that his bill would also replace the current fixed annual premium with a sliding scale version and eliminate the \$4 million cap on funding for the drug program.

Joel Ullund, a spokesman for the Minnesota Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, said there are several medicines available to help control multiple sclerosis, but they carry a high price tag.

Because of the extremely high costs, people who would be helped by the medicine often don't get it, Ullund said. Patients are often under age 65 and don't qualify for other government health care programs with prescription coverage.

The bill also has the support of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons.

Several lawmakers argued that if the federal government raised the Medicare reimbursement level, the problem would be solved. Others suggested Medicare supplements as a solution.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) said another solution could come from the drug companies themselves, many of which have established programs for providing their product free to those in need.

Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato) said that expanding the senior drug program could be advantageous in the long run, because if a

patient foregoes necessary medicine because of costs, the state will eventually pick up a higher health care bill when complications arise.

The bill (**HF1769**) moves to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Pharmacists' growing job

The House passed a bill March 24 that would make changes to the Minnesota Pharmacy Practice Act. The vote was 130-0.

The bill (**HF408**) would allow pharmacists to engage in monitoring of drug therapy, selection of therapeutic devices, drug administration of first dosage and emergencies, and drug research.

It would also allow pharmacists to manage and modify drug therapy on a case-by-case basis according to a written agreement between the pharmacist and a health-care practitioner.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), sponsor of the bill, said the language in the bill recognizes current practices.

The original pharmacy act was adopted in 1937.

The bill moves to the Senate.

Ensuring financial stability

The state's three community integrated health care service networks would have to maintain a net worth reserve of three times their minimum net worth requirement, under a bill the House passed March 22. The vote was 126-0.

The networks, often called CISNs, are managed health care networks similar to health maintenance organizations (HMOs), but the networks have smaller enrollments and operate mostly outside the urban areas.

The net worth holdings are required to assure financial solvency.

Rep. Gregory Davids (R-Preston) said his bill is designed to treat CISNs in a way similar to the way the state treats HMOs, which were required to up their net worth holdings under a bill passed last year.

The bill also accords peer review protection to the CISNs, which shields their deliberations from the legal process should a contested incident occur.

The bill (**HF614**) moves to the Senate.

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

Indian child welfare



Terri Yellowhammer of the Indian Child Welfare Law Center testifies March 24 before the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee in support of continued state funding for the Indian Child Welfare Defense Corporation.

Expanding lab help

The House passed a bill March 22 that would exempt some medical researchers from medical licensing requirements. The vote was 127-0.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), who is sponsoring the bill, said the exemption would apply to those performing medical research for a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization operated primarily to conduct scientific research on causes and cures of human disease.

To qualify, researchers would be required to perform duties that are related to public health education and conducted under the supervision of one or more licensed physicians.

Bradley said researchers often come from other countries and are not licensed to practice medicine here but desire to participate in research projects.

The bill (**HF1660**) moves to the Senate.

Testing for chiropractors

The House passed a bill March 22 that would change state licensing requirements for chiropractors. The vote was 127-2.

Under the bill, chiropractors practicing in Minnesota would no longer have to pass the Minnesota licensure practical exam, as long as they have passed any examination that is approved by the Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

The bill (**HF1216**) is sponsored by Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka), who is a chiropractor. He said the intent of the bill is to follow a nationwide effort to standardize the chiropractic field.

His bill moves to the Senate.

Clarifying water laws



Effective Aug. 1, the definition of "public water supply" in the state's Safe Drinking Water Act will match the definition in the federal law.

The new state law was signed March 25 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The possibility that some water projects in Minnesota would lose federal funding because of the discrepancy prompted the clarification.

Rep. Kathy Tinglestad (R-Andover) and Sen. Martha Robertson (R-Minnetonka) sponsored the measure.

HF610/SF649*/CH18



HIGHER EDUCATION

Health endowment proposed

A proposal to create an endowment that would fund medical education at the University of Minnesota with a portion of the state's tobacco settlement was considered March 22 by the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley) is sponsoring a bill (**HF1391**) that would put \$350 million into an endowment for 10 years, bringing in \$35.5 million in interest over the first two years to fund the U of M's Academic Health Center.

Leppik said the endowment is necessary for the Academic Health Center to continue its mission of educating the majority of the state's health care professionals.

A loss in patient revenues that in the past paid for medical education and increasing health care costs are two major factors contributing to reduced funding for the Academic Health Center. In addition, federal cuts in graduate medical education funding have also added to the funding gap.

U of M President Mark Yudof said without the money, rural Minnesota could suffer from potential cutbacks in rural physician training.

"We do not have the sources of income to keep this great medical program going," Yudof said.

How to spend the tobacco settlement money, expected to total \$6.1 billion over the next 25 years, has been a recurring issue in the House this session. Earlier, the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee approved a plan to use the money to eliminate the state's health care provider tax. It also approved funding a grant program to aid local anti-smoking programs.

Another bill moving through the House, sponsored by Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), would distribute \$1.3 billion of the tobacco settlement dollars between four endowments. That plan is supported by Gov. Jesse Ventura and it includes the \$350 million endowment for the U of M.

The committee did not take any action on Leppik's bill, but will consider it for inclusion in the omnibus higher education finance bill.

Regent change proposed

A proposal that would allow incumbent candidates to be automatically considered for re-election to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents was considered March 18 by the House Education Policy Committee.

Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) is sponsoring the bill (**HF2056**), which would alter the current process of nominating regent candidates.

Carlson said he has heard from some incumbents who said they feel they are held to a different standard during the initial interview process because of their board experience.

The bill would require the Regent Candidate Advisory Council to automatically forward the name of incumbents among its recommendations to the Legislature.

The council recruits and interviews candidates every two years for four spots on the 12-member board. The council then selects two to four names for each spot and forwards them to the Legislature.

A joint House and Senate committee interviews the candidates and narrows the slate to one candidate for each seat, and the entire Legislature votes on those candidates.

Some lawmakers criticized Carlson's proposal, saying it would put incumbents on an inside track to re-election, take authority away from the advisory council, and possibly deter other potential regent candidates.

"To force a recommendation on them is really troublesome," said Rep. Len Biernat

(DFL-Mpls). "Why have a process when we're automatically going to let the incumbent go through it?"

During last month's regent election, former Regent Julie Bleyhl was not selected as a finalist. She was twice nominated at the last minute during a vote on the House floor, but did not win a second term.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) said the current process sets up embarrassing situations for candidates and the Legislature and that it could be changed.

The committee did not vote for or against Carlson's bill, but instead forwarded it to the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Tech college requirements

Students pursuing certificates or diplomas at technical colleges would not be subject to the same general education requirements as their degree-seeking counterparts, under a proposal discussed March 24 by the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

The proposal was offered as a compromise alternative to a bill (**HF1811**) sponsored by Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel). The proposal was considered but not formally adopted by the committee as an amendment to Ness' bill.

Three options exist in technical school programs: certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees of applied sciences. Certificate programs usually last one year or less, and diploma programs take two years to complete.

Degree programs also last two years, but they require a general education component, which can later be used toward a bachelor's degree. Currently, the decision to require general education credits for certificate or diploma programs is left up to individual colleges.

Under the compromise proposal, only general education courses specifically related to a student's field of study could be required. That could be a course requested by a trade industry as an occupational requirement. For example, a carpentry student might need to show proficiency in applied mathematics.

Ness' original bill was drafted in response to a plan considered by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system. The plan would have required all students enrolled in a technical college to complete 15 percent of their credits in general education courses such as math or English.

The MnSCU plan prompted a backlash from students and technical education leaders who were concerned that many students would be turned off by technical programs because of the new requirements.

Ness' original bill would have barred

general education requirements from diploma and certificate programs and made optional a skills assessment for students wishing to enter those programs. But that bill was not popular with MnSCU officials.

The compromise amendment would allow relevant general education courses. And the skills assessment would be allowed only on the condition that it would not disqualify a student for a certificate or diploma program.

"We're opening the door and not turning people away," Ness said of the amendment.

He said he is concerned that students who need remedial instruction or general education courses could lose interest in school before they actually begin the program in their field. In addition, general education requirements could make some programs longer, possibly sending students to private schools with shorter programs, he said.

John Ostrem, deputy to the MnSCU chancellor for legislative analysis, said the system's original plan to require general education in all programs would have created more transferable credits for students who might want pursue degrees at a later date.

MnSCU has now abandoned that plan, Ostrem said, and favors the new language in the proposed amendment to Ness' measure.

Lawmakers will consider the proposal as part of their omnibus higher education finance bill.

Mental health help wanted

More mental health workers are needed to help Southeast Asian immigrants, said Ilean Her, executive director of the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans.

She cited a tragedy last fall when a St. Paul Hmong woman killed her six children in an act of desperation, stemming from her unhappiness with her life.

But incidents like that could be prevented if more culturally sensitive mental health care services were available to immigrants, particularly Southeast Asian immigrants, Her told lawmakers.

A bill sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) would provide \$100,000 in grants for Asian Americans to attend graduate school to become licensed mental health professionals.

The House Higher Education Finance Committee discussed the bill (**HF1895**) March 22.

The grants, ranging from \$2,000 to \$4,000 per year, would be targeted toward Asian-Pacific Americans who currently work in the mental health field but have only bachelor's degrees.

While many do work in community clinics,

they do not have professional licenses, which would entitle them to reimbursement costs from health care insurance. This makes offering some mental health services difficult for clinics because of the expense of paying for non-reimbursed services.

Stephen Maxwell, a social worker and clinic administrator at the Community University Health Care Center, said more licensed Asian mental health professionals are needed because of increased language and cultural barriers between immigrant patients and health care workers.

"There's just a huge cultural divide," he said. "Especially in a crisis situation, my skills and my knowledge are just not sufficient."

Nearly 130,000 Asian immigrants live in Minnesota, and the bulk are from Southeast Asia. The majority are refugees who have left war-torn countries and family members behind, and as a result, many experience severe mental health problems while trying to participate in American society.

Maxwell said the grant money would make a "dent" in problems in metro-area clinics, but he hopes that if successful, the program could reach into the rest of Minnesota.

The committee will consider Boudreau's bill for inclusion in the omnibus higher education finance bill.



HUMAN SERVICES

Changes to fathers' registry

Although 28 men registered on Minnesota's Fathers' Adoption Registry in 1998 and seven infants were matched with their birth fathers, officials say the program could become more successful with a little tweaking.

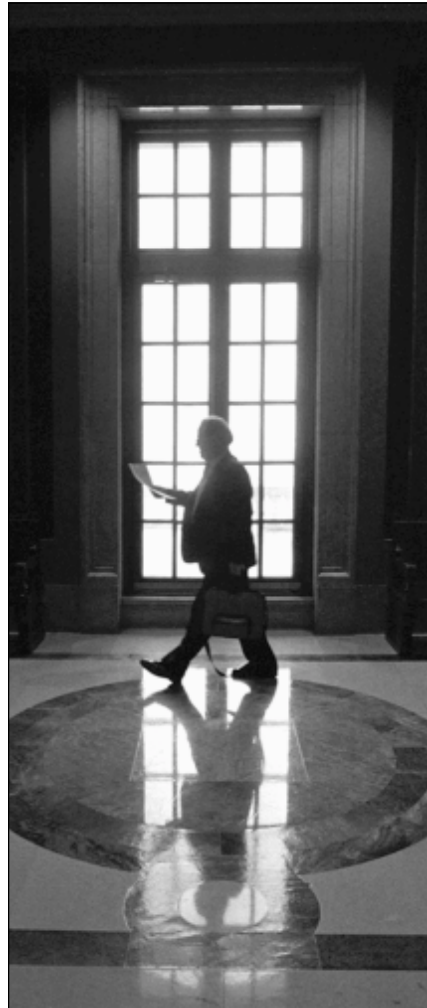
The registry was created by a 1997 law and allows any man who believes he may be the biological father of a child to register with the state Department of Health so he will be notified if his child is put up for adoption.

Laura Arvold, coordinator of advocacy services for Children's Home Society, spoke March 23 in favor of a bill that would make minor changes to the registry. She was testifying during a hearing of the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee, which approved the bill.

The registry is for any male who is or believes he may be a child's father but is not married to the mother and has not otherwise established paternity. The law is aimed mainly at couples who have little or no relationship beyond the time of conception.

The registry protects a birth father's rights

Bright page



Bright sunlight streams through a set of second-floor French doors in the Capitol as House page Wayne Kline makes his way to the House chamber for a floor session.

in the event his child is put up for adoption, and it protects children and adoptive parents from conflicts with fathers contesting an adoption.

Last year, the Legislature passed a measure requiring the mother to be notified when the father has registered.

Arvold told the committee that in addition to the seven children who were matched with their fathers last year, 282 adoptions were run through the registry and turned up no matches.

This year, suggested changes include making all data in the registry private, requiring that fathers on the list be notified of the jurisdiction where an adoption petition will be filed, and providing that post-adoption reporting requirements of another country be given full faith and credit by the courts in Minnesota.

Arvold said the proposed changes grew from unanimous recommendations by a task force

consisting of adoption agency, legal, and other officials.

The bill (HF863), sponsored by Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover), moves to the House floor.

No free rides

Medical services abound in Minnesota, but they don't help much if people in need can't get to the doctor's office.

Most older people and people with disabilities who need transportation to a clinic appointment rely on a network of special transportation services. The cost of the trips is often paid by the state.

Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover) is sponsoring a bill (HF1260) that would increase reimbursement to the transportation companies for such trips. The bill was considered March 24 by the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

"Special transportation providers, just like direct care providers, are struggling to attract and maintain quality employees in a very competitive job market," said Allyson Hartle, a spokeswoman for the Special Transportation Services Association.

She said that as the population of elderly and disabled people increases, there will be higher demand for service. That means every effort to keep all providers in business should be taken.

Officials from transportation service providers in metropolitan and rural areas also spoke in favor of the plan.

Steve Elwood, who operates R. and S. Transportation in Rochester, said the challenges are particularly tough for rural providers because of the large areas they cover.

He explained that if one of his drivers has to make a trip to Preston to bring someone to Mayo Clinic and take them home again, the driver racks up 180 miles but the company is only reimbursed for 90 miles.

"A lot of providers just choose not to do it," he said.

Also, if a driver brings a patient into the Twin Cities and waits to take the person home again, the driver's salary expenses are borne by the provider and are not reimbursed.

The reimbursement boost would cost the state about \$850,000 annually. There are about 180 special transportation service providers statewide.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus health and human services finance bill.

Mental health board

The House passed a bill March 18 that would modify the membership and reporting requirements for the State Advisory Council on Mental Health. The vote was 131-0.

Sponsored by Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), the bill would add a representative from the Mental Health Consumer/Survivor Network of Minnesota to the council. It would also require one or more of the council members to be a person of color.

And the bill would require the council to report on its activities to the Legislature, in addition to the executive branch.

The 30-member panel is charged with providing input on policy, programs, and services affecting people with mental illness.

The bill (**HF640**) moves to the Senate

Assistance hike proposed

Twenty-seven dollars may not seem like a great deal of money to most people. But if you're income is low and medical bills absorb much of your monthly finances, it can mean the difference between eating and not eating.

That's the case made by Barbara Collins, an attorney for Legal Services Advocacy Project, in March 24 testimony to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Collins was speaking in favor of a bill that would raise the Medical Assistance income standard to allow about 12,000 people to each receive \$27 in additional monthly aid.

The bill (**HF669**) would cost the state about \$2.7 million per year.

Collins said the net impact of the legislation would be to help keep elderly people and others in their homes and out of long-term care facilities, housing shelters, and other such institutions.

"If they cannot survive in the community, many of these individuals may find that nursing home placement is a more viable option," Collins said. "If placed in a nursing home, these individuals will receive all their medical care, food, and shelter, but at a much higher cost to the state."

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), was laid over for possible inclusion in this year's omnibus health and human services finance bill.

Making work possible

A bill (**HF670**) that would expand Medical Assistance eligibility for employed people with disabilities passed the House March 18. The vote was 131-0.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) said

many of the state's disabled people are able to work, but employment generally means loss of eligibility for the Medical Assistance program. And because of their medical conditions, many don't qualify for standard health care coverage offered by employers.

Goodno told his House colleagues that his bill aims to allow greater self-sufficiency for disabled people. He said under current law, some disabled people have nothing to gain from working.

The bill would require the state to provide Medical Assistance coverage for people who are employed, eligible for the Supplemental Security Income program, have assets of less than \$20,000, and pay required premiums.

Minority Leader Rep. Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul), questioned whether passing bills requiring significant spending commitments is proper, without overall spending targets in place.

Goodno, who chairs the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee, said the proposal should be a priority and that ample funding would be made available.

The bill moves to the Senate.



INSURANCE

Benefits limit may rise

The lifetime limit on health benefits through the Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association (MCHA) would be raised from \$2 million to \$3 million under a bill approved March 22 by the House. The vote was 128-0.

The association provides insurance to Minnesota residents who cannot get insurance in the private market because of chronic health conditions.

"I had originally hoped to remove the cap, because since it is the insurance of last resort, it seems odd to me that it would have a cap," said Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), who is sponsoring the bill (**HF270**).

Osskopp said an 8-year-old boy in Red Wing stands to benefit from a raised cap. The child needs a special ventilator to breathe and requires constant supervision. His medical needs cost about \$30,000 per month.

MCHA participants pay higher premiums than they would pay for similar coverage in the private market, and the state subsidizes the association to help offset financial losses due to the high costs of claims.

When the bill was heard by the House Commerce Committee, some lawmakers had expressed concerns about eliminating the lifetime limit because it is not known how that would affect the industry overall.

Raising the lifetime limit to \$3 million was proposed as a compromise.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



SAFETY

Bleacher safety addressed

A bill that would establish safety requirements for bleacher seats was approved March 24 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

The bill (**HF1124**), sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), would require bleachers, such as those in sports stadiums or other facilities, to include guardrails or safety nets. Open spaces between floorboards, seats, and guardrails would have to be four inches or less, or safety nets would have to be installed.

The bill would also appropriate money for grants to help pay for upgrades to make bleachers comply with the safety standards.

Ted Haase of Mound spoke in support of the bill on behalf of the Toby Lee Memorial Committee. Six-year-old Toby Lee died in January after falling from a set of bleachers while attending a hockey game at a Hutchinson arena.

Haase said there have been many other accidents that have been less publicized and that the Legislature should take steps to help prevent future tragedies.

Lawmakers indicated support for the concept, but they debated the broad rule-making authority that would be given to the Minnesota Department of Administration under the measure.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) said the rule-making process would include a series of public meetings that could take more than one year. And that process has been known to create rules that are beyond the scope of the related legislation, she said.

The committee voted to allow the department to create rules concerning only design standards for the safety nets, grant administration, periodic safety inspections, and the designing of devices that prevent children from climbing on the guardrails.

The committee also adopted an amendment that would prevent the department from passing rules that include fees.

The bill now moves to the House State Government Finance Committee.

For an unofficial list of Minnesota commissioners and appointed agency heads on the World Wide Web go to:
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/comm.htm>



TAXES

Transit tax break

There are probably hundreds of ways to convince people to ride the bus to work, but Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) believes money can be a powerful motivator.

He's sponsoring a bill (**HF723**) that would provide a tax credit for employers who provide transit passes for their employees.

McElroy told the House Taxes Committee March 23 that the use of mass transit in the metro area is a key to a higher quality of life.

"It reduces stress to build new roads, and the need for huge parking lots connected to our buildings goes down," McElroy said.

Under the bill, employers would receive an income tax credit equal to 30 percent of the cost of transit passes provided to employees. The credit would apply to both the corporate franchise tax and the income tax.

However, the credit would not apply to any amount the employer recoups from employees by selling the passes at a "bargain" price.

Qualifying passes could be used for public or private transit systems, as long as the vehicle used seats six or more individuals besides the driver.

The idea drew cheers from several organizations.

Todd Otis, a spokesman for Minnesotans for an Energy-Efficient Economy, said reducing air pollution and providing less congested access to downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul would have a mushrooming impact.

"If we are to control sprawl, reduce pollution, and maintain vibrant cities, we need a breakthrough in transit use," Otis said. "The Ventura administration sees that, as do business, environmental, labor, and political leaders."

Patrick Loonan of Capital City Partnership said transit options are a lynchpin in his group's plan to revitalize downtown St. Paul. He said the proposed tax break is an opportunity for the state to "leverage its investment in transit" and that it beats the alternative — building more parking ramps.

But some lawmakers expressed concerns that the bill would benefit only metropolitan areas. Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) said the plan could give Minneapolis businesses a competitive advantage by allowing them to save on taxes and parking costs and to attract employees.

McElroy said the difference in cost between doing business in the Twin Cities and in outstate areas more than offsets any advantage the tax break might foster. He also pointed out that metro-area property tax dollars go to pay for transit services.

He added that the employers would not get the tax break on the full amount of the transit pass. For example, if an employer bought a bus pass for one month from Metro Transit for \$57 and sold it to an employee for \$27, the employer would receive a 30-percent credit for the \$30 subsidy only. The entire cost would be deductible as a business expense, however.

If adopted, the plan would cost the state an estimated \$2 million per year in lost tax revenue.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

County seeks payback

Some say Hennepin County is going broke trying to provide health care for uninsured Minnesotans who don't even live in the county.

Dan McLaughlin, Hennepin's director of health policy, testified before lawmakers in favor of a bill aimed at distributing those costs more evenly between the home counties of those receiving the health care. The Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee considered the proposal March 22.

The bill (**HF1700**), sponsored by Rep.

Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie), would include health care in the distribution formula for a current program of pooling and sharing tax revenues in the metropolitan area.

As it exists now, the so-called fiscal disparities program takes into account real property market value and population in participating municipalities, but the program does not consider issues like health care costs.

McLaughlin said his county is being asked to pay uncompensated health care costs for many residents of the other counties in the fiscal disparities program. That price is borne by Hennepin County taxpayers, and he believes neighboring counties should be willing to give up a piece of their fiscal disparities funds to help out.

"Uncompensated health care costs have always been part of the cost of doing business, but this problem has grown so rapidly in the last two years that it threatens the viability of our Hennepin County health-care programs," McLaughlin said.

Hennepin County Medical Center expects to provide \$31 million in uncompensated care in 1999. The cost has been increasing at a rate of 10 percent to 15 percent annually.

Between the medical center and all of the other county-sponsored programs, the cost approaches nearly \$50 million annually. About \$6.2 million of that amount goes to providing free care for residents of other counties.

"Let me put this in context," McLaughlin said. "If we did not have this obligation, we could pay for our new public safety facility in just over two years with cash."

While lawmakers said they are sympathetic to the county's problem, few at the hearing said using fiscal disparities is the answer.

Anoka County Administrator Jay McLinden said uncompensated care is a state obligation and urged the panel not to dismantle a successful program for something "unrelated to the original intent."

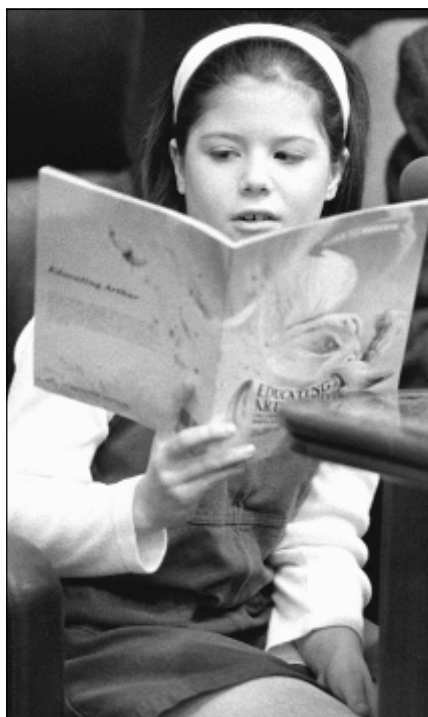
Using a revamped fiscal disparities formula would simply transfer the costs to property-tax payers in other metro counties, added Jim Schug, Washington County Administrator. He suggested the Legislature devise another way to pay uncompensated health care costs.

Under Paulsen's proposal, 50 percent of the fiscal disparities aid would be based on the current mechanism and 50 percent would be based on the proposed distribution factor by 2004.

Meanwhile, Hennepin County has tried a number of different approaches to solving the problem on its own.

McLaughlin said the county employs 10 full-time workers to help patients at its medical center enroll in state and federal health care programs.

After-school reading



Emily Shannon, a third-grader at Christie McAuliffe Elementary School in Hastings, reads "Educating Arthur" to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee on March 24. Shannon participated in an after-school program to improve her reading skills, and she urged lawmakers to continue financial support for the program.

He said that task was made even more difficult by the 22-page application process for assistance.

Further complicating the situation is the recent trend among employers to limit insurance benefits due to rising costs and competition in the health care industry.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Meat packing project pitched

How much would the state be willing to invest to help bring 150 new jobs to Windom? Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson) hopes the answer is \$580,000.

That's the potential price tag of her bill (**HF1372**), which calls for the state to forego collecting sales tax on materials and supplies for an expansion project planned by Caldwell Packing Co. The measure was considered March 23 by the House Taxes Committee.

Caldwell has been operating in the Windom area since 1946 and employs 190 workers with an annual payroll of \$3 million. About 190,000 head of cattle are run through the plant annually, and the carcasses are shipped to Iowa for fabrication and finishing.

James Bever, general manager of the plant, said his company wants to invest another \$15 million in the Windom facility and to expand to include the fabrication and finishing operation.

He estimates that would mean an additional 150 workers with about \$4 million in added payroll.

And with all of the processing capacity in one plant, the company could pay higher wages, Bever said.

Jim King, economic development director for Windom, told the committee that without the state's participation, the company might choose to go down the well-traveled road of moving operations to Iowa.

He said his city is at a "crossroads of opportunity," and encouraged the committee to consider the ripple effect the plant expansion would have in the agricultural economy.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) said he is "conflicted" over the proposal because he fears establishing a pattern in which the state's forgiveness of taxes becomes a tool for economic development.

Harder said the crux of the situation is the increased competition from Iowa, something that Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda) agreed is getting worse each year.

Although a construction schedule hasn't been completed, it is expected the project would begin late in 2000 with work continu-

ing into 2001. It would be completed in the spring of 2001.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

TV stations face crunch

Big changes are ahead for Minnesota's television stations. Expensive changes. Changes that might drive smaller stations out of business.

In April 1997, the Federal Communications Commission issued orders requiring affiliates of the top four television networks in the 30 largest markets in the country to begin broadcasting digital television signals by Nov. 1, 1999. The remaining stations must comply by 2007, when the commission plans to end analog television signals entirely.

That mandate has left owners of television stations scrambling to find and fund new equipment.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) is sponsoring a bill (**HF2007**) that would exempt from sales tax purchases of necessary machinery, equipment, and supplies for the conversion. The House Taxes Committee considered the proposal March 23.

The changeover could cost stations between \$1 million and \$5 million each, and stations that don't comply could lose their license to operate.

Stations owned by large companies, including the bulk of those in the metro area, wouldn't feel as much impact as smaller ones in Austin, Duluth, and Mankato.

Pat St. George, general manager of KAAL-TV in Austin, called the mandate a "runaway train." He said it was the latest in a series of blows, including the growth of cable television, that have left small-market stations with fractured audiences.

Complicating matters, the stations have little control over their advertising rates, which are generally set according to ratings points. That means recouping the investment to go digital isn't simply a matter of charging more for their services.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) said he is sympathetic to the plight of station owners but that he isn't sure it is the state's place to help them out.

He pointed to a similar federal mandate regarding large storage tanks for gas stations. When stricter tank laws were passed, the state didn't provide owners with aid.

"A lot of them quit," Jennings noted.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue expects the conversion will cost the state's 22 television stations an average of \$3.8 million per station in taxable equipment.

The situation is worst for stations that must convert in November since some of the equipment required isn't even on the market yet.

The federal ruling will also have a downside for television owners, Abrams said.

"Digital signals will not work on your analog set, so you'll have to buy a new television or a converter that could cost between \$100 and \$200 dollars," he said.

TV stations must simulcast programming on both their digital and analog frequencies for at least 10 years to give consumers time to purchase digital television receivers.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Military-friendly Minn.

One of the advantages to serving in the U.S. military is the opportunity to pick the state in which you establish residency.

Some lawmakers are asking why members of the military would choose a state that taxes military pay and benefits — as Minnesota does — over one that gives service members an income tax break.

For most, the choice is obvious, and that presents problems for Minnesota.

The House Taxes Committee debated three bills March 19 that present three slightly different solutions to that problem.

HF123, sponsored by Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center), would allow active-duty personnel to subtract the first \$5,000 of military pay in determining Minnesota taxable income and income tax liability for services performed outside the state.

HF375, sponsored by Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls), would allow taxpayers to subtract up to \$8,000 of military pay from taxable income in calculating state income tax. Some National Guard members' pay would also be deductible.

And **HF1218**, sponsored by Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), would let active-duty personnel stationed outside of Minnesota subtract eleven-twelfths of active military pay in determining Minnesota taxable income.

"The current tax code is a major disincentive to say you're a resident of Minnesota," said Carruthers, adding that with the loss of residents goes the loss of census numbers and the commensurate loss of federal aid dollars.

Three mothers of cadets at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., told the committee that it was likely none of their sons would choose Minnesota residency because of the tax situation. In many cases, the military provides information on which states have tax codes that are soldier-friendly.

The mothers said that besides federal

dollars, the state was losing an even more valuable asset, bright and dedicated young men and women.

The proposals would cost the state anywhere from \$5 million to \$12 million in the next biennium.

When Minnesota implemented its income tax in 1933, military pay was fully taxable. The Legislature enacted a \$2,000 exemption for military pay in during World War II. That was increased to \$3,000 in 1951, during the Korean War. The exemption was upped once again during the Vietnam War to \$5,000.

It took war of another kind — the battle to balance the state's budget in 1987 — to torpedo the exemption entirely.

Wenzel said he voted against the repeal and added that the issue had bothered him ever since.

All three bills will be considered for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill later this session.

Incentive to protect forests

Owners of land that is part of a state-sponsored program designed to save Minnesota's forests pay hardly any tax on the property, but the land is open to the general public for fishing and hunting.

A bill considered March 23 by the House Taxes Committee would change that.

The bill (**HF656**), sponsored by Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee), would apply only to non-industrial forest land. The plan would retain the tax break but get rid of the stipulation that the owner make the land available for public use.

Non-industrial landowners are those who have no capacity, such as a mill or lathe operation, to produce any sort of product on their land. The public would still have access to industrial forest land included in the forest management program.

David Parent, vice president of Minnesota Forestry Association in Grand Rapids, told the committee that lagging participation in the program spurred the Daggett proposal.

He said fishermen and hunters are tough on seedlings and some property owners would rather pay a higher tax and protect their trees. But, he added, it is in the state's best interest to try to maximize participation in the forest management program.

He pointed out that 190,000 private landowners own over 45 percent of the forested land in the state, and he said 50 percent of the wood being harvested today comes from those lands.

The tree growth tax was established as an in-lieu property tax in the 1960s. It is used on

forest properties that are designated exclusively for growing forests on a continuous basis.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.



TRANSPORTATION

Airport rules proposed

A bill that would increase state authority over airports in the Twin Cities area won approval March 19 from the House Transportation Policy Committee.

Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View) is sponsoring the bill (**HF849**), which has the support of local groups from cities including Mounds View, Eden Prairie, and Lake Elmo.

The measure would further classify airports throughout the metropolitan region. It would set runway lengths to define the airports as intermediate-use or minor-use airports. And under the bill, legislative approval would be required before airports could be re-designated or runways lengthened.

The bill comes in response to efforts made by the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) to expand some of the runways at smaller airports. Those plans have been met with opposition from some residents who live near the airports.

An intermediate-use airport handles mostly corporate flights and mid-sized aircraft, while minor-use airports experience less traffic, have smaller runways, and handle instructional and personal aircraft.

Currently, there are 11 airports in the metropolitan area. Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport is the only major-use airport in the area and would not be affected by the bill.

But smaller airports, such as Flying Cloud Airport in Eden Prairie, the St. Paul Downtown Airport, and the Anoka County-Blaine Airport, would be affected.

Testimony on the bill lasted nearly five hours. Several witnesses argued that the MAC and the Metropolitan Council exceeded their authority to lengthen runways and re-designate airports and did not communicate with local residents before making such decisions.

Officials from both organizations disputed those statements, and they said they acted within their jurisdiction with the goal of providing efficient airport service in the Twin Cities area.

Haake said her bill would hold the Metropolitan Council and the MAC accountable for their decisions by setting up the legislative approval process.

Many lawmakers questioned the bill's intent

and said the Legislature should not take on the responsibility of airport policy-making and instead should rely on trained professionals.

If such decisions are made at the state level, "we're looking at a full-time Legislature" said Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park). "We are micro-managing."

The bill would require the MAC to set up a sound abatement council to handle airport noise issues in communities with smaller airports.

In addition, the commission would be required to craft policies to divert aircraft from the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport to the smaller airports. The commission would have to report those policies to the Legislature next year.

The bill moves to the House floor.

Personal transit plan

Yet another mass transit option was unveiled March 22 before the House Transportation Finance Committee.

Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) is sponsoring a bill (**HF2041**) that would fund a \$600,000 study of personal rapid transit, or PRT.

Personal rapid transit is an electric system of small, individual cars that run on an elevated rail line. The cars operate 24 hours a day and depending on their design, can fit one person or a group of passengers.

Minnesota PRT, a design scheme for such a system, is a registered trademark owned by the University of Minnesota and was crafted by a group of engineers there in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Members of Citizens for PRT, a local group that advocates for the proposed rail system, told lawmakers that it would not compete with other modes of transit, such as bus service or light rail transit. However, it would provide an alternative to using a car while still providing a somewhat private environment.

Instead of focusing on commuters, PRT is designed for all travelers, said group member Steven Anderson.

Anderson said the system is designed so that cars wait for passengers, eliminating waiting times at stations. The cars travel at about 30 miles per hour and do not stop before reaching the passenger's destination.

While Minnesota PRT is still a concept on paper, its advocates say it is a low-cost, energy-efficient system.

"I love my car, but this is something I would actually use," said Rep. Ray Vandever (R-Forest Lake).

The committee discussed but did not vote on the bill. Lawmakers may consider it for inclusion in this year's omnibus transportation finance bill.

Lower rural speed limits

A bill that would reduce speed limits in residential areas of rural townships was approved March 23 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

The measure would set a speed limit of 30 miles per hour on town roads that run through residential developments.

Under current law, many of those roads have limits of 55 miles per hour because they do not fit the state's definition of an urban district, and thus don't qualify for a reduced speed limit.

In an urban district, the speed limit is 30 miles per hour where buildings are within 100 feet of each other.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), would put in law a separate definition for rural residential districts, allowing the reduced speed limit when houses are within 300 feet of each other for a distance of at least one quarter of a mile.

The bill (**HF1265/SF1150***) now moves to the House floor.

Airport noise payback

A bill designed to help redevelop the areas around the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport advanced, without a recommendation, through the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee on March 24.

The bill (**HF1290**) would allow the cities of Bloomington, Minneapolis, and Richfield to

establish tax-increment financing districts to assist with redevelopment and noise mitigation costs in areas airport expansion is planned.

"The benefits (of the expanded airport) to the state are significant, and the impact should not be borne entirely by those residents who live next to the airport," said Rep. Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland), sponsor of the bill.

Larsen said her main concern is for people who have lived in that area for many years and are now forced to relocate because of the expansion.

Lawmakers who supported the proposal pointed to a study by the Metropolitan Airport Commission (MAC) that found it would be better to expand the airport at its current site than to build a new one.

That decision led to the proposal to add a new north-and-south runway, which will increase airport noise in homes and businesses in South Minneapolis, Richfield, and Bloomington.

Rep. Mark Gleason (DFL-Richfield) said the estimate to build a new airport was \$4 billion compared to the \$2 billion estimate to expand the existing airport. But that \$2 billion estimate did not include the costs of mitigating noise by soundproofing homes and buildings in those areas, he said.

Gleason said those neighborhoods will also be hurt because of the number of families that will move away, causing the school districts to lose students and state funding.

Marlys Michalik spoke in favor of the bill, saying she and her husband have lived in their home in Richfield for 34 years.

"We have been very happy until recently," she said. "Never did we believe we would have hundreds of planes a day taking off from a runway within walking distance of our home."

Gleason, who has a lawsuit pending against the MAC challenging the validity of a study concerning airport noise, said he sees the bill as a step in the right direction. He said it would be a cooperative effort between the cities, the Metropolitan Council, and the MAC.

But Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) objected to creating more tax-increment financing (TIF) districts, where local governments are allowed to capture some state tax revenue, often used for attracting businesses to their area. He urged lawmakers from the affected cities to come up with a more straightforward solution, such as an appropriation from the state's general fund or a bonding request.

Abrams said the bill would allow the Metropolitan Council to establish boundaries of the TIF districts, dedicate sales tax revenue from the airport to local units of government, and use general obligation bonds to protect bonds issued by the local governments. The Met Council has never had such control over a TIF district, Abrams said, and it would set a bad precedent for public policy.

The committee voted to send the bill to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee without a recommendation.



Steve Elwood, who operates a transportation company in Rochester, told a House committee that because of the expanse of his company's coverage area, his vehicles are high-mileage. Six vehicles in the fleet have over 350,000 miles, and four others have over 300,000.

Rep. Luanne Koskinen (DFL-Coon Rapids) wanted to know what kind of vehicles survive that kind of torture.

Chrysler minivans, Elwood replied.

That response drew a huge smile from Koskinen. "My daughter sells Chrysler minivans for a living," she said.

Territorial Gov. Alexander Ramsey, on his first day in Minnesota, May 27, 1849, made his first gubernatorial visit to Fort Snelling.

Upon realizing that he was in the presence of the new territory's chief executive, the commanding officer told Ramsey that military regulations called for a 17 gun military salute for such an occasion.

The officer began belting out the orders for the troops to get into formation to fire.

"Whoa, whoa," said Ramsey.

Perhaps still a little groggy from the long journey from his Pennsylvania home, Ramsey told the officer that he would much prefer a shot of good whiskey over any show of military regalia.

The officer gladly accepted the alternative plan.

"I think that must have been pretty good whiskey, for we went down to St. Paul that day and laid the foundations for a good state," Ramsey told a reporter some years later.

Continued from page 4

Gruen proposal, stating that it would "aim people away from the central business district." And officials stuck with the original proposed route approved in the 1940s.

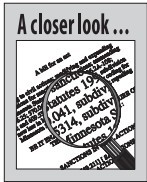
Construction of I-94 began in the early 1960s, and the first section was opened in 1967. Many critics today decry the affect the route has had on St. Paul.

In his 1958 letter, Herrold lamented the disconnect between highway planning and social concerns.

"We have excellent highway engineers versed in the economics of highway construction, moving dirt, of locating highways across country, around swamps, hills, and lakes, and through cut over lands," Herrold wrote in the letter. "But they are not versed in the economics of a city, what makes property values, what causes obsolescence, blight and slums, and what keeps customers coming into a retail district."

Proposals would reduce class sizes in early years

By Sandy Donovan



In 34 years as an elementary school teacher, Nancy Enstad has taught classes of 24 children, classes of 32 children, and ones of just about every size in between.

"Each year I know the directives and goals I'm trying to meet. I have the training and skills to meet them. And each year I wait to see how large my class will be," the second-grade teacher said. "Each year I wonder if I'll be able to do it."

Enstad, who teaches at Gordon Bailey Elementary School in Woodbury, was plugging smaller class sizes before the House K-12 Education Finance Committee, but she was largely preaching to the choir.

In fact, it's hard to find anyone who doesn't think students would learn better in smaller groups. Up for debate is how to achieve — and to pay for — that goal.

Lawmakers on the education panel heard about five such proposals — including Gov. Jesse Ventura's — on March 19. Ventura's plan for reducing class sizes is included in his omnibus education proposal (HF1117), sponsored by Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington).

The governor's plan would spend about \$150 million over the next two years for class-size reduction programs. The programs would target kindergarten through third-grade classes, with the goal of having one teacher for every 17 students for reading and math instruction in those grades.

"This is a K-3 rather than a K-6 initiative," said Christine Jax, commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. "Research shows that class-size reduction does not have the impact in later years that it does in earlier ones. Basically, the governor wants to make sure we put the money where it works best."

Under Ventura's proposal, school districts would submit to the department a two-year plan for reducing class sizes.

The plans would have to detail the district's current class sizes, the proposed class sizes for coming years, how the 17-to-1 ratio would be met for reading and math classes in kindergarten through third grade, and the proposed number of additional teachers needed to meet the district's goals.

Upon the plan's approval, districts would receive an extra \$370 per student in grades one to three and an extra \$185 per kindergartner annually.

"The governor's philosophy is to get as much local control as possible," Jax told lawmakers. "We are not coming up with a one-size-fits-all plan. Instead we say, 'Tell us what your plans are, what you want to focus on.'"

School districts that already have small classes in kindergarten through third grade would still be eligible for the extra funding. With approval from the department, such districts could put the money toward other goals including reducing class sizes in fourth through sixth grade, providing all-day kindergarten, increasing staff, or upgrading technology.



A proposal supported by many lawmakers as well as Gov. Jesse Ventura would provide extra funding for schools to reduce class sizes in the earliest grades to 17 children per teacher.

Districts would also be required to submit an annual report of their progress toward the 17-to-1 goal, which Jax said would open up an important dialogue between her department and individual districts.

"We want to be more service oriented and we want to offer technical help to districts and to teachers," she said.

But the extra paperwork stemming from those dialogues between department and district is exactly what some lawmakers would like to avoid.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) is sponsoring a class-size reduction bill (HF3) that he said would also "limit administrative hassles."

Instead of calling for districts to submit a plan for reducing class sizes, Seifert's measure would direct extra funding — \$600 per student — for each kindergartner through third-grader who spends their entire day in a class of 17 or fewer children. Districts could receive \$300 per pupil who spends one-half of the day in a class of 17 or fewer students.

"(My bill) is class-size reduction on steroids," Seifert said. "It will reduce class size the quickest."

In addition to keeping paperwork down, Seifert said his proposal would offer districts the advantage of being able to use the extra money for whatever they deem necessary.

"The constant attachment of strings by the state is what I hear concerns about from superintendents in my district," he said.

But some lawmakers voiced concerns that Seifert's plan wouldn't benefit enough districts.

"Some districts would not be able to access the money without swelling up class sizes for part of the day," said Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul).

The committee also considered three identical proposals that mirror Ventura's plan for reducing class sizes in kindergarten through third grade. The bills — HF1166, sponsored by Rep. Satveer Chaudhary (DFL-Fridley); HF1353, sponsored by Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal); and HF1407, sponsored by Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) — would provide the same per-pupil finding as Ventura's proposal and would require the same type of plan to be submitted to the education department.

Those three bills would also increase the level up to which the state "equalizes" local referendum revenue. Under equalization, the state provides additional aid based on a district's property tax base and its approved levies. The bills would up the level from the current \$350 to \$465 per pupil unit, in an attempt to offset the impact of potential local levy increases to fund additional classroom space for smaller classes.

Although lawmakers began targeting money for class-size reduction in a 1993 law, any of the proposals discussed this year would, for the first time, provide districts with additional funding expressly for that purpose. Under current law, districts must reserve for class-size reduction programs 6 percent of their general state aid for elementary students.

The education finance panel will consider the proposals for inclusion in the omnibus K-12 education funding bill, expected to be compiled in April.



How to get here

Location

The Capitol complex is north of I-94, just minutes from downtown St. Paul. It is accessible from the east and west on I-94, and from the north and south on I-35E.

I-94 eastbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn left. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

I-94 westbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn right. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

I-35E northbound: Exit at Kellogg Boulevard. Turn left. Go to John Ireland Boulevard and turn right. Metered parking spaces line both sides of the boulevard.

I-35E southbound: Exit at University Avenue. Turn right. Go to Rice Street and turn left. Go one block and turn left to enter Parking Lot D.

Visiting the Minnesota State Capitol complex can be a rewarding and educational experience for everyone. There are buildings to explore and tours to take almost any time you choose to visit. And when the Legislature is in session during the first part of every year, there are floor sessions to observe, committee meetings to attend, and legislators to meet. Remember that this is your state Capitol, and you are always welcome.

Parking

Public metered parking is available in Lot Q, north of the Capitol at Cedar Street and Sherburne Avenue; Lot D, next to the State Office Building off Rice Street on Aurora Avenue; Lot F, directly behind the Transportation Building; Lot K, across from the Armory on Cedar Street (enter from 12th Street); and on the orange level of the Centennial Office Building Ramp at Cedar Street and Constitution Avenue. All-day metered parking is available in Lot Q. Capitol Security personnel will issue tickets for expired meters.

All-day parking permits may be purchased for \$3.50 from Plant Management on the third floor of the Ford Building. Cash or checks are accepted and correct change is appreciated. For more information, call (651) 297-3993.

Outdoor handicapped parking is available in Lot O, which is on the northeast side of the Capitol, and in Lot F.

Indoor handicapped parking is available on the lower level of the State Office Building Ramp (use the call box at the ramp entrance to gain entry); on the blue level of the Centennial

Office Building Ramp; and on the entry level of the Administration Building Ramp (two stalls).

There are two handicapped entrances to the Capitol. One is on the northeast side of the building, just off Lot O; the other is a drop-off entrance under the south main steps at the front of the building.

Since parking is limited during legislative sessions, busing may be easier. Freeway express bus service is available. Bus number 94B takes you to the Capitol and the State Office Building. Call the Transit Information Center at (651) 349-7000 for schedule and route information.

What to do

Tours

Tours of the Capitol are offered through the Capitol Historic Site Program of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Tour guides lead the 45-minute tours on the hour Mondays through Fridays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (last tour leaves at 4 p.m.); Saturdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.); and Sundays between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.). The tours are free of charge and begin at the Capitol's information desk at the end of the corridor to the right of the main entrance. Brochures in about 20 foreign languages also are available there.

Tour participants may request customized tours that emphasize either the building or state government.

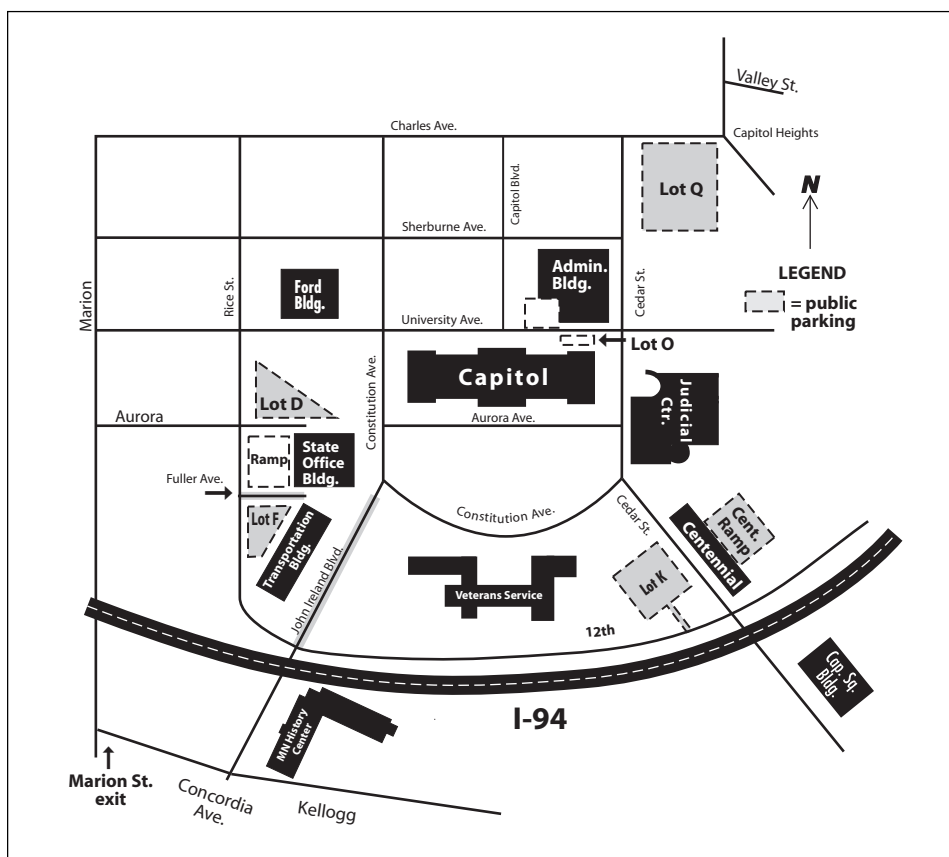
Historical society officials ask that groups of 10 or more call at least two weeks in advance to reserve a tour time.

The society offers "Voice of the People: Your Role in Minnesota Government," a half-day session for students in grades 9-12.

Also, special tour events are scheduled monthly throughout the year. Some of these events entail admission fees; others are free. A special events guide is available upon request.

For a recorded message regarding tours and events, call (651) 297-3521.

For more information about the tours or to reserve a time, call the Capitol Historic Site Program, (651) 296-2881.



Legislative sessions

Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate debate bills when the Legislature is in session.

At the beginning of a legislative session, the pace of floor sessions is generally slow as new bills are assigned to committees and non-controversial items are discussed. At about the session's midpoint, however, the legislative pace quickens.

The House usually meets at 2:30 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays, and the Senate meets at 11:30 a.m. Mondays and at 9 a.m. Thursdays during the first few weeks. House floor sessions are scheduled for the afternoon because committees meet in the morning and early afternoon. As the session nears the end, however, both bodies may meet several times a day, often into the night.

All House and Senate floor sessions are open to the public. Visitors interested in observing these sessions may call the House Chief Clerk's Office, (651) 296-2314, or Senate Information, (651) 296-0504, with questions. Spectators may sit in the galleries of either chamber.

Committee meetings

Visitors wanting to attend a committee meeting may call the committee hotlines for prerecorded messages with the meeting times and agendas for each day: House, (651) 296-9283; Senate, (651) 296-8088. Printed agendas for the week also appear in each issue of the *Session Weekly* and the *Senate Briefly*.

Committee meetings are open to the public. When a public hearing is scheduled, the committee may listen to comments from the audience (when time permits) in addition to the scheduled speakers. Committees have different policies on hearing testimony depending upon their size and workload. Informational handouts that committee members receive during meetings or hearings are considered public information and are available to the audience on a first-come, first-served basis.

Major proposals often have several public hearings so committee members may listen to all arguments for and against a bill.

Each committee has a chair, vice chair, administrator, and legislative assistant. A list of committees and members is available in the House Public Information Office in Room 175, State Office Building or the Senate Information Office in Room 231, State Capitol.

Groups and individuals wishing to testify before a committee should call the appropriate committee's legislative assistant well in advance of the meeting and ask to be placed on the agenda. Committees prefer requests one week in advance but will accept later notification when unexpected issues appear on the committee schedule. A brochure containing tips on testifying at legislative committee hear-

ings is available from the House Public Information Office.

Dining

Most buildings in the Capitol complex have their own cafeterias. The small State Office Building cafeteria is usually open only when the Legislature is in session, but it will remain open year-round during the restoration of the Capitol cafeteria, due to be completed in 2000. A large, year-round cafeteria is available in the Transportation Building.

Also, there are many restaurants within walking distance. On Rice Street, there is Benjamin's Restaurant and Lounge located inside the Kelly Inn, Cafe Capitol, the Lagoon Vietnamese Restaurant, White Castle, and El Bravo Mexican Restaurant. On University Avenue, there is McDonald's, Burger King, Mai Village, and other restaurants. There also are dozens of restaurants only minutes away in downtown St. Paul. Bus rides downtown cost 25 cents. Bus stops are located on Constitution Avenue.

Group visits

Sometimes groups plan a "legislative day" at the Capitol in order to express a particular viewpoint to legislators.

Rooms for special conferences or speakers can be reserved by calling the State Office Building room scheduler at (651) 296-5408 or the Capitol room scheduler at (651) 296-0866.

If group members want to meet with their individual legislators or testify before a committee (see "Committee meetings"), arrangements should be made at least a week in advance.

Often such groups have members wear a distinctive name tag or badge to indicate their concern about a particular issue.

Groups planning a trip to the Capitol should remember that seating is fairly limited in some committee rooms — particularly when the topic is controversial.

E-mail schedules

Anyone with e-mail can receive both House and Senate committee schedules. To receive the House schedule, send a message to:

listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us
Leave the subject line blank, and in the body of the message, enter:

subscribe h-schedules

To receive the Senate schedule, send a message to:

listserv@senate.leg.state.mn.us
Leave the subject line blank, and in the body of the message, enter:
subscribe sen-schedules

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* newsmagazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

House Television Services

216C State Capitol (651) 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>

All televised floor sessions and committee hearings are close-captioned for people with hearing impairments.

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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 (651) 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 committee, topic, author, file number, and other categories. The office can also give you the current status of legislation.

Senate Information Office

231 State Capitol (651) 296-0504

The Senate Information Office is responsible for all information about the Senate, including the committee schedule, bill status, legislator information, and the distribution of bill copies.

Senate Media Services

B-44 State Capitol (651) 296-0264

Senate Media Services, a bipartisan office, produces television programs, multi-media productions, scriptwriting, photography and graphics. It offers live coverage of the Senate floor sessions and some committee hearings.

Bill Introductions

HF2183-HF2291

Monday, March 22

HF2183—Davids (R) **Commerce**

Motor vehicle sales and distributions regulated, unfair practices specified, and civil remedy provided.

HF2184—Otremba (DFL) **Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

University of Minnesota Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management (CINRAM) research and technology transfer on agroforestry appropriation provided.

HF2185—Rest (DFL) **Taxes**

Income tax rates reduced, dependent care credit income limitations increased, income tax credits for children provided, property tax refund amounts adjusted, sales tax exemption provided, and money appropriated.

HF2186—Van Dellen (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

School district referendum allowance limit increased.

HF2187—Gray (DFL) **Education Policy**

Compulsory education parent definition modified, reporting to county and state agencies permitted, at-risk student needs developed, staff development grants provided, advisory council created, and money appropriated.

HF2188—Gray (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Urban League Street Academy expansion grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2189—Westerberg (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Individual sewage treatment system loans authorized in Blaine, and money appropriated.

HF2190—Rest (DFL) **Education Policy**

School site decision-making team composition modified.

HF2191—Otremba (DFL) **Education Policy**

Semiannual visits required to unaccredited educational institutions.

HF2192—Peterson (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Special operating levy extended for Independent School District No. 2853, Lac qui Parle Valley.

HF2193—Jennings (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

School impact fees authorized in Independent School District Nos. 138, North Branch and 2144, Chisago Lakes.

HF2194—Greenfield (DFL) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Public hospital administrators exempted from a certain compensation limit.

HF2195—Holsten (R) **Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Annexation removed from municipal board jurisdiction, and annexation by mutual agreement provided as exclusive means of annexation.

HF2196—Molnau (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Public facilities authority wastewater treatment funding formula modified.

HF2197—Entenza (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Minnesota International Center's international classroom connection funded, and money appropriated.

HF2198—Munger (DFL) **Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

No net loss of public shoreland act adopted, and money appropriated.

HF2199—Daggett (R) **Taxes**

Sales and use tax exemption provided materials and supplies used in constructing a community center by a nonprofit corporation.

HF2200—Pugh (DFL) **Commerce**

Negative option offers treatment provided.

HF2201—Dawkins (DFL) **Taxes**

Residential property containing four or more units tax class rates reduced.

HF2202—Dawkins (DFL) **Taxes**

Education expense credit and deduction applicability extended to certain expenditures for prekindergarten expenses and museum memberships.

HF2203—Clark, K. (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Affordable housing production and preservation appropriation provided.

HF2204—Hausman (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Non-hard-wired stairway chair lifts in private residences authorized in certain circumstances.

HF2205—Knoblach (R) **Capital Investment**

Itasca Community College construction project authorized.

HF2206—Abrams (R) **Taxes**

Certain Holocaust claim settlement payments exempted from state income taxation.

HF2207—McElroy (R) **Taxes**

Income and franchise tax provisions modified relating to allocation of gross income to state.

HF2208—Wejcman (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy
Universal health board established, universal health program and trust fund created, statewide and regional health care budgets established, board memberships modified, health care commission abolished, and money appropriated.

HF2209—Carruthers (DFL) **Civil Law**

Government data classifications provided and clarified, and terminology simplified.

HF2210—Schumacher (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Special assessment costs authorized to be included in debt service equalization revenue for Independent School District Nos. 477, Princeton; and 51, Foley.

HF2211—Schumacher (DFL) **Taxes**

Previous capital equipment refunds interest paid provision effective date changed.

HF2212—Davids (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

Fund transfer authorized for Independent School District No. 495, Grand Meadow.

HF2213—Dawkins (DFL) **Taxes**

Income tax credit allowed for child support payments made by low-income noncustodial parents, and money appropriated.

HF2214—Mariani (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

School choice enrollment provisions expanded and modified, and money appropriated.

HF2215—McElroy (R) **Taxes**

Individual income tax education subtraction and education credit modified.

HF2216—Trimble (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Resolution memorializing the President and Congress to honor Hmong and Lao combat veterans by easing naturalization requirements, and enacting the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 1999.

HF2217—Murphy (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Rates modified for transfers of contributions and interest for employees transferring from the general Minnesota State Retirement System to the unclassified plan.

HF2218—Pugh (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Laboratory school grants modified to include the operation of schools, and money appropriated.

HF2219—Hasskamp (DFL) **Taxes**

Property tax market value increases limited.

HF2220—Leppik (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 270, Hopkins, grant provided for a year-round school/extended week or day program, and money appropriated.

HF2221—Ozment (R)**Ways & Means**

Claims against the state paid, certain language concerning claims clarified, and money appropriated.

HF2222—Biernat (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Violence prevention grant program established through the Department of Children, Families and Learning, and money appropriated.

HF2223—Kalis (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Compulsive gambling program support provisions modified, relating to the governor's request for funding from tribal governments, and money appropriated.

HF2224—Biernat (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Minneapolis YMCA provided grant for the Beacons Project, and money appropriated.

HF2225—Bishop (R)**Capital Investment**

Grant provided for the southeastern Minnesota regional public safety training center in Rochester, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2226—Abrams (R)**Taxes**

Property tax forfeiture and delinquency procedures modified.

HF2227—Abrams (R)**Taxes**

Local contribution rate reduced for housing districts relating to tax increment financing.

HF2228—Broecker (R)**Judiciary Finance**

Hennepin and Ramsey counties authorized grants to construct law enforcement training facilities, plans required, and money appropriated.

HF2229—Harder (R)**Civil Law**

Reduced marriage license fee provided for couples who obtain premarital counseling.

HF2230—Dorn (DFL)**Education Policy**

Student membership provided on school boards.

HF2231—Larsen, P. (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Annexation of urban towns limited to certain processes.

HF2232—Chaudhary (DFL)**Taxes**

State share of education funding increased, income tax reduction provided, local property tax levies reduced, sales tax reduced, MinnesotaCare provider tax eliminated, and increases in market value limited.

HF2233—Erhardt (R)**Taxes**

Registration tax rate for passenger automobiles decreased.

HF2234—Chaudhary (DFL)**Taxes**

Corporate franchise tax research credit rate increased.

HF2235—Dorman (R)**Taxes**

Sales tax exemption provided for sales to political subdivisions of a state.

HF2236—Bishop (R)**Higher Education Finance**

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees granted certain authority with respect to property transactions, constructions, repairs, and improvements, and money appropriated.

Wednesday, March 24**HF2237—Seifert, M. (R)****Taxes**

Southwest regional emergency response and fire training center construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF2238—Entenza (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Teacher licensure program created in Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis; and Independent School District No. 625, St. Paul to educate teachers of students with emotional and behavioral disorders, and money appropriated.

HF2239—Munger (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Lake Superior Mississippi Railroad scenic railway appropriation provided.

HF2240—Abrams (R)**Taxes**

Transit zone tax relating to property taxation repealed with certain exceptions.

HF2241—Murphy (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Duluth air base STARBASE educational program appropriation provided.

HF2242—Huntley (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Supplemental and transition education revenue consolidated, and state aid provided for levies recognized early.

HF2243—Smith (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

School districts prohibited from billing special education tuition to residents open enrolled in other districts, Independent School District No. 277, Westonka, reimbursed for tuition payments, and money appropriated.

HF2244—Westfall (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Glyndon provided park construction appropriation.

HF2245—Westfall (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Whiskey Creek restoration project appropriation provided in city of Barnesville.

HF2246—Westfall (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Hitterdal provided appropriation for park construction at Lake Flora.

HF2247—Gunther (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Portion of opportunities industrialization centers appropriation reserved to match federal welfare-to-work funds.

HF2248—Mahoney (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Policy**

Employment-related empowerment groups in St. Paul provided funding, and money appropriated.

HF2249—Harder (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 2862, Jackson County Central, facilities and consolidation costs grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2250—Lindner (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Asian-Pacific community center grant provided in St. Paul, and money appropriated.

HF2251—Cassell (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Temporary permit provided for producers of Grade A or manufactured grade milk for adulterated milk.

HF2252—Paulsen (R)**Taxes**

Municipal contributions to areawide tax base limited.

HF2253—Holsten (R)**Taxes**

Grant city levy limit base adjusted.

HF2254—Carruthers (DFL)**Education Policy**

Minimum number of days of student instruction established, and aid penalty provided.

HF2255—Dorn (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

District-sponsored choice magnet schools created and authorized to qualify for start-up grants.

HF2256—Lenczewski (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Metropolitan Airports Commission required to study and propose noise restriction on certain aircraft use of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

HF2257—Peterson (DFL)**Judiciary Finance**

Law enforcement agency grants provided for purchase of drug detection dogs, and money appropriated.

HF2258—Chaudhary (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Fridley Tax Increment Financing District duration extended.

HF2259—Clark, J. (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Inflationary increase provided in the general education basic formula allowance, and money appropriated.

HF2260—Entenza (DFL)**Commerce**

Automobile insurance premium reduction eligibility modified for completion of accident prevention course.

HF2261—Carlson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School district state aids payment dates modified.

HF2262—Ness (R)
Education Policy
Statewide educational testing provided in autumn to ensure test results in a timely fashion during the same school year.

HF2263—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Categorical funding restored for pupil transportation to and from school, and money appropriated.

HF2264—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Health insurance premium growth goals established.

HF2265—Lenczewski (DFL)
Taxes
Bloomington fiscal disparities obligation eliminated under certain conditions, and Mall of America tax revenue study authorized.

HF2266—Skoe (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Bagley stormwater and sediment control project appropriation provided.

HF2267—Chaudhary (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Trust fund to support innovation and self-sufficiency in families and children act adopted, and money appropriated.

HF2268—Kalis (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Operation of a motor vehicle at certain speeds deemed grossly negligent relating to criminal vehicular homicide.

HF2269—Trimble (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Neighborhood Development Center, Inc. grant provided for neighborhood improvement and ethnic-based entrepreneurial support in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and money appropriated.

HF2270—Trimble (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Contaminated land petroleum tank cleanup provisions modified.

HF2271—Trimble (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Contamination cleanup grant application content requirements modified.

HF2272—Trimble (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Metropolitan and rural economic development grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF2273—Dempsey (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 256, Red Wing, grant provided for the concentrating on reading enhancement program, and money appropriated.

HF2274—Greiling (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Polling place required on every college campus with 500 or more students enrolled.

HF2275—Seagren (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Professional teaching standards promoted, salary incentives provided, and money appropriated.

HF2276—Chaudhary (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Child care assistance provisions modified, dependent care tax credit expanded, and basic sliding fee transition credit provided.

HF2277—Otremba (DFL)
Taxes
Municipalities authorized to use the Revenue Recapture Act to collect delinquent payments for ambulance services.

Thursday, March 25

HF2278—Osthoff (DFL)
Taxes
Relating to county property tax levies; deleting a sheriff's authority to appeal budget and salary decisions.

HF2279—Howes (R)
Crime Prevention
Relating to crimes; amending the definition of harassment for purposes of the harassment restraining order law; authorizing the court to find a hearing is unnecessary in certain harassment cases; authorizing indigent parties to perform alternative community service work in lieu of paying filing fees.

HF2280—Howes (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Relating to community development; providing financial assistance to the city of Backus for its waterfront improvement project and related roadway improvements; appropriating money.

HF2281—Holberg (R)
Taxes
Relating to taxation; sales and use; exempting construction materials used in certain library constructions and improvements.

HF2282—Mahoney (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Relating to corrections; requiring all counties to be charged for the actual costs of confinement of juvenile females at the Minnesota correctional facility-Sauk Centre; amending.

HF2283—Howes (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Relating to education; authorizing a technology grant for Independent School District No. 116, Pillager; appropriating money.

HF2284—Daggett (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Relating to education; authorizing a technology grant for Independent School District No. 23, Frazee; appropriating money.

HF2285—Kalis (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Relating to retirement; teachers retirement association; permitting certain retiring teachers to elect the improved money purchase benefit plan in lieu of the formula benefit plan.

HF2286—Erhardt (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Relating to education; authorizing funding for voluntary integration programs; appropriating money.

HF2287—Solberg (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Relating to recreational vehicles; requiring a title for certain recreational vehicles; providing criminal penalties.

HF2288—Seagren (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Relating to education; authorizing funding for voluntary integration programs; appropriating money.

HF2289—Carlson (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Relating to retirement; Minneapolis Teachers Retirement Fund Association; authorizing the purchase of service credit for various periods of prior teaching service.

HF2290—Tomassoni (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Relating to appropriations; appropriating wastewater funding for the city of Hibbing; authorizing the sale of state bonds.

HF2291—McElroy (R)
Agriculture Policy
Relating to agriculture; repealing the weather modification regulatory laws.

Legislative history can be researched in printed materials at the Legislative Reference Library or, for the years since 1995, on the Internet.
Find directions at:
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/leghist/histstep.htm>

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.
For information updates, call
House Calls at (651) 296-9283.
All meetings are open to the public.
Sign language interpreter services:
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MONDAY, March 29

7 a.m.

NOTE EARLIER TIME

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: HF1294 (McElroy) Prorated motor vehicle license fees authorized after dealer transfer.
HF1472 (Mulder) Special number plates for collector aircraft provisions modified.
HF773 (Westfall) Fire department expense reimbursement provided for costs incurred extinguishing motor vehicle fires within highway or interstate rights-of-way.
HF1886 (Krinkie) Seven-county metropolitan area regional rail authorities abolished.
HF1215 (Pelowski) Southern rail corridor grade crossing minimum safety standards provided. Discussion on deputy registrars.
HF1993 (Workman) Seasonal road restrictions task force established and study required.

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: HF1825 (Osskopp) Pull-tab dispensing machines authorized in premises licensed for off-sale liquor, progressive bingo prizes modified, and maximum tipboard prizes specified.
HF483 (Tuma) Special education provisions modified and rulemaking provided.
HF2173 (Smith) State professional unit employee positions classified.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: HF1858 (Rhodes) Crisis intervention hotline pilot project established for the metropolitan area Hmong community and money appropriated.
HF948 (Huntley) St. Louis County; statewide adolescent compulsive gambling prevention and

education project grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF910 (Finseth) Rural mental health services grants provided and money appropriated.
HF818 (Nornes) Residential mental health facility upgrades established and money appropriated.
HF834 (Boudreau) Adult mental illness crisis housing assistance program created and money appropriated.
HF951 (Abeler) Area agencies on aging provided funding for support and planning services, and money appropriated.
HF959 (Goodno) Supplemental aid recipients with special needs provisions modified.
HF1426 (Tingelstad) Well notification fees, advisory council on water supply systems and wastewater treatment facilities terms, rural hospital grant provisions, and health professional student loan repayment provisions modified.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: To be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: HF1927 (Storm) Police agency shared information management system established and money appropriated.
HF2142 (Tingelstad) DARE advisory council grant provided and money appropriated.
HF2158 (Swenson) Center for Reducing Rural Violence funding continued and money appropriated.
HF1893 (McGuire) Crosswalk safety awareness campaign continued and expanded, and money appropriated.
HF1954 (Paymar) Crime victim and witness services pilot project grant program established, and money appropriated.
Note: Meeting will continue at 12 noon in 10 State Office Building.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: HF478 (Haas) Structured settlement payment rights protected related to tort or workers' compensation claims.
HF1728 (Seifert, J.) Board of architecture, engineering, land surveying, landscape architecture, geoscience, and interior design fees and continuing education provisions modified; and penalties increased.
HF1348 (Holberg) Tort liability exception clarified relating to snow and ice accumulation on municipal property.
HF862 (Holberg) County board ordinance violation civil penalty procedures established, and fine certification to auditors as a special tax against the land authorized.
HF1122 (Leighton) Mediated settlement agreements under the Minnesota Civil Mediation

Act considered binding when all parties are represented by counsel.

HF1153 (Paymar) Juror compensation studied by the Supreme Court.

Note: In the event that the agenda is not completed, the committee will reconvene at 3 p.m. or 15 minutes after session in 10 State Office Building.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: HF794 (Hackbarth) Natural resources department account interest disposition specified and unrefunded gasoline tax computation provisions modified.
HF654 (Tingelstad) Metropolitan area regional parks maintenance and operation funded, and money appropriated.
HF842 (Fuller) Cross-country ski pass provisions modified.
HF1481 (Hausman) Como Park education and resource center construction completed, and money appropriated.
HF1321 (Hausman) St. Paul Como Park zoo and conservatory maintenance subsidy provided, and money appropriated.
HF2081 (Storm) St. Peter tree planting grants provided and money appropriated.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: HF1241 (Bishop) University Center Rochester appropriation for course and degree offerings.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: To be announced.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt
Agenda: HF2226 (Abrams) Property tax forfeiture and delinquency procedures modified.
HF1869 (Van Dellen) City local government minimum per capita aid amount established.
HF1981 (Lenczewski) Local government city aid base reduced as aid appropriations increase.
HF1295 (Clark, J.) Property tax homestead treatment extended to include property leased to family farm corporations.
HF167 (Wenzel) State-paid agricultural property taxes provided, and money appropriated.
HF667 (Milbert) Proposed property tax optional public hearings authorized and reverse referendum for levy increases required under certain circumstances.
HF2177 (Ozment) Agricultural and open space property taxation task force established, study required, and appointments provided.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: To be announced.

12 noon

JUDICIARY FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF1235 (Swenson) Livestock production facilities exempted from ambient hydrogen sulfide standards on days manure is being removed from barns or manure storage facilities.

HF1142 (Rostberg) Animal cruelty provisions modified, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF688 (Kubly) Hydroponic greenhouses corporate farm law exemption provided.

HF2251 (Cassell) Temporary permit provided for producers of Grade A or manufactured grade milk for adulterated milk.

Regulated Industries Subcommittee/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: HF1940 (Jennings) Renewable energy development funding requirements modified and required expenditures specified as recoverable.

HF2165 (Holsten) Internet, interactive computer services, digital broadband services, and high-speed data and Internet access services regulation restricted.

Other bills to be announced.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Omnibus finance bill.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda:

SF1712 (Pariseau); HF1628 (Kelliher) Metropolitan transit system operation performance audit schedule changed.

Other bills to be announced.

Subcommittee referrals.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

Immediately following session

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF1721 (Kelliher) Residential homestead first tier property valuation limit increased, education homestead credit rate increased, and general education levy reduced.

HF2028 (Seagren) Bloomington fiscal disparities

contribution adjustment requirement eliminated.

HF2126 (Abrams) Fiscal disparities abatement authorized, school district uniform abatement authority provided, and provisions clarified.

HF2240 (Abrams) Transit zone tax relating to property taxation repealed with certain exceptions.

HF2252 (Paulsen) Municipal contributions to area-wide tax base limited.

HF2087 (Krinkie) Property tax use for light rail transit prohibited.

HF2085 (Tuma) Senior-owned homesteads estimated market value increases prohibited.

30 minutes after session

Health Care Directives Subcommittee/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF718 (Ozment) Advanced practice registered nursing regulated.

6 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: To be announced.

TUESDAY, March 30

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF1593 (Mulder) Loan forgiveness program established for certain pharmacy students, sole community pharmacy financial assistance authorized, and drug therapy management pilot project established.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda:

SF1848 (Novak); HF1915 (Leighton) Workers' compensation third-party liability provisions modified, filing of attorney fee statements required, special compensation fund procedures modified, and alternative cost allocation accounts provided.

SF1471 (Murphy); HF1613 (Storm) Tenant screening fees limited.

SF1148 (Janezich); HF1266 (Mullery) Women encouraged to enter nontraditional careers, grants provided, and money appropriated.

Other bills to be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF1031 (Broecker) County or municipal attorney authorized to prosecute domestic assault misdemeanors in Ramsey County, domestic assault and child abuse protection unit funded, and money appropriated.

HF892 (Stanek) CODEFOR; Hennepin County

or Minneapolis coordinated criminal justice strategies demonstration grant program established; and money appropriated.

HF2228 (Broecker) Hennepin and Ramsey counties authorized grants to construct law enforcement training facilities, plans required, and money appropriated.

HF1979 (Rostberg) Critical incident stress management (CISM), fire assistance support team (FAST) grant program established and money appropriated.

HF338 (Larsen, P.) Emergency management grant program created and rulemaking authorized.

HF294 (Broecker) Extraordinary local disaster expense aid provided and money appropriated.

Note: Meeting will adjourn and reconvene at 12 noon in 500S State Office Building.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Secretary of State budget presentation. Bills may be added to the agenda.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda:

SF1562 (Kleis); HF1583 (Anderson, B.) Firearm report requirement repealed.

SF1553 (Berglin); HF1602 (Abeler) Prescription drug coverage for the senior drug program clarified, Medical Assistance eligibility and income provisions modified, and other health care provider provisions clarified.

SF1192 (Berglin); HF1490 (Mullery) Hennepin and Ramsey counties community service crime prevention grants authorized, and money appropriated.

Other bills to be announced.

Note: If necessary, the committee will meet in 316 State Capitol after a short lunch break.

Note: If necessary, an additional meeting will be scheduled on Wednesday, March 31 at 2:15 p.m. in the Basement Hearing Room, State Office Building.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda:

SF86 (Pogemiller); HF76 (Seagren) K-12 education technical changes provided; governor's workforce development council, state interagency coordinating council, and certain lease purchase installment buys and transportation aid repealed.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF1493 (Ozment) Public waters wetlands classification modified.

Other bills to be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: SF655 (Hottinger); HF538 (Abrams) Resident definition clarified related to individual income tax.

SF618 (Johnson, D.J.); HF761 (Abrams) School district number required on state income tax returns.

SF1316 (Scheid); HF1011 (Abrams) Utility property tax class rate modified.

SF1285 (Stumpf); HF1285 (Harder) Agricultural aircraft registration tax exemption provided.

SF1456 (Pogemiller); HF1322 (Paulsen) Corporate franchise education expenses credit authorized.

HF2002 (Lenczewski) Roth IRA conversions excluded from definition of household income relating to property tax refunds.

HF2206 (Abrams) Certain Holocaust claim settlement payments exempted from state income taxation.

12 noon

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

12:30 p.m.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: HF1791 (Solberg) Itasca County railroad and public highway improvements, and Nashwauck wells and wastewater treatment facilities funded; bonds issued; and money appropriated.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: SF441 (Spear); HF624 (Stanek) Dishonored checks; theft and related crimes penalty uniformity provided, civil penalties increased, and pretrial diversion program created.

SF583 (Novak); HF700 (Davids) Fire protection notification required in contracts for the sale of newly constructed residential dwellings.

SF1607 (Scheid); HF1932 (Jennings) Rental vehicle insurance coverage regulated.

SF243 (Cohen); HF846 (Koskinen) Eyeglasses and hearing aid health insurance coverage required.

Other bills to be announced.

NOTE TIME CHANGE

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

NOTE ROOM CHANGE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: HF138 (Seifert, M.) Lazarus Creek/LQP-25 floodwater retention project appropriated money.

HF1676 (Swenson) Minnesota river basin appropriation provided.

HF1781 (Howes) Soil and water conservation districts technical support grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1780 (Ozment) Soil and water conservation districts general services allocation provided and money appropriated.

HF1782 (Westfall) Erosion and sediment control and water quality cost share grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF797 (Finseth) Small city wetland replacement cost-share program created and money appropriated.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

Immediately following session

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

118 State Capitol

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: To be announced.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: Continuation of March 29 meeting agenda.

30 minutes after session

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF1028 (Leppik) Rule 80; Golden Valley nursing facility medical assistance reimbursement rate modified for residential rehabilitation services.

HF1025 (Murphy) Carlton County nursing facility moratorium project deadline extended, Medical Assistance reimbursement rates modified, and money appropriated.

HF1935 (Harder) Approved nursing facility completed projects replacement cost new calculation modified.

HF1030 (Seifert, M.) Canby nursing facility property related per diem rate increased.

HF361 (Molnau) Carver County nursing home reimbursement operating per diem limit exemption provided.

HF1788 (Kalis) Faribault County nursing facility spend-up limit exemption provided.

HF1317 (Daggett) Becker County nursing facility Medical Assistance rate increase provided.

HF962 (Winter) Murray County; nursing facility Medical Assistance reimbursement modified.

HF916 (Rifenberg) Houston County; nursing facility rate spend-up limit exemption created.

HF480 (Workman) Carver County intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR) reconfiguration project authorized.

HF2099 (Tuma) Intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR) services and resident relocation funding modified.

HF2043 (Tuma) Intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR) funding transferred to the Medical Assistance program.

HF934 (Greenfield) Hennepin County; nursing facility Medical Assistance reimbursement modified.

HF1214 (Haas) Nursing home bed moratorium exception provided.

HF1154 (Goodno) Nursing home moratorium exception provisions modified.

HF915 (Jennings) Pine County; nursing home bed moratorium exception provided.

HF1458 (Jennings) Certain Chisago County nursing facility reimbursement provision modified.

HF1460 (Jennings) Certain Chisago County nursing home reimbursement provisions modified.

HF170 (Nornes) Nursing facility technology room grant program established in the Department of Health, and money appropriated.

HF2082 (Nornes) Nursing facility purchase price used in property reimbursement rate determinations.

HF1956 (Goodno) Human services appropriations bill.

HF467 (Goodno) Medicare certification exemption allowed for nursing facilities under certain circumstances and criteria specified.

5 p.m.

COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting agenda.

7 p.m.

Compensation Council/ Legislative Coordinating Commission

316 State Capitol

Agenda: Consideration of possible recommendations to the Legislature.

WEDNESDAY, March 31

7 a.m.

NOTE EARLIER TIME

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Bills to be announced

Agenda starting at 8 a.m.: Light rail transit presentation, Department of Transportation Commissioner Elwyn Tinklenberg; Metropolitan Council Chair Ted Mondale; Metropolitan Council Director of Transportation Planning Nacho Diaz; and Department of Transportation Assistant Metro Division Engineer Bob Winter.

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: To be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF1118 (Stanek) Criminal and juvenile justice task force membership increased, funding requests reviewed by task force, grants provided

to develop integrated criminal justice information systems, and money appropriated. Other bills to be announced.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF2229 (Harder) Reduced marriage license fee provided for couples who obtain premarital counseling.

HF1067 (Fuller) Orders for protection service short form notification authorized, domestic assault crime sentences modified, cash bail increased, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF1631 (Goodno) Protocol established for occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens in certain settings, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF805 (Leighton) Municipal liability provisions expanded to include municipal power agencies.

Note: In the event that this agenda is not completed, the committee will reconvene at 3:30 p.m. or 15 minutes after session in 300N State Office Building.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HF1356 (Wenzel) Operational skills instructor funding authorized for Central Lakes College, Brainerd campus.

HF2091 (Cassell) Farm and small business management programs, and tuition assistance funded; and money appropriated.

Other bills to be announced.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: To be announced.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkle

Agenda: Office of Technology/Department of Administration budget presentation.

Bills may be added to the agenda.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda:

SF1344 (Hottinger); HF900 (Rest) Working family income tax credit percentages modified. HF1015 (Abrams) Election redistricting provided and money appropriated.

SF1308 (Ten Eyck); HF1272 (Abrams) Court administration costs in specified judicial districts funded by the state, court employee collective bargaining provisions established, taxes imposed, and money appropriated.

SF1889 (Johnson, D.J.); HF1998 (Rest) Marriage penalty and property tax provisions modified, income tax rates reduced, alternative minimum tax exemption increased, and constitutional amendment proposed dedicating motor vehicle sales taxes to the highway user trust fund.

SF1153 (Pappas); HF2119 (Rest) Dependent care credit, education credit and subtraction, and working family credit inflationary and family size adjustments provided; and money appropriated.

HF2226 (Abrams) Property tax forfeiture and delinquency procedures modified.

10:45 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: HF1221 (Finseth) Commissioner of natural resources appropriated money for construction of ring dikes.

HF1964 (Finseth) Red River basin flood water management grants provided and money appropriated.

HF2140 (Westfall) Cromwell Township flood damage mitigation funded and money appropriated.

HF1666 (Kelliher) Lake of the Isles flood mitigation appropriation provided.

HF1277 (Bishop) Wastewater treatment provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF1774 (Bakk) Gitchie-Gami trail constructed along Lake Superior in Lake and Cook counties, and money appropriated.

HF955 (McCollum) Ramsey and Washington counties regional trail development around Silver Lake funded, and money appropriated.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: Continuation of March 29 agenda.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Omnibus finance bill.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: Bills to be announced. Subcommittee referrals.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

Immediately following session

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

THURSDAY, April 1

**The House will not meet in session.
Committees will not meet.**

FRIDAY, April 2

Holiday.

House offices will be closed.

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MINNESOTA INDEX

The graying of Minnesota

Number of Minnesotans age 65 and older in 1996	578,000
As percent of state population	8.1
Percent for whom Social Security is the major source of income	46
Estimated number of Minnesotans age 65 and older in 2000	600,000
As percent of state population	12
Estimated number of Minnesotans age 65 and older in 2030, in millions	1.2
As percent of state population	24
Minnesotans age 65 and older who lived alone in 1990	167,000
Estimated number that will be living alone in 2020	262,230
Percent of increase	36
Minnesotans age 65 and older who were employed in 1990	62,560
Estimated number that will be employed in 2020	144,110
Percent of increase	57
Percent of Minnesotans age 60 and older who reported needing help with heavy household chores in 1995	31
Percent of those who said they received necessary help	81
Percent of older Minnesotans needing long-term care who received unpaid care from family or friends in 1995	95
Percent who received care from service agencies	5
Average number of children of Minnesota seniors in 1995	3.2
Average number of children of Minnesotans who will be seniors in 2030	1.8
Percent of Minnesotans who will be over age 85 in 2030	12
Percent in 2050	22
Number of women age 85 or older per each man in that age group, 2050	2
Percent of Minnesotans earning more than \$50,000 per year who believe they will maintain a comfortable lifestyle upon retirement	75
Percent earning less than \$35,000 per year who believe that	53
Percent earning less than \$25,000 per year who believe that	33
Percent of expected increase in Minnesota's total Medicaid costs from 1995 to 2030, adjusted for inflation	400

Sources: *Aging Initiative: Project 2030*; 1999, Minnesota Planning; Minnesota State Demographic Center Web site (<http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/demography/demogest>); *Minnesota Databook for Legislators*, 1999, House Research Department.

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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ April 2, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 13



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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • April 2, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 13

Reflections



Eighty-eight-year-old Rep. Willard Munger returned to the House chamber on March 29, after a bout with cancer. Once the roll was taken, Rep. Dave Bishop rose to give him a warm and affectionate welcome return, noting that his light on the voting board had been dark since Feb. 11. Lawmakers and staff present gave him one of the longest standing ovations and cheers that anyone has received.

Senior members get to choose where they sit in the chamber, so Munger, the Legislature's senior member, acknowledged the ovation by rising from his same seat of 20 years to thank the body.

He recognized staff members Betty Goihl, John Helland, and Cecil Underwood for their dedication and Rep. Harry Mares who gave Munger one of his homemade walking sticks "for special friends." Munger used it to help get himself to the House floor.

Rep. Munger is Minnesota's elder statesman. He is the only House member to hold office longer than any other. Rep. Walter E. Day, served almost as long, for 36 years. Three other lawmakers who served in both bodies hold a record of 44 years in the Legislature. Munger has served under 12 governors and 16 speakers. He was elected when Dwight D. Eisenhower was U.S. president, a year after Queen Elizabeth II was coronated in 1953.

A local elected official whose record may never be reached is Carl Peterson who served 61 years as a council member in the town of Roosevelt (population 180).

In 1964, Munger ran for Senate and lost. Thus, in 1998, he completed 21 nonconsecutive terms in the House. This 81st legislative session is his 22nd.

Rep. Munger is adorably called "Mr. Environment." He chaired the House Environment & Natural Resources Committee for 21 years, and he strongly believes that man should not interfere with the creative nature of the Earth. "Embrace and protect it so that it will last long after we are gone," he said.

He is honored for the multi-use Willard Munger Trail that runs from his hometown of west Duluth, all the way to the Twin Cities. Also, the Willard Munger Award honors a worthy environmentalist each year.

Munger is known for cleaning up and conserving the St. Louis, Minnesota, and Mississippi rivers and for preserving the wetlands, among other successful projects. He authored the Environmental Trust Fund law in the late 1980s to receive funds from the Minnesota Lottery.

Rep. Munger planned to retire in 1997, but before Frances, his wife of 33 years, died, she told him to stay. "So I am not leaving until the good Lord thinks I've had enough and have sponsored enough good legislation," he said.

Those who challenge Munger's issues are likely to get a long and passionate speech from him. The word among other "old-timer" legislators in the House of Representatives is, "When Munger speaks, everyone listens."

The House chamber is once more complete. All members are present.

— LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Flags flew during a rally for tax cuts on the Capitol steps March 27.

Photo by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

Light-rail transit . . .

Mass transit plan's long, strange trip continues

By Sarah Hallonquist

Before Gov. Jesse Ventura realizes his dream of riding a light-rail transit train by 2002, he still has some convincing to do in the House.

The House Transportation Finance Committee on March 31 considered arguments for and against a planned light-rail transit system in the Hiawatha corridor in south Minneapolis. But the likelihood of lawmakers approving a funding plan for that project remains uncertain.

Beginning in downtown Minneapolis and ending at the Mall of America in Bloomington, the proposed 12.2-mile rail line would have 18 stops along its route, including ones at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the University of Minnesota.

In 1998, the Legislature appropriated \$40 million for the light-rail proposal. That same year, the U.S. Congress allotted \$120 million in federal funds for the project, which could be completed as early as 2003.

However, the life of the project is contingent on whether the state contributes a final piece of funding — about \$60 million — needed before construction, slated to begin in 2000. The state funds could also leverage additional federal start-up dollars for the Hiawatha corridor project.

But citing future cost concerns and facing budgetary targets that curb spending growth, House lawmakers appear hesitant to fund light-rail transit this year.

Ventura recommended the \$60 million in state funding for light-rail transit in his proposed biennial budget.

And earlier in the week, he proposed dedicating 5 percent of the motor vehicle sales tax fund to transit projects. That would generate about \$25 million per year in capital funds for transit. However, that plan is not currently in the governor's budget, which has some lawmakers leery of changing course this session because the 5 percent would be taken from other programs in the state's general fund.

Metropolitan Council Chair Ted Mondale joined Elwyn Tinklenberg, commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), appeared at the transportation finance committee hearing to urge lawmakers to go along with the governor's request.

Tinklenberg said a light-rail line is only one piece of solving congestion in the metropolitan area. However, he said, it is a step in the



Lawmakers are considering a \$60 million appropriation for a light-rail transit project along the Hiawatha corridor in south Minneapolis, as depicted in this photo illustration.

Photo illustration by Tom Olmscheid

right direction. MnDOT estimates that by 2020 there will be 2.3 million more daily commuter trips on Twin Cities-area freeways, with a population increase of 650,000 people.

"It is not the only thing we need to do," he said. "No one piece will solve all our problems."

Tinklenberg said aggressive action should be taken to keep the light-rail project going in the Twin Cities.

Mondale agreed, and he added that forecast increases in highway congestion will slow down other transit options already available, such as bus travel. Mondale said light-rail lines take cars off the roads and allow for the bus system to keep working.

"As congestion worsens, the rail would be much faster," he said.

Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) asked Mondale if the current budget request for light rail would lead to future funding requests. Worried that light rail could rob other transit initiatives of funding, Kuisle said he hopes it "isn't going to be a cactus that's going to prick this Legislature for years to come."

Mondale said the plan to use motor vehicle sales tax for transit is not intended to take money away from projects or to use it solely for light rail.

"The bus system is the backbone of our transit system," Mondale said.

Business leaders from Minneapolis and

St. Paul also told the committee they support light-rail transit plans and that they would work with downtown businesses to come up with long-term financing ideas for the project.

Some groups, however, recommended that lawmakers not fund the Hiawatha project.

David Strom, legislative director for the Taxpayers League of Minnesota, said light-rail transit is too expensive and is essentially an effort to curb urban sprawl.

"We are not going to get rid of congestion with light-rail transit," Strom said.

Earlier in the week, committee members discussed a bill sponsored by Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) that would limit land acquisition for light-rail projects.

Krinkie's bill (HF1886) would abolish the regional railroad authorities in the metropolitan area that are charged with planning and acquiring land for light-rail corridors. Under the bill, individual counties would take over responsibilities handled by the rail authorities.

He said the measure would "stop the mad rush to rail" in Minnesota. Krinkie said he thinks the price tag is too high on light-rail projects and they would end up being too costly for the state in the long run.

Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin argued against the bill, saying it would jeopardize the ability to receive federal funding for the project.



The proposed Hiawatha corridor light-rail line would run from downtown Minneapolis to the Mall of America in Bloomington.

Map courtesy of Minnesota Department of Transportation

"This action would, in my view, hobble us," McLaughlin said.

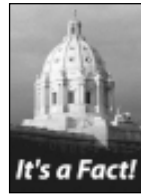
In an amendment that was not adopted, Krinkie proposed repealing the dollars allotted last year by the state for light-rail transit. The amendment also would have prohibited any city or county from studying light-rail transit as a transit option for the metro area.

On top of light-rail transit, the transportation department is also studying the possibility of a commuter rail system to serve outlying regions. Commuter rail lines use existing railroad tracks to carry passengers. The estimated cost for six rail lines plus a Minneapolis-St. Paul downtown connector route is about \$1.4 billion.

The transportation finance panel will be hearing additional testimony on light-rail transit. However, Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska), who chairs the panel, noted that there does not appear to be a high level of support among committee members for the governor's proposal. The panel also will consider Krinkie's bill later this session for inclusion in the omnibus transportation funding bill.

The Senate Transportation Committee has already approved \$60 million in funding for light-rail transit in a license tab fee reduction bill. 🐾

Architect defended the cost of the Capitol



to justify the added expense.

In fact, the final costs were only \$1.5 million over the original estimate, but because \$1.5 million was almost one-fifth of the state's entire budget that year, lawmakers wanted answers.

So Gilbert appeared before the Committee on Public Accounts and Expenditures in March 1903 to explain the increase.

He told lawmakers that some of the higher costs were due to changes in the project before construction. The Legislature had authorized enlarging the proposed building to reflect the growing needs of state government.

But lawmakers also grilled the St. Paul architect concerning his own compensation, which was also higher than originally proposed.

When the Board of State Capitol Commissioners initiated the building process in 1893, it set the architect's compensation at 2.5 percent of the total building cost. The architect was also expected to serve as superintendent of the construction to make sure the building conformed to plans and specifications.

A design competition was held in 1893, but the board rejected all of the designs that were submitted. According to a report issued by the board, the best architects in the country did not enter the competition because the compensation did not reflect the cost of their services.

In that competition, 20 designs were selected for detailed consideration. One of the best overall designs was rejected for what the board called a major flaw—the dome had been placed on the rear wing of the building instead of on the main axis. Another design had the Supreme Court Chamber in a different area and on a different floor than the Clerk of the Supreme Court, which would have caused justices to walk through the main corridors to get to the courtroom.

After the board had rejected all 20 designs, the Legislature authorized a different rate for compensating the architect and called for a second design competition to

be held. The new rate would pay the architect in three phases: 5 percent of the first \$500,000 spent on the building, 4 percent of the second \$500,000, and 2 percent for the remaining costs of the building.

Some precedent for those rates had been established by similar projects, such as the Agriculture Building at the World's Fair in Chicago, built in 1893 by McKim, Mead and White of New York.

Of the 41 designs submitted in the second competition, a committee narrowed the choice to 20. Five finalists were chosen before Gilbert was selected the overall winner. Among his design's best features were the committee rooms near the legislative chambers, the retiring rooms behind the House speaker's and Senate president's chairs, and the lantern on top of the dome, according to the judging results.

So when lawmakers questioned Gilbert in 1903 about the added costs, he assured them that his compensation was far from extraordinary. He said that he had served on the jury selecting the design for the New York Public Library and that the costs for that project had also been adjusted during the construction process.

Gilbert attributed much of the \$1.5 million increase to higher labor costs. When the Capitol was built, the prevailing wage for construction workers was \$5 to \$7 per day for an eight-hour day, he said, whereas they had been paid \$2.50 per day for a 10-hour day 20 years earlier.

Gilbert also said his costs associated with any project are about 60 to 75 percent of his compensation. On the Capitol project, that meant some of his staff members earned more than he did.

And lawmakers apparently appreciated Gilbert's professional judgement. A legislative resolution dated March 12, 1903, stated that the Capitol was "without exception the most perfectly executed piece of building in all details ever erected in the state of Minnesota."

The resolution also stated that Gilbert's compensation was less than the prevailing market price and that Gilbert had "performed his duties in every detail with the utmost fidelity, honesty, ability, and skill, and that the state has received full value for the money it has expended on the state Capitol, and that the building promises to be an object of pride and satisfaction to the state of Minnesota." 🐾

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Not high on hemp

An effort to study whether industrial hemp could be a viable commercial crop in Minnesota appears to have burned out.

Members of the House Crime Prevention Committee rejected the proposal March 30. The vote was 10-7.

The measure has generated some controversy because hemp is in the same family as marijuana, an illegal controlled substance in the United States since 1937.

The bill (HF1238/SF122*) would have authorized the Department of Agriculture to issue a permit allowing the University of Minnesota to grow and research industrial hemp.

Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph), the bill's sponsor, said that under current law the university can do some research on its own but political pressures prevent the school from taking the initiative.

"I think it's best that the state of Minnesota and the representatives here at the Legislature give them that authority," he said.

Dehler's bill would have directed the U of M to study possible uses for the plant — including paper, oil, and building materials — and ways to remove the narcotic chemicals from the plant.

But Tim McCormick, an agent with the U. S. Drug Enforcement Agency, said his agency sees no difference between industrial hemp and the marijuana sold on the street. He said any legalization of the industrial plants would make law enforcement more difficult.

Critics also said that the bill would send mixed signals about marijuana at a time when illegal use of the drug by adolescents is on the rise.

Dehler's bill follows several attempts in recent years to study the possibility of making industrial hemp a commercial crop in Minnesota.

A hemp legalization bill was introduced in 1997 but was rejected by a House agriculture panel. Another proposal to study the issue stalled on the House floor that year.

In 1998, both the House and Senate approved a measure to go forward with a study, but that bill was vetoed by then-Gov. Arne Carlson.

Farm aid

With financial pressures rising, the number of farmers and family members needing mental health counseling is going up, according to supporters of a plan to help provide assistance to those in need.

Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) is sponsoring a bill that would commit \$2.6 million to funding mental health outreach, support, intervention, assessment, treatment, and emergency services for farm families and individuals affected by the crisis some farmers face.

About half of that amount would go to 11 northwestern Minnesota counties most impacted by the hard times in agriculture, Finseth told the Health and Human Services Finance Committee on March 29.

A support program in that area has received some state funding since 1997, but it would be able to expand under Finseth's proposal.

But Dan Wilson, coordinator of the Northwestern Mental Health Center in Crookston, said the need is statewide. Under Finseth's bill, services in other areas of Minnesota would be developed and provided by local network partners.

Wilson's agency, along with the Rural Life Outreach Program, the University of Minnesota Extension Service, the University of Minnesota at Crookston, and the Northwest Regional Development Commission would provide coordinated support to farm families.

Farm families would be able to access the program by calling First Call Minnesota. All calls would be free and confidential.

Wilson said nearly every farm family may be in need of some form of help. Federal sources indicate that about 1,000 Minnesota farmers are currently delinquent and at-risk of losing their farms. In most cases, farmers don't have insurance that will cover mental health counseling.

The bill (HF910) was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus health and human services finance bill.

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BUDGET

Budget resolution passed

The House passed a budget resolution March 29 that sets the maximum spending over the next two years.

The resolution states that the total expenditures approved by the House for the 2000-01 budget cycle will not exceed \$24.4 billion. That figure amounts to a 4.8-percent increase over the 1998-99 budget.

The governor's budget request calls for a spending level of \$24.5 billion, a 5.5 percent increase over the 1998-99 budget.

The House resolution also would maintain the budget reserve account — the state's rainy day fund — at \$622 million. The governor's budget request would increase it to \$667 million.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), the sponsor of the resolution, said the plan does a good job balancing the needs of the state with a strong desire to control the size of the state government.

"We want to set a reasonable level of spending that we can afford," he said.

Bishop said the budget reserve account recommendations would be more than sufficient to keep the state afloat in tough financial times and to maintain the excellent fiscal ratings the state receives from national bond rating firms.

One day later, the House Ways and Means Committee approved individual spending limits for each finance committee. Those figures will dictate the size of the omnibus finance bills for major budget items such as K-12 education, transportation, and the judiciary.



CHILDREN

Anti-gambling plan

Funding for programs aimed at keeping children away from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco are common, but efforts to steer youths away from gambling addiction are relatively rare.

That does not mean anti-gambling programs are any less needed, Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) told the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee on March 29.

Huntley is sponsoring a bill (HF948) that would use \$300,000 from the state's lottery

prize fund to expand a statewide compulsive gambling prevention and education project for adolescents.

The money would go to the Minnesota Council on Compulsive Gambling.

Betty George, the group's executive director, said research has revealed that youths have twice the risk of adults for developing a gambling problem. Many young people start gambling before age 11, earlier than they report experimenting with alcohol or drugs.

The centerpiece of the council's program is a Web page (www.wannabet.org) that presents a variety of resources children can use to help them avoid troubles with gambling. The site gets about 250 hits a week.

Also included is a classroom curriculum and a "train the trainer" program that George said has helped spread the anti-gambling message more quickly and effectively.

George said that the proposed funding would ensure two-thirds of all middle school students in the state would hear the council's message within the next two years.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) questioned how children come to have a gambling problem, considering they must be 18 to enter a casino.

George said many children first experience gambling in poker or pool games played for money. Other common avenues of exposure are betting on sports games and playing computer poker and blackjack games.

Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie) said a common rite of passage for teens turning 18 is a visit to a casino where, on some occasions, much of their savings can be gambled away in an evening.

Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Fairbault) said one solution might be raising the legal gambling age to 21. George said that possibility had been discussed in previous years and rejected, but she said it would be a step in the right direction.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus health and human services funding bill.



CRIME

Traps protect drug labs

Lawmakers have triggered a plan that would toughen penalties for setting booby traps to protect illegal drug labs.

The House Crime Prevention Committee approved a bill March 26 that would make setting a booby trap in such cases a felony. Penalties would depend on the actual harm caused by the trap.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth), defines booby trap

to include "firearms, ammunition, or explosive devices attached to trip wires or other triggering mechanisms, sharpened stakes, nails, spikes, electrical devices, lines or wires with hooks attached, and devices for the production of toxic fumes or gases."

Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji), who serves with a volunteer fire department, said public safety officials throughout the state have seen increases in drug labs and booby traps to protect those labs. He said tougher measures are needed to protect officials while they are doing their jobs.

"It's becoming more prevalent, and it's a danger for all public safety personnel," he said.

Pat Diamond, a prosecutor with the Hennepin County attorney's office, told the committee of a situation in Minneapolis where a person rigged an elaborate booby trap to protect his drug lab. He said the person had even created back-up power sources for the trap in the case that police officers cut off the power.

"Frankly, it was a miracle that the bomb squad was able to defuse everything in that building," he said.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), chair of the committee, amended the bill to remove all references to the word "booby." He said the word "trap" would be sufficient and probably less controversial.

D.A.R.E. review



Eleven-year-old Katherine Hellings, who attends Crooked Lake Elementary School in Andover, gives a review of her school's D.A.R.E. program to lawmakers considering funding a grant for the anti-drug abuse program. Hellings testified March 29 before the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

The measure also would make theft of anhydrous ammonia a felony-level crime. Anhydrous ammonia is used in the manufacture of methamphetamine.

The bill (HF1055) now goes to the House floor.

Guns for sale

The House passed a bill March 30 that would allow sheriffs and police chiefs to sell confiscated firearms. The vote was 104-23.

Current law requires that those agencies destroy all forfeited weapons that they cannot use, including firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories.

The bill (HF70), sponsored by Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee), would give agencies the authority to either destroy those weapons or to sell them to federally authorized dealers.

The bill also would require local agencies to sell any antique guns they seize. But semi-automatic, military-style assault weapons would continue to be destroyed, under the bill.

Under current law, local law enforcement agencies keep 70 percent of the proceeds from the sale of any forfeited property, county attorneys and other prosecutors get 20 percent of the proceeds, and the state receives the remaining 10 percent.

Some lawmakers expressed concern that the bill would put guns back on the streets to be used illegally.

"We're going to recycle the guns around and around and around," said Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls). "These guns are going to end up in the hands of criminals."

The bill now goes to the Senate.

Protecting callers in crisis



A measure signed by the governor March 29 clarifies an existing law frequently used to prosecute domestic assault offenders.

Under a 1997 law, prosecutors can charge a person who interferes with a phone call to a 911 dispatcher with a gross misdemeanor crime. The law is often used against domestic assault offenders who try to prevent their victims from calling the police for help.

The new law, effective March 30, expands the existing law to include all emergency calls to police, ambulance services, or fire departments, not just calls placed through 911.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Jane Ranum (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the measure.

HF193/SF255*/CH24

Railroad trespassing

A bill that would make trespassing on railroad tracks a misdemeanor level crime was rejected by the House March 25. The vote was 114-17.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), the bill's sponsor, said he was seeking to address an oversight first made when the Legislature rewrote the state's trespass laws in 1989.

He said that trespassing on tracks had been a misdemeanor level crime under previous law and that his bill would have simply returned the law to the way it was prior to the rewrite.

Critics said the bill would have gone too far and that it would have criminalized an action that most people agree is relatively harmless.

Under a standard motion, lawmakers later reconsidered and tabled the proposal, so Stanek's bill (HF1120) may come up for consideration later.

Assault by laser

If you intentionally aimed a laser pointer into someone's eye, you would be guilty of a crime, under a bill approved March 30 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Bill sponsor Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul) said that laser pointers intended for office presentations can cause serious damage to the retina if aimed directly at the eye.

She said the devices are being misused by some children. For example, students are taking them to high school hockey games and flashing the light at players to distract them.

McCollum's bill would create the gross misdemeanor level crime of laser assault. A person who intentionally points the beam of a laser device at another person's eye would be guilty of the crime and could be sentenced to prison for up to a year.

Eye doctors using lasers to treat eyes would be exempt from the crime, under the measure.

The bill (HF1737/SF1120*) now goes to the House floor.



EDUCATION

Keeping classrooms safe

Persons convicted of criminal sexual conduct would not be allowed to teach in Minnesota's classrooms, under a bill passed by the House March 25. The vote was 128 to 5.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji), would require the state Board of Teaching to revoke or refuse a teaching license

to any person convicted of criminal sexual conduct in the first to fifth degrees.

Criminal sexual conduct can range from rape (first degree) to exposing genitals in the presence of a minor (fifth degree), as defined by state law.

The measure would exempt individuals with non-felony convictions for fifth-degree offenses.

Under the bill, courts would be required to notify the Board of Teaching once they discover a convicted sex offender is a licensed teacher. The board would then revoke the teacher's license and notify the school board that employs the teacher.

The bill (HF14) also would allow the state board to refuse to issue or renew licenses to applicants convicted of criminal sexual conduct.

A similar measure already exists for school bus drivers.

Fuller said he is sponsoring the legislation because of recent publicized incidents in which teachers were found to have sexually abused their students or other children.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

Crisis volunteer



Mary Hepakoski, Golden Valley, urges lawmakers on the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee on March 26 to continue funding for Crisis Nurseries. Hepakoski, holding one of the infants helped by the organization, has been a volunteer with Crisis Nurseries for six years.

Education mandates eyed

A bill that would lower the age until which schools are required to provide special education instruction was approved recently by two House committees.

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) is sponsoring the measure. It was approved March 25 by the House Education Policy Committee and March 30 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

In 1998, lawmakers approved a new set of laws governing special education policies to make them consistent with federal law. Tuma said his bill essentially wraps up that process by tying up some loose ends of certain state laws that exceed federal requirements. The 1998 law left those provisions to be examined by lawmakers and special education officials to determine which ones should still exceed federal law.

Under that law, Minnesota requires special education services to be provided until a student is 22 years old. Under federal law, that requirement is 21 years old.

The bill (HF483) would change the state law to age 21 and require a school district to provide instruction until July 1 after the student turns 21.

Other changes included in Tuma's bill deal with discipline procedures for students of special education and state reimbursement for litigation costs incurred by school districts.

The bill moves to the House floor.



ENVIRONMENT

Cleaning up wetlands laws

A bill aimed at simplifying laws regarding public drainage systems got bogged down March 30 in the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee, but after hours of testimony lawmakers narrowly approved it.

One provision of the bill (HF1493) would require the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to follow the same guidelines for delineating wetlands as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), sponsor of the bill and chair of the committee, said local units of government already follow those guidelines but the DNR uses a different standard that refers to the "ordinary high water mark."

The different standards mean landowners sometimes need two different permits for a drainage project that impacts a wetland, Ozment said. The bill would remove references to the "ordinary high water mark" from the Wetland Conservation Act of 1991.

Some committee members objected to other provisions of the bill that refer to public drainage systems and how they impact those wetlands. For example, current law requires that if flood-control structures or road projects destroy wetlands, the wetlands must be drained and replaced with new wetlands established elsewhere.

Some of the controversy surrounds questions such as who should pay for that process and who should be responsible when ditches or drainage systems destroy a wetland due to a lack of maintenance or repair.

Those and other questions often result in litigation between landowners and government bodies that have jurisdiction in those situations, including the DNR, counties, and local watershed districts.

One of the bill's provisions would require a public waters work permit for certain repair or maintenance projects to a public drainage system. A permit would be required if the project destroys a wetland that has existed for at least 25 years. Another provision would exempt some projects from requiring replacement of a wetland, unless the wetland has existed for 25 years.

Opponents of those provisions said that in some instances the lack of maintenance to the drainage system created the wetland so repairing the drainage system should not require a permit.

Several Hugo-area residents spoke against the bill, because it could affect a lawsuit regarding such a situation that has caused flooding in that area.

But Ron Harnack, executive director of the state Board of Water and Soil Resources, argued that if a wetland is created in that situation and exists for 25 years, the drainage system would have to have been ignored for 40 or 50 years. He said the affected landowners have a responsibility to petition the counties to request repair projects in those situations.

"There has to be a shared authority between landowners and the ditch authority," Harnack said.

Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) proposed deleting the related provisions.

"The whole system is working fairly well considering how controversial it is," he said. "If you delete (those sections), you will be able to carry forward a bill that does some good things without getting in the middle of a battle."

Committee members voted to delete the section that would require a repair or maintenance work permit but to keep the provision concerning replacement exemptions.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

Munger returns



Rep. Willard Munger awaits the arrival of his colleagues before a House session March 30. Munger, the longest-serving member of the Legislature, was making his first appearance at the Capitol since undergoing surgery for colon cancer in January. House members welcomed him back with a rousing ovation. (See related story on page 2.)

International fishing fight



A resolution urging the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to resolve alleged violations of international law by the Province of Ontario was signed March 26 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The resolution states that the Provincial Government of Ontario imposed restrictions on United States residents taking fish from Canadian waters of Rainy Lake in 1994. It also states that the province extended the restrictions to Rainy River and Lake of the Woods in 1998 and has "threatened to extend" them to the entire Minnesota-Ontario border.

Minnesota resorts have suffered due to the restrictions because Canadian residents are allowed to fish in those areas. The resolution states the restrictions are a violation of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the General Agreement on Trade in Services under the World Trade Organization.

The resolution is sponsored by Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls) in the House and Sen. LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls) in the Senate.

HF544*/SF638/Res. 1



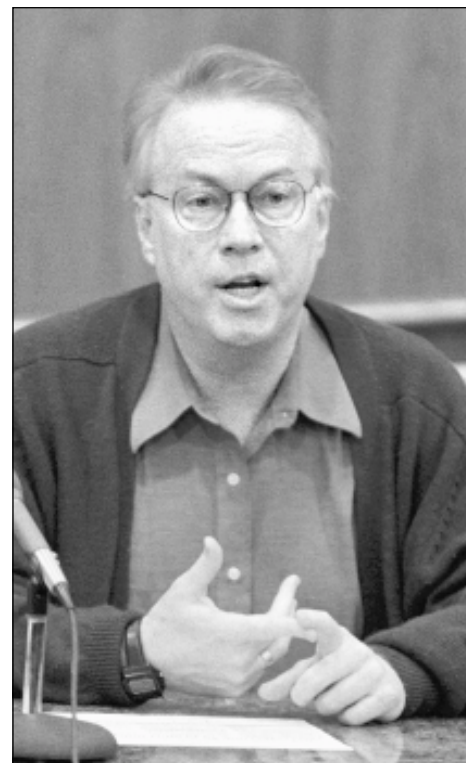
FAMILY

Get counseling, save cash

Couples who receive premarital counseling would get a deal on the cost of a marriage

license, under a bill approved March 31 by the House Civil Law Committee.

The current fee for a marriage license in Minnesota is \$70. Under the bill, couples who participate in at least 12 hours of counseling with a licensed counselor or ordained minister would get a \$50 discount.



Bill Doherty, professor of family social science at the University of Minnesota, testifies in favor of a bill that would reduce the marriage license fee for couples who receive pre-marital counseling.

"I think it is in the best interest of the state of Minnesota for people to enter into marriage very carefully with information about themselves, their relationship, and their future plans," said bill sponsor Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson).

Harder said she is considering a plan to add \$50 to divorce fees to make up for the lost revenue.

"Hopefully, that wouldn't work out," said Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls). "Hopefully, your program would be so successful that there would be fewer divorces."

The bill (HF2229) now goes to the House Ways and Means Committee.



HEALTH

Dentists on the move

Have drill, will travel. That's the motto of Apple Tree Dental, a nonprofit program that brings dental services to isolated rural communities around Hawley.

Rep. Bob Westfall (R-Rothsay) is sponsoring a bill (HF756) that would provide \$75,000 in financing for the venture.

Dr. Michael Helgeson, executive director of Apple Tree and a practicing dentist, told the Health and Human Services Finance Committee on March 26 that this is the first time the 14-year-old agency has had to ask for state money.

He said the program was expanded into Clay, Becker, Mahnommen, and Pope counties because of tremendous need. Funding had been available from a private source, but that has dried up.

Helgeson said 90 percent of the reimbursement received for services is from state-provided medical coverage. Dental care is provided to people, from children to senior citizens, who can't afford a regular dentist or who do not have access to transportation to reach a dentist.

Joe Peterson, mayor of Hawley, said that in addition to the benefit of fewer toothaches, Apple Tree has also brought economic development to his city.

"They refurbished a 100-year-old building that was formerly a hardware and implement store," Peterson said. "It was in quite a state of disrepair."

He said the city had anticipated spending \$50,000 to demolish the structure.

In addition, the program's staff is a valuable asset in the community, even beyond the payroll impact. He cited a program developed outside work time that teaches dental hygiene to children.

Peterson said the program is not seen as competition from area dentists, several of whom sit on Apple Tree's advisory board.

Helgeson said in addition to the state money to keep the program going, collaboration with other public health agencies in the area is being sought.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the health and human services omnibus finance bill.

Planning organ donation



Tissue and eyes have been added to the list of organs available for donation on the state's health care directive, under a new law effective March 17.

The new law was designed to help draw attention to the need for donated tissue and eyes — a need said to be critical by regional organ donation program officials.

Under the state's 1998 health care directive law, people can use a directive to address all aspects of advanced planning for health care by either appointing an agent to make their health care decisions or by making statements concerning how they want their health care to be handled.

Proponents of the measure said that while many people are aware of the possibility of donating organs, they do not know that tissue and eyes are organs that can be donated.

The bill was sponsored by Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and Sen. Becky Lourey (DFL-Kerrick).

HF74/SF301*/CH14



HIGHER EDUCATION

Rochester campus proposed

Lawmakers discussed a plan March 29 that would upgrade higher education in the Rochester area.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) pitched a bill (HF1241) that would fund the proposal to the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Rochester, Minnesota's fifth largest city, does not have a four-year higher education institution. However, Winona State University is within commuting distance, and Rochester Community and Technical College — a two-year institution — is located in the city. In addition, the University Center Rochester offers courses to the public, and students can earn credit there toward degrees granted by the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities campus.

Now the U of M is proposing to add a new Rochester campus to their system. Currently, the university has four campuses, in the Twin Cities, Duluth, Morris, and Crookston.

The Rochester plan would require a permanent faculty at the proposed nonresidential campus — currently all University Center faculty members commute to Rochester to teach classes. The proposed school would continue to cater to students who live in the Rochester area and would serve a largely non-traditional and part-time student population.

Advocates of the new campus say Rochester's economy requires more higher-education options. The Mayo Clinic is the area's main employer, and IBM also supplies many jobs. U of M course offerings would focus on health professions, technology, education, and social services.

The Rochester campus would not provide the traditional liberal arts curriculum typically offered by four-year learning institutions. Instead, its programs would focus on training and developing the current work force in the area, ultimately benefiting IBM and the Mayo Clinic.

Officials at the U of M and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system agreed in February to a joint set of principles to protect both parties' assets in Rochester. The agreement states that programs will remain intact at Winona State University and Rochester Community and Technical College.

The project would cost the state an estimated \$5.7 million over the 2000-01 biennium and would be treated as a separate item from the legislative appropriations already requested by the U of M and MnSCU.

The two systems do not need permission from the Legislature to operate the new campus, but state funding would be key in developing a legitimate public education institution.

Some lawmakers were skeptical of the plan, asking for more specific details on campus design and courses.

Rep. Gene Pelowski (DFL-Winona) also said enrollment in the current Rochester facility has been declining and questioned the need for more programs.

Robert Bruininks, U of M executive vice president and provost, said the programs at Rochester are under-funded and that increased economic activity has led potential students away from school into Rochester's booming economy. However, Bruininks said the labor market will eventually require those workers to upgrade their skills, which he said makes the case for the new Rochester campus.

Lawmakers did not take action on Bishop's bill but will consider it for inclusion in the omnibus higher education finance bill.



HOUSING

Fighting real estate flipping

The House Crime Prevention Committee approved a bill March 26 that seeks to address the real estate scam known as mortgage flipping.

Mortgage flipping is a scheme to defraud home buyers and lending institutions based on a fraudulent appraisal of a house's value.

In one scheme, a buyer purchases a house at market value and has an appraiser file a fraudulent appraisal setting the value of the house higher than the market value.

The owner then re-sells the house at the inflated price, making a huge profit, and the appraiser gets a kickback.

The victim is then stuck with payments on a home much higher than the actual value. And if the victim defaults on the mortgage, the bank cannot recoup the inflated mortgage by re-selling the house.

The bill would address the problem by going after the appraiser. It would make the intentional violation of the laws governing appraisers a gross misdemeanor.

Under current law, real estate brokers and agents can be charged with a crime for intentionally violating the terms of their licenses. But appraisers are only subject to license revocation, not criminal prosecution.

Gary Levasseur, deputy commissioner of enforcement with the Department of Commerce, said the key element in the crime is the fraudulent appraisal and that tougher penalties are needed to go after these appraisers.

"In some of these cases, the revocation of license is not sufficient to stop the activity," he said.

And Lasseur said the inflated values placed on the property can distort property taxes and local school aid formulas.

Bill sponsor Rep. Gregory Gray (DFL-Mpls) said his district in north Minneapolis has been one of the areas hardest hit by the scam.

"This is a significant problem in depressed areas, and we feel this bill will go a long way toward solving the problem," he said.

Gray's bill also would set aside \$100,000 for an education program aimed at stopping the fraudulent practice.

Under the bill, the Department of Commerce would administer the program and would seek additional funding from private organizations also affected by flipping, such as banks, mortgage companies, and economic development groups.

The bill (HF743) was earlier approved by the House Commerce Committee and now goes to the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.

Get well soon



House members gather around a get-well card for Minnesota's first lady, Terry Ventura, following the March 31 floor session. Ventura was recently diagnosed with mononucleosis, caused by Epstein-Bar Syndrome. Signing, clockwise from top, are Reps. Rob Leighton, Tim Finseth, Steve Wenzel, George Cassell, and Leslie Schumacher.

Streamlining building code

Many different state departments develop and enforce various sections of the state building code. A bill that would partially consolidate that authority was approved March 30 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

The bill (HF1568) would transfer authority over the energy code from the Department of Public Service to the Department of Administration.

The administration department currently oversees many provisions of the state building code. However, other parts of the code are developed and enforced under the departments of health, public safety, or public service. Several state agencies and boards also have input in inspecting and reviewing building plans for public buildings.

Disagreements and poor coordination between the various state agencies and departments has caused unnecessary delays in construction, according to a January report by the Office of the Legislative Auditor.

Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), sponsor of the bill, said transferring authority over the energy code to the Department of Administration would be one small step toward a better process for implementing the building code.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

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



HUMAN SERVICES

Seniors at home

The tiny community of Rothsay may be the best spot for older Minnesotans wishing to continue living in their own homes.

The town, just north of Fergus Falls, has arguably the most active Living at Home/Block Nurse Programs in the state.

The program organizes neighborhoods to provide assistance to help older people continue living at home and to link them with support services and professionals when necessary.

Roberta Ouse, board chair, told the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee on March 26 that in addition to the obvious benefit for seniors, the program also helps build a community "where neighbors help neighbors because it is the right thing to do."

Ouse, who also heads the state board for the program, testified in support of a bill (HF424) that would expand financing for Living at Home/Block Nurse Programs throughout the state. Rep. Bob Westfall (R-Rothsay) is sponsoring the bill.

There are currently 25 programs operating in the state — 13 in urban neighborhoods in St. Paul and Minneapolis and 12 in greater Minnesota.

During last fiscal year, those 25 programs provided assistance and care to 3,300 people. Volunteers provided over 35,700 hours of direct assistance to people in their homes.

Volunteers do lawn and garden work and

minor home repairs. They arrange for meals on wheels or for a home health aid or nurse to provide services. And sometimes they simply stop by for a visit.

An estimated 471 people delayed or avoided entering a nursing home by using the program, Ouse said. That saved the state about \$6.8 million.

Westfall's bill would make available \$576,000 for the coming biennium, the bulk of which would be used to start new Living at Home/Block Nurse Program operations in several rural and urban areas.

State funding comprises about one-third to one-half of the total cost for the efforts, according to Malcom Mitchell, executive director of the statewide program.

He said the program is particularly beneficial in rural areas because once people have to move to nursing homes in other communities, they take their assets with them.

He said the typical person served by the program is an 81-year-old woman who lives alone on \$632 a month without a social support network.

Westfall, who has worked as a volunteer in the Rothsay program, said one of its unique assets is an exercise program for people in their 80s and older.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the health and human services omnibus finance bill.

Helping Hmong Minnesotans

The death of six young Hmong children last summer has resulted in a call for more help to assist Asian immigrants in acclimating to life in the United States.

Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park) is sponsoring a bill (HF1858) that would provide \$200,000 to the Council of Asian Minnesotans to operate a crisis intervention hotline for the Hmong community in the metropolitan area.

David Zander, research analyst for the council, said many Hmong immigrants face depression, gambling addiction, domestic violence, poverty, and crime at rates higher than the general population.

The council convened a task force to help identify ways of aiding Hmong people in need, and the crisis line was one item identified.

William Yang, executive director of the Hmong American Partnership, told the Health and Human Services Finance Committee on March 29 that there are many existing programs but no one-stop way to access them.

He said many Hmong people have limited English skills. Some also have more significant mental health needs and have less access to family help because they do not have relatives in this country.

Yang said he envisions a staff of bilingual professionals who could provide professional counseling and direct callers to other avenues of assistance. Callers would remain anonymous.

The council estimates there are 113,000 residents of Minnesota of Asian-Pacific heritage, representing more than 40 ethnic groups, the largest of which is Hmong. Many of them live in the Twin Cities area, but Asian populations in other communities including Worthington, Warroad, Austin, and Duluth are rising.

The bill is expected to be considered later this session for inclusion in the omnibus health and human service finance bill.



INSURANCE

Looking for competition

For whatever reason, health insurance costs for small employers keep going up.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) believes the primary cause is a lack of competition, and he is sponsoring a bill (HF870) aimed at bringing more insurance providers back to the state.

Haas told the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee that a temporary waiving of state mandates is needed to see if more companies respond.

His bill would permit companies that do not already have a major presence in the state to offer alternatives to the minimum state-mandated policies for up to two years. The committee approved the measure March 26.

The bill would permit policies with different copayments and deductibles, as well as those that would pay on a basis other than medical expenses incurred, such as a flat dollar amount per day in the hospital or a flat dollar amount upon a diagnosis of cancer.

The policies would have to be sold only to companies that have 50 employees or fewer.

The bill also would waive portions of law that require insurance companies to spend a certain amount directly on health care and a lesser amount on overhead.

Under existing law, insurers and health maintenance organizations may offer only one of two policies for small employers and must maximize the amount of the premium that goes directly to paying for care.

Haas said those standards, adopted in 1992, are keeping smaller insurance companies out. He said the problem is particularly tough in rural areas. The metropolitan area has three major carriers; rural employers searching for insurance for their employees often have only one choice.

Several lawmakers expressed concern that

approving the bill would start the state down the "slippery slope" of substandard health care.

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls) said the state might find itself paying more if private plans didn't cover certain vital care procedures.

He added that it would only be fair to allow all companies to offer the policies in Haas' bill.

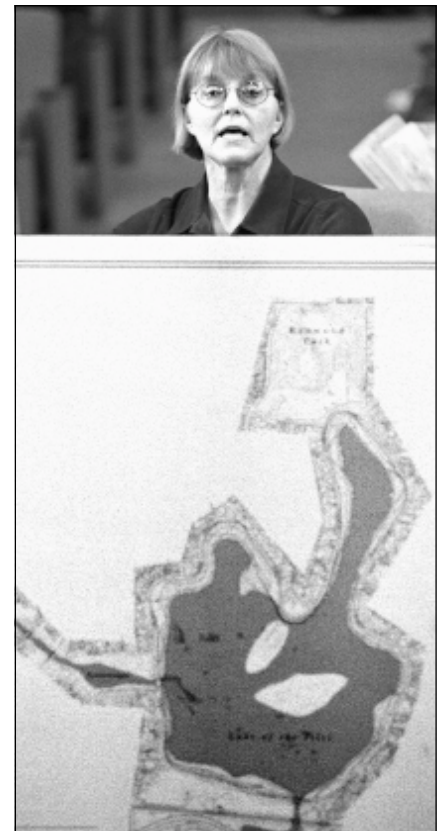
Haas argued that the small companies — whether in Minnesota or outside — need the competitive edge afforded in his bill to level the playing field. He said if the two-year pilot program works, he would be more open to Greenfield's suggestion.

The bill moves to the House floor.

Mandate plan stalls

A bill that would require health plans to cover eyeglasses and hearing aids under certain circumstances was laid over for further study by the House Commerce Committee on March 29.

Isles S.O.S.



Vivian Mason, a commissioner for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, sits behind a map of Lake of the Isles as she describes the need for funding flood mitigation programs at the lake. Mason spoke to lawmakers on the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee on March 31.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), chair of the committee, said he plans to appoint an interim committee to review the effects of such mandates on the insurance industry.

"This is a very important issue," Davids said. "This isn't something we can just brush off."

The bill (HF846) would require eyeglasses to be covered for people who are deaf or hard of hearing and rely on vision for communication — either through American Sign Language or lip reading. Hearing aids would be covered if they are for children under age 18 or for adults who have a specified level of hearing loss.

Rep. Luanne Koskinen (DFL-Coon Rapids), sponsor of the bill, said health plans should consider eyeglasses and hearing aids necessary in those situations. Some hearing loss is genetic, she said, which means some families have more than one child requiring hearing aids, and those expenses cause significant financial hardship for those families.

Other bills that put mandates on health coverage have failed to become law in recent years, Davids said. A major reason is that some lawmakers and others object to passing mandates that do not affect self-insured companies.

About one-third of the people in the state are covered by self-insured companies. But state mandates cannot be applied to the self-insured companies, so the mandates and the related costs are only passed on to those who pay premiums in the private market.

Budget outline



Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer presents a portion of her office's budget request to members of the House State Government Finance Committee on March 30.

until next year, because a Senate companion bill has yet to be introduced.



SPORTS

New soccer stadium plan

The House Higher Education Finance Committee discussed a proposal March 31 to change plans for a University of Minnesota women's soccer stadium.

The U of M is set to break ground this month on a soccer stadium for which the Legislature approved funding in 1998. The site was originally planned for Falcon Heights, near the university's St. Paul campus.

Last summer, Falcon Heights residents opposed the construction, and the U of M chose a new site in the city for the stadium. That site currently is home to recreational fields that will have to be moved, and some residents are concerned that limited space for new fields would ultimately conflict with neighborhoods.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) is proposing to dismantle that plan in favor of using the grandstand area at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. Except for 12 days a year when the fair is on, the grandstand area would be a good solution to accommodate a women's soccer field, she said.

Hausman's bill (HF2046) would appropriate \$3 million to the U of M to build the facility on the fairgrounds. It also would require the school to let municipal youth soccer teams use its soccer fields during the summer.

The committee did not take action on the bill, but lawmakers will consider it for possible inclusion in the omnibus higher education finance bill.

No stickers on antique boats



Owners of antique boats will have more leeway in displaying their boat licenses, under a measure signed March 26 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The new law will allow owners of restored historic boats to affix the license number and decals to a detachable device on the boat instead of to the boat itself. It will affect boats that were built before July 1, 1959, and are used solely as collector's items. The law takes effect Aug. 1.

Rep. Jim Rostberg (R-Isanti), House sponsor of the measure, said it will allow owners of those boats to participate in parades or events without having to deface the valuable crafts with license stickers.

In a letter filed with the bill, Ventura wrote that he believes the law should apply to all watercraft.



LAW

Malpractice limit extended



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law March 26 that will give more victims of medical malpractice their day in court.

Current law requires that lawsuits dealing with medical malpractice must be initiated within two years of the alleged occurrence of the malpractice. The new law will allow up to four years to take legal action.

Bill sponsor Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth) said that some cases of malpractice do not become evident within the two-year period and when the victims discover the problem, it is too late to take action.

Van Dellen said his bill will not change the standard for malpractice, it will just allow these cases to move forward.

The new law is effective Aug. 1 and will apply to legal actions commenced on or following that date.

Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF56*/SF90/CH23



SAFETY

Fireworks bill fizzles

A plan to legalize some fireworks appears to have fizzled out, and its supporters may have to wait until next year.

The House Crime Prevention Committee laid over a bill March 30 that would have legalized smaller devices such as party poppers, sparklers, smoke bombs, snakes, and glow worms.

Bill sponsor Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth) said the list of devices in the bill is reasonable.

"It doesn't include anything that flies in the air or explodes," he said. "It allows safe enjoyment of freedom in Minnesota."

But Nyle Zikmund, a spokesperson for the Minnesota Fire Chiefs Association, said that legalizing fireworks would result in more fires and, consequently, more costs to local governments forced to fight those fires.

"We simply don't need fireworks," he said.

The bill (HF1896) was laid over, which means it likely will not be considered again

"It is my expectation that the Legislature will revisit this issue in a future legislative session and pass a bill exempting all watercraft from the license display requirement during any exhibit, regatta, or boat parade held in Minnesota," he wrote.

Sen. Doug Johnson (DFL-Tower) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF137*/SF463/CH22



TAXES

A fitness tax break

Encouraging Minnesotans who make healthy lifestyle choices is the aim of a bill that would eliminate sales tax on most health club memberships.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie), told the House Taxes Committee on March 30 that the original purpose of the tax had disappeared — and so should the tax.

Paulsen said the tax was extended to include health clubs in the late 1980s as a method of financing debt service on bonds issued to build amateur sports facilities in Blaine, a swimming pool at the University of Minnesota, and the St. Cloud State University hockey arena.

But, he noted, the tax revenue far exceeded estimates and the need for the money has gone away.

YMCA, YWCA, and Jewish Community Center memberships in the state are already exempt. Paulsen's bill would not extend that exemption to member-governed or member-controlled clubs.

Additional fees paid by members for the use of racquetball or tennis courts, gymnasiums, equipment, swimming pools, or other equipment would remain taxable.

Passing the bill would level the playing field for such firms as Lifetime Fitness, according to the company's vice president for finance Shaun Nugent.

Nugent said organizations like his are taxed twice — first when they purchase equipment to put in their health clubs and then again when they are forced to tax those who join.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) questioned whether the exemption would extend to memberships sold by city-operated health facilities, such as those in Chaska and Shoreview.

Paulsen said that was his intent; however, cities that contract with private companies to run their facilities, such as Plymouth, may not be exempt.

The bill (HF1597) was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Boosting deductions

Some say those who are allowed to deduct a charitable gift are more likely to give and to give more. So why not offer everyone the opportunity to deduct their gifts, regardless of their federal tax-filing status?

Three bills outlined by House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) before the House Taxes Committee on March 26 aim to do just that.

Pawlenty said there's an increasing need for the measures as government looks more to nonprofits to provide essential human services.

Roughly 60 percent of Minnesota taxpayers do not itemize, choosing instead to use the standard deduction. Pawlenty believes that's an inequity that should be fixed.

Pawlenty said taxpayers generally begin to itemize deductions when their income reaches \$75,000 annually. Those who make less give in significant amounts, but their contributions are not recognized by the state tax code.

The three bills offer varying strategies for implementing the overall plan.

HF25 would allow taxpayers who claim the federal standard deduction to subtract a portion of charitable contributions from taxable income in calculating their state income tax. The subtraction would be 50 percent of contributions that exceed \$500.

HF108 would allow a non-refundable tax credit equal to 75 percent of contributions to charities that provide direct services in Minnesota to people with incomes below 185 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

And HF109 would allow a non-refundable tax credit equal to 50 percent of contributions to any qualifying charities in Minnesota, with a cap of \$100 for married couples filing joint returns and \$50 for all other taxpayers.

Pawlenty said HF108 would mean considerable work for the Department of Revenue, which would have to determine which charities would qualify. However, it would be the least costly of the measures.

The tax credit idea had strong support from the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and several of the council's members who testified.

"People give because they believe in the causes that they support," said John Pratt, executive director of the council. "Once people decide to contribute, the amount they donate can be influenced by the charitable tax deduction."

Tax provisions similar to Pawlenty's proposals were passed by the House last year but did not become law.

The Taxes Committee will consider the measures for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Effort to spur housing

Creating low-income housing opportunities in Minnesota should be a priority, according to Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul).

Dawkins unveiled a proposal before the House Taxes Committee on March 25 that he says would spur creation of such housing. His bill (HF584) would create a low-income housing tax credit similar to one already provided by the federal government.

By replicating the federal program, Dawkins said, additional housing could be built without adding more bureaucracy.

About 1,500 new housing units, mostly apartments, are built annually in the state with money from the federal tax incentive program. Dawkins believes that number could double if his bill passes.

Under the federal law, tax credits are sold at auction and investors purchase them, creating a pool of money for housing developments targeted to those in need. The money is made available to developers to build the projects. An independent company is often hired to run the housing complexes.

Robert Ewanika, president of Eloigne Company, a subsidiary of Northern States Power, told the committee his firm has invested \$182 million in 3,285 apartment units across Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

The bulk of the units have been built in the Twin Cities area. One of the firm's more successful projects, he said, was Central Towers in St. Paul. About \$5 million provided by Eloigne was used to renovate the building, constructed in the 1960s. Today it is managed by Presbyterian Homes and is 100 percent occupied.

Dawkins said encouraging private sector participation appears to be a good way attain low-income housing goals. Past moves by the Legislature to lower taxes on apartment properties have not had a great deal of impact.

Several lawmakers said they had concerns about the quality of the management of the apartment complexes that are created. Others expressed concerns about the complexity of the tax credit program, which, by requiring lawyers and accountants for interpretation, could mean less money would be available for direct financing of housing projects.

Dawkins agreed the plan is not perfect, but he said the alternative would be pumping more state money directly into financing housing projects.

If passed, the bill is expected to cost the state about \$5 million annually.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.



TRANSPORTATION

Emissions testing opposed

The House passed a bill March 26 that would repeal the state's motor vehicle emission testing program. The vote was 93-40.

The program would end Jan. 1, 2000, or earlier if the state attains federal air quality standards for carbon monoxide.

"I believe we should put that money back in the pockets of taxpayers," said Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View), sponsor of the bill.

Haake said carbon monoxide levels have been decreasing steadily since the emissions program was started in 1991 but that it is not clear whether the emissions program caused that decrease. She attributed part of the decrease in carbon monoxide to improvements in automobile technology.

The testing program was signed into law in 1988 by then-Gov. Rudy Perpich. It was created in response to a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finding that the seven-county metropolitan area's carbon monoxide level exceeded federal and state standards. The program went into effect in mid-1991 for all vehicles built after 1976.

In 1995, then-Gov. Arne Carlson signed a bill that exempted new cars up to five years old

from emissions testing. That measure cut by one-third the number of vehicles required to undergo inspection each year.

Emissions inspections cost \$8 per vehicle and are assessed as part of vehicle registration.

Gov. Jesse Ventura's biennial budget proposal also calls for the repeal of the emissions inspection program, contingent upon federal approval of air quality standards. Under the governor's plan, the program would be repealed as of Aug. 1.

The earlier version of Haake's bill had called for the program to end July 1, 2000, but that date was moved up in anticipation of the state's compliance with air quality standards.

Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) said the state's air quality problems are not over. A recent EPA study has identified seven types of air pollution, four of which are from motor vehicles, she said.

"When the (emissions) test picks up cars that are not performing and you tune up your car, it also eliminates 11 million pounds of hydrocarbons per year," she said.

Other lawmakers pointed out flaws in the emissions tests and said the state should find other ways to improve air quality.

"This program has never had a significant impact," said Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), chair of the House Environ-

ment and Natural Resources Policy Committee. "If we really wanted to do something for the environment, would we have left so many loopholes in it? The public doesn't support it, and it's time to get rid of it."

The bill (HF7) now moves to the Senate.

Easing plate application



A new law effective Aug. 1 reduces the steps required to obtain disability license plates.

The law will apply to anyone who applies for a set of disability license plates for a vehicle that has been modified for permanent use by a person with a disability.

It will do away with the current requirement that people must provide additional proof of their disability by a physician's statement or other means to obtain the special license plates.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) and Sen. Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville) sponsored the legislation.

HF165/SF460*/CH25

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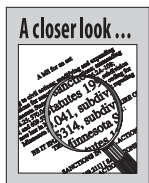
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Lawmakers contend with stubborn feedlot concerns

By Paul Wahl



The debate over animal feedlot regulation has wafted into the Legislature in each of the past three sessions, fueled by concerns over potential health hazards of air and water quality affected by the facilities and their manure lagoons.

Last year a House-approved moratorium on new or expanding feedlots was rejected by the Senate, but a two-year moratorium on construction of certain swine waste lagoons did make it into law.

And lawmakers directed the Office of the Legislative Auditor to study the issue, resulting in a report released in January that criticized the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for not acting quickly enough to produce rules for feedlot operation.

This session, the House has debated only a handful of feedlot proposals, but the most contentious appears to be a bill (HF1235) that would exempt operators from standards for ambient hydrogen sulfide emission levels on days manure is being removed from barns or storage facilities and handled for application on land or other disposal.

Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet), the bill's sponsor, said it is a common-sense measure that would assure farmers won't be punished for actions they cannot avoid. The House Agriculture Policy Committee approved the measure March 29.

A feedlot is a lot or building or combination of lots or buildings used to feed, breed, raise, and hold animals. They are designed as confinement areas, and manure often accumulates in basins.

Although the basins are covered with a thick odor-stopping crust most of the time, it occasionally must be removed so the manure solids can be extracted. The byproduct is often spread on nearby land as a natural fertilizer.

The air can get rather pungent during those times. Hydrogen sulfide levels often rise above what is allowed by regulators.

Jenny Ward, environmental manager for a dairy operation near St. Peter, told lawmakers that city sewage lagoons, landfills, and breweries have a similar problem at various points in their production cycles.

"For farmers, it's like road weight restrictions in the spring," Ward said. "We work with it because we know it's just a matter of time until it's over."

She said suggestions that feedlot operators



Olivia resident Julie Jansen brought buckets of liquid manure and a device that measures airborne hydrogen sulfide amounts to demonstrate to lawmakers the noxious nature of the substance. Although she was not permitted to the uncap the buckets for a demonstration, she testified against a bill that would exempt livestock feedlots from ambient hydrogen sulfide standards on certain days.

would use the exemption as an excuse to allow smells to rise unabated year-round was ludicrous, considering that the emptying process must be done at very specific times of the year.

She said most farms must rent the equipment involved, paying by the day. The sooner the process is over, the less it costs, and the sooner the smell is controlled again.

But opponents argue that any exposure to hydrogen sulfide can be harmful, causing headaches, nausea, and upper-respiratory problems.

Former candidate for lieutenant governor Julie Jansen, who lives near a large feedlot in the Olivia area, told lawmakers she has spent the past four years battling with the owners and regulatory agencies.

She brought several covered buckets of liquid hog manure and a metering device to the hearing to demonstrate her point, but she was not allowed to uncap the buckets.

She said hydrogen sulfide is an asphyxiating gas that is absorbed into the lungs.

"Because it is cumulative in your system, no level is safe," Jansen said.

If the bill becomes law, she said, "the state will take the only protection we have and mandate we have to breathe this 14 to 28 days a year," she said.

Some lawmakers said they are still interested in looking at alternative solutions to the feedlot problem.

Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls) said feedlot operators should look more closely at using chemical additives that he believes would reduce the amount of hydrogen sulfide released during the stirring process.

But Jim Sullivan, feedlot air quality manager for the MPCA, said he does not believe enough commercial testing has been conducted on those additives.

Sullivan also said that so far no feedlots have been cited for exceeding emission standards and that his department's rules regarding the subject are still being rewritten.

The slow pace of the rulemaking process was specifically criticized in the report by the legislative auditor, which also stated concerns that the entire feedlot issue may overwhelm department staff.

There are 45,000 feedlots in the state. The rules were last updated in 1978.

Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison) said it may not be advantageous to write an exemption into law when rules have not been adopted.

And others said the issue should not be approached only from an agricultural or environmental perspective.

Don Dame, a mechanical engineer from Woodbury, told lawmakers on the agriculture panel that the feedlot problem would be best solved by engineers. He said in three years time with about \$10 million in funding, a team of engineers could devise a solution that would be acceptable to everyone.

"But no one is working on it from that direction," he said.

Swenson's bill was amended to include a provision to require five days notice to neighbors of pending stirring activity.

The measure moves to the House floor. 🐷

Grams describes goals of new era in government

By Sarah Hallonquist

Borrowing from another famous Minnesotan, U.S. Sen. Rod Grams told state lawmakers in the House chamber March 29 that “the times, they are a-changin.”

Two years ago, Hulk Hogan was the world’s best-known wrestler, Grams said. And the best-known Monica was found on the NBC sitcom “Friends.”

But a lot has changed in two years, said Grams, whose term is up in 2000. He joked to lawmakers that his re-election campaign slogan is “Rod the Bod for Senate in 2000.”

But some things have not changed, including the Republican senator’s political beliefs. In a 25-minute speech, he described a set of conservative governing principles that he said guide his work as a federal lawmaker, and he urged Minnesota legislators to use them, too.

Those principles include lowering the tax burden, avoiding duplication of government services, and respecting states’ rights by supporting local control.

“Washington should never intrude on your right of doing what’s right for the people of Minnesota,” Grams told lawmakers.

House Republicans applauded his suggestion to scrap the federal tax code and rebuild it from scratch. He urged a reduction of other kinds of taxes and commended lawmakers for working on a rebate for taxpayers. And in light of state and federal surpluses, Grams said the time is right for a reduction of income tax rates.

On the subject of education, the senator said the federal government requires too much paperwork, which he views as wasteful. He said the ins and outs of education are best solved at the home-town level, and not in Washington, D.C.

“Let’s put more money into educating our kids and quit lining the pockets of bureaucrats,” he said.

Grams warned his colleagues not to take the contributions of citizens — fiscal or otherwise — lightly. He offered his cooperation to work with state officials, and he seemed optimistic about his job.

“Together, we can make the most of our service,” he said.

Another theme of Grams’ speech was the size and scope of government, which, he said repeatedly, is too far-reaching.

“In case you haven’t noticed, government is everywhere today,” he said.

Grams told a technologically enhanced



U.S. Sen. Rod Grams tells lawmakers to be wary of big government during a March 29 address in the House chamber.

version of the biblical tale of Noah’s Ark to illustrate his views on government regulation. He told of Noah needing a building permit. Then he said Noah had to hire an engineer to redesign the ark specifications to meet code requirements, which delayed the date that the ark could be ready.

After the installation of a sprinkler system to meet fire safety rules, Noah then handled an Occupational Safety and Health Administration complaint and had to make sure he reported his expenditures correctly to the Internal Revenue Service. And when the ark was finished, it rained so hard that the federal government declared the earth a wetland.

While government regulations can exist to help people, Grams said sometimes they are unnecessary.

“Government can’t be everything to everyone,” he said.

Grams said some government programs and policies have caused citizens to adopt more cynical attitudes toward the political process. However, he said, government does have the potential to positively affect people’s lives.

“It ought to encourage success, not block it,” he said. “It ought to always be there for those in need.”


The audience, consisting of most of Minnesota’s Republican legislators and a number of their DFL colleagues, reacted favorably to Grams’ speech. Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet) said the senator spoke about many issues on which the two agree.

“I agree with this philosophy that government should provide for people,” Swenson said.

But he added that often lawmakers get caught up in policy-making and forget whose money they are handling. Swenson added that officials should be careful about taking too much money away from citizens, a point also stressed by Grams.

Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington) said she did not agree with some of Grams’ anti-government statements, but did find some common ground in the rest of his remarks.

“It’s not a partisan issue to do what’s right with the people’s money,” she said.

Grams spoke to the Legislature in 1997, as did his Democratic colleague Sen. Paul Wellstone. Although his appearance is not yet scheduled, Wellstone has also been invited by House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) to address lawmakers this session. 

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides committee meetings schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* news magazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

New headquarters . . .

Revenue department at home in Capitol complex

By Paul Wahl

Minnesota taxpayers who stop in at the new Department of Revenue headquarters this year will be greeted in an expansive sun-drenched lobby at the new office building in the Capitol complex.

But they won't be able to follow their tax returns beyond the lobby area and onto the giant sparkling floor where the processing is done. The new \$74.5 million building is secure — meaning no visitor goes unescorted or unaccounted for beyond the reception area.

"People tend to think that's either to protect money — in fact we have very little cash in the building — or else they think it's to protect workers from terrorists," said John Lally, assistant commissioner at the revenue department.

And although concern over a possible terrorist attack has been cited as one reason the department does not yet have a permanent sign identifying its new location, Lally said it is really an unlikely possibility — or at least one that won't be minimized by the absence of a sign.

"If taxpayers can find us, terrorists can find us," he said. "We're in the phone book. And terrorists rarely drive around with bombs in their cars just in case they run across a tax building."

Lally said a completed sign is in storage waiting for the new commissioner of the Department of Administration to give the go-ahead to put it up.

But despite having only a temporary banner to announce the new offices at the corner of Robert and 12th streets in St. Paul, the revenue department's new home is fully operational. It opened for business in October 1998 — just 14 months from the time a construction contract was signed.

Lally said the speedy building process was made possible by using a design-build concept.

"You start building before you know what it's going to look like," he said. "You make decisions real fast. It worked remarkably well."

Lally has been working on the revenue department's latest relocation since 1994. It had been the tenant of a building on St. Paul's riverfront since 1988, but that space didn't allow for growth or technological updates.

And since 1995, Lally said, it's been obvious



The first stop for Minnesota tax returns is the document processing room in the Department of Revenue's new building in the Capitol complex.

that a bigger space was needed for the 900 year-round department workers and the up to 400 additional tax-season employees. After study, a team of designers proposed a building with a \$130 million price tag, which Lally called "totally irrational."

The Legislature turned down that idea and another consultant was hired. This time the proposal was a design-build structure in suburban Inver Grove Heights, with an estimated cost of about \$45 million.

But the idea of moving the Department of Revenue outside of the capital city was opposed by many members of the Legislature. Eventually the department received approval to build

within view of the Capitol for \$74.5 million or to purchase and refurbish the building it already occupied. Moving to Inver Grove Heights was at the bottom of the list, despite the potential savings.

By the time all of the negotiation and deliberation had taken place, two years had passed and the department was facing a deadline to be out of its existing building after lease negotiations failed. To assure the work would be completed on time, a \$6.7 million penalty clause was inserted in the construction contract.

"It was built in record time," Lally said.

"Instead of four years, it took one. And it cost less because there weren't inflated construction dollars to deal with."

What resulted was an ultra-modern and spacious office building.

Foot-friendly carpeting covers nearly all of the floors. And all flooring except that in the storage areas of the basement is raised to allow full access for an advanced fiber-optics network that connects the entire facility.

It has state-of-the-art ventilation, cooling, and heating systems. And office walls are easily removed and replaced.

Lally said most of the growth space is in the public areas. Customer service was high on the design priority list.

The department collects \$11.4 billion in gross state tax receipts annually, much of which is from electronic transfer payments from businesses. That's the reason the public is kept out of the work centers, Lally said.

"We have an enormous amount of highly confidential data all through the building," he said. "We have to protect that information from unauthorized eyes."

By all evaluations, the building is serving its purpose well. Lally said one of the more noticeable benefits has been the attitude of the people who work for the department.

Some of them had begun their careers working at U.S. Army surplus desks in cubicles with one tiny light bulb overhead.

"The people who work in this building take

Continued on page 20

New building by the numbers

- 381,000 square feet of high-tech office space
- 902-stall parking ramp
- 350,000 person-hours of construction labor
- 3,200 tons of structural steel and reinforcing steel
- 14,000 cubic yards of concrete
- 30,000 square feet of exterior glass
- 20,000 light bulbs
- 123 miles of electrical wiring
- 10 miles of pipe
- 450 tons of ventilation ductwork

Governor's Desk

CH1-CH26

Bills await governor's action

Once a bill has passed both the House and the Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill. The governor 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 results in the bill becoming law in the first year of the biennium. The timing of these actions is as significant as the actions themselves.

In the first year of the biennium, the important thing to remember is that the

governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill. If the governor doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law with or without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

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 objects. As with all vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

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.mainserver.state.mn.us/governor/>
(Select "It's a New Day" and then click on "Legislative Logs")

Key:

CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
Res. 1	544*	638	Resolution for Minnesota/Ontario border lakes trade agreements violation resolution.	3/26/99	
Res. 2	719	757*	Resolution to prohibit federal recoupment of state tobacco settlement recoveries.	3/29/99	
1	88	139*	Campaign finance and public disclosure board member qualifications specified.	2/17/99	
2	29	26*	Mississippi education center previous grantee changed to the city of Grand Rapids, and condition imposed.	2/17/99	
3	107	133*	Minneapolis and St. Paul residency requirements repealed.	3/4/99	
4	40	6*	Snowmobile metal traction device use restrictions modified and recreational vehicle rulemaking authority modified.	3/4/99	
5	121*	171	Health-related licensing board licensees infection control.	3/8/99	
6	424*	370	Nonregistered pesticide distribution permitted for certain uses outside the state.	3/8/99	
7	324	248*	Crooked Lake detached banking facility.	3/15/99	
8	241	214*	Emergency medical services volunteer ambulance attendant definition.	3/15/99	
9	464*	536	Carisoprodol classification as controlled substance effective date delay.	3/15/99	
10	73*	356	Consumer support program for persons with functional limitations financial eligibility criteria modification.	3/15/99	
11	343*	382	Real estate provisions modifications.	3/15/99	
12	162	49*	Peace officers or firefighters killed in line of duty spouse health insurance coverage.	3/16/99	
13	579	302*	Ambulance services shared service purchasing.	3/16/99	
14	301*	74	Health care directive form modification.	3/16/99	
15	416	453*	Minneapolis skilled workers and apprentices deferred compensation plan participation.	3/18/99	
16	379	157*	Laura Ingalls Wilder historic highway route modification.	3/18/99	
17	564	454*	Nursing home administrators sharing authority expansion.	3/18/99	
18	610	649*	Safe drinking water act public water supply definition modification.	3/25/99	
19	812	914*	Legislative Electric Energy Task Force membership modification.	3/25/99	
20	434	593*	St. Cloud paramount arts district regional arts center grant recipient change.	3/25/99	
21	48	50*	Public utilities performance based natural gas purchasing plans sunset repeal.	3/25/99	
22	137*	463	Collector watercraft license numbers and display requirements exemption.	3/26/99	
23	56*	90	Health care provider actions statute of limitations modification.	3/26/99	
24	193	255*	Emergency telephone (911) calls interference crime expansion.	3/29/99	
25	165	460*	Special disability license plates for modified motor vehicles.	3/29/99	
26	438	407*	McLeod West School District #2887; secondary educational facility grant.	3/29/99	

Bill Introductions

HF2292-HF2346

Monday, March 29

HF2292—Sviggum (R) **K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 2172, Kenyon-Wanamingo, technology grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2293—Dorman (R) **Agriculture Policy**

Minnesota grown agricultural promotion program expansion and administration appropriation provided.

HF2294—Ozment (R) **Transportation Policy**

State transportation bond issuance authorized to match federal funds and replace or rehabilitate local bridges, and money appropriated.

HF2295—Wenzel (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 482, Little Falls, and Morrison County cooperative facility grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2296—Bishop (R) **Capital Investment**

Transitional housing provided for felons, report required, bond sale authorized, and money appropriated.

HF2297—Murphy (DFL) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Local police and paid fire consolidation account member contribution rate revised, and certification procedure for coverage expansion eliminated.

HF2298—Dawkins (DFL) **Taxes**

Notification required for compromised tax liabilities, and certain farm property capital gains tax deduction provided.

HF2299—Schumacher (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Young inventors program expansion appropriation provided.

HF2300—Bishop (R) **Taxes**

Mayo Civic Center construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF2301—McElroy (R) **Taxes**

Time limit provided for denial of tax refunds.

HF2302—Entenza (DFL) **State Government Finance**

Public radio funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF2303—Finseth (R) **Taxes**

East Grand Forks redevelopment project grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF2304—McElroy (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Affordable housing demonstration project established, and money appropriated.

HF2305—Broecker (R) **Taxes**

Income tax checkoff provided for the children's trust fund for the prevention of child abuse.

HF2306—Rhodes (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Redevelopment account appropriation provided.

HF2307—Hilty (DFL) **State Government Finance**

Senate appropriation provided for production and distribution of an educational tape on the legislative process.

HF2308—Milbert (DFL) **Taxes**

Green acres property taxation definition expanded.

HF2309—Milbert (DFL) **Taxes**

Certain items exempted from sales and use tax including books, sheet music, personal hygiene products, and veterinary prescription drugs.

HF2310—Larsen, P. (R) **Health & Human Services Policy**

Sexually transmitted infections report required, and money appropriated for prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, HIV prevention initiatives for greater Minnesota and HIV and substance abuse prevention.

HF2311—Winter (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 417, Tracy, levy authority provided.

HF2312—Winter (DFL) **K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 417, Tracy, grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2313—Westfall (R) **Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Wolverton City Creek restoration project appropriation provided.

HF2314—Lenczewski (DFL) **Taxes**

Bloomington obligation to fiscal disparities areawide tax base eliminated under certain conditions.

HF2315—Wenzel (DFL) **Taxes**

Certain cities provided increased government aid.

HF2316—Huntley (DFL) **Taxes**

Property tax treatment clarified for certain property owned by utilities and leased for residential or recreational purposes.

HF2317—Larson, D. (DFL) **Taxes**

Property tax increases prohibited for taxes payable in 2000, limits imposed on later increases, study required, and money appropriated.

HF2318—Trimble (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Demonstration projects created for economic and community development through telecommunications technology, regional electronic commerce incentives funded, and money appropriated.

Tuesday, March 30

HF2319—Abeler (R) **Education Policy**

Phonics education required in elementary school, staff development provided, and phonics instruction required for teacher licensure.

HF2320—Abeler (R) **Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Public employee military duty reimbursement time period redefined.

HF2321—Mulder (R) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Pipestone County Historical Society economic development grant provided.

HF2322—Dorman (R) **Taxes**

Property tax credit for debt service and referendum levies on agriculture property provided, and money appropriated.

HF2323—Gray (DFL) **Education Policy**

Parent definition modified for compulsory education and reporting, county and state agency reporting permitted, at-risk student needs development structure provided, advisory council created, and money appropriated.

HF2324—Peterson (DFL) **Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Madison historic preservation and downtown redevelopment program grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2325—Solberg (DFL) **Taxes**

Business incubator property tax exemption requirements modified.

HF2326—Finseth (R) **Taxes**

Counties provided aid for flood-related market value losses, and money appropriated.

HF2327—Fuller (R)
Crime Prevention

Inmates required to apply assets toward incarceration costs, impoverishment of innocent spouse prevention provided, certain transfers of assets permitted, certain transfers prohibited and criminal penalties provided.

HF2328—Opatz (DFL)
Higher Education Finance

St. Cloud State University teacher training program to increase urban teachers of color appropriation provided.

HF2329—Peterson (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Madison provided grant for infrastructure for the Madison historic preservation and downtown redevelopment program, bond issuance authorized, and money appropriated.

Wednesday, March 31

HF2330—Rhodes (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Administration provisions modified relating to public lands, procurements, easements, designer selection, parking facilities, and other matters, and state archaeologist authority modified.

HF2331—Hasskamp (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Watercraft license fees modified, and personal watercraft surcharge repealed.

HF2332—Knoblach (R)
Capital Investment

Beaver Island Trail in Stearns county grant matching requirements modified.

HF2333—Seagren (R)
K-12 Education Finance

Jan. 5 deadline for settlement of teacher contracts repealed.

HF2334—Holsten (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Resident and nonresident hunting and fishing license fees modified.

HF2335—Howes (R)
Health & Human Services Finance

Park Rapids nursing facility contract payment rate increased.

HF2336—Sviggum (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) member appointment provisions modified.

HF2337—Larsen, P. (R)
Civil Law

Year 2000 failure civil action liability limited.

HF2338—Haas (R)
Transportation Finance

Pedestrian bridge over Highway 169 construction required, and money appropriated.

HF2339—Dehler (R)
Higher Education Finance

International technology acquisition and transfer system development appropriation provided.

HF2340—Westfall (R)
Agriculture Policy

Usefulness of developing a revolving loan fund to support value-added activities associated with short rotation of woody crops provided, and report required.

HF2341—Molnau (R)
Transportation Finance

Trunk highway bonds issued for bridge repair, construction, and reconstruction and for acquisition of right-of-way, and money appropriated.

HF2342—Wagenius (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Office of strategic and long-range planning directed to create state development strategy, and money appropriated.

HF2343—Molnau (R)
Transportation Finance

Commuter rail plan adopted, design plan approval process established, coordination committee created, and regional rail authority provisions modified.

HF2344—Rhodes (R)
Health & Human Services Finance

Nonprofit agency appropriations restored.

HF2345—Bishop (R)
Ways & Means

Legislative Commission on Planning and Fiscal Policy forecasting and budgeting standards developed.

HF2346—Kubly (DFL)
State Government Finance

Compulsive gambling treatment and education appropriation provided.

Continued from page 17

a great deal of pride in it," Lally said.

While he's convinced the Inver Grove Heights location would have worked fine, Lally said this spot is more convenient for taxpayers and for those who have to run back and forth to the Capitol.

The department isn't connected to the underground tunnel that links several buildings around the Capitol, but there are plans to make the connection soon. There is a tunnel that connects the building to the adjacent parking ramp. 🐾



Evidently, fear of pie-throwers is escalating around the Capitol after Sen. Carol Flynn (DFL-Mpls) was hit in the face with a pie thrown by a protester March 30.

Ted Mondale, chairman of the Metropolitan Council, tried to dissuade possible assailants during a March 31 meeting of the House Transportation Finance Committee.

"I just want to clarify if anyone has a pie here this morning they should go after the guy with the beard," Mondale said of his colleague Elwyn Tinklenberg, commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

The two attended the committee meeting to urge lawmakers to fund light rail transit initiatives.

Where to find information

House Television Services

216C State Capitol (651) 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>

All televised floor sessions and committee hearings are close-captioned for people with hearing impairments.

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

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MONDAY, April 5

**The House will not meet in session.
Committees will not meet.**

TUESDAY, April 6

10 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: HF350 (Tuma) Cannon River Valley watershed district protection provided, trail and joint powers planning funded, and money appropriated.

HF495 (Howes) Nonpaved alternative trails developed adjacent to the Heartland Paul Bunyon State Trails, and money appropriated.

HF1667 (Westrom) Design and engineering appropriation provided for Minnesota River trail from Appleton to the Milan Beach on Lake Lac Qui Parle.

HF1252 (Murphy) Money appropriated for a snowmobile trail to connect the Willard Munger state trail and the North Shore state trail.

HF1539 (Davids) Olmsted County regional trail appropriation provided.

HF2245 (Westfall) Whiskey Creek restoration project appropriation provided in city of Barnesville.

HF2076 (Peterson, D.) Chippewa County; recreational trail resurfaced from Milan to Lac Qui Parle Lake and money appropriated.

HF1774 (Bakk) Gitchie-Gami trail constructed along Lake Superior in Lake and Cook counties, and money appropriated.

HF955 (McCollum) Ramsey and Washington counties regional trail development around Silver Lake funded, and money appropriated.

12 noon

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Construction of the judiciary finance omnibus bill.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: HF479 (Westrom) Agricultural producer contract advisory task force established; livestock, agricultural commodity, and specialty crop contracts studied; and money appropriated. HF808 (Ness) Bovine paratuberculosis diagnosis data classification provided, Board of Animal Health executive secretary name changed to executive director, and sale of cattle limitations repealed.

HF978 (Harder) Agricultural water quality and quantity management initiative funded, and money appropriated.

HF447 (Winter) Livestock price discrimination prohibited and civil penalties provided.

HF816 (Peterson) Feedlot and manure management advisory committee composition modified.

HF543 (Peterson) Cooperatively owned livestock processing plant development program established and money appropriated.

HF486 (Bakk) Riparian landowners and aircraft operators allowed bulk delivery of nonoxygenated gasoline.

Note: Bills not heard in this meeting will be added to the end of the April 7 committee meeting agenda.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: HF1123 (McCollum) St. Paul flood mitigation holding pond grant provided.

Overview of magnet school proposals for Woodbury and Edina.

HF1547 (Bishop) Minnesota State Colleges and Universities capital improvements authorized, and money appropriated.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

30 minutes after session

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF539 (Huntley) MFIP face-to-face orientation exemption provided for minor parents.

HF615 (Bradley) Nursing facility provider training and education program established, and money appropriated.

HF1392 (Jennings) Minnesota Family Investment Fund, MFIP, provisions modified relating to earned income disregard, food stamps, and employment services; food assistance to legal noncitizens continued, and TANF administrative cap proposed.

HF1645 (Knobloch) Truancy prevention pilot program provided, and money appropriated.

HF1593 (Mulder) Loan forgiveness program established for certain pharmacy students established, sole community pharmacy financial assistance authorized, and drug therapy management pilot project established.

HF1436 (Greenfield) University of Minnesota Medical School primary care physician training initiative appropriated money.

HF1596 (Goodno) Planning and transition grant program established for providers of older adult services, and money appropriated.

WEDNESDAY, April 7

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF1193 (Nornes) First Call Minnesota federal reimbursement claims processed by the Department of Human Services.

HF1190 (Harder) Westbrook Care Center hospital and clinic improvement grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF468 (Dorn) Emergency medical services fund appropriation automatic inflation adjustment provided.

HF215 (Howes) Comprehensive advanced life support rural medical personnel training program established, and money appropriated.

HF1837 (Fuller) Automatic external defibrillators purchase and study funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF1840 (Fuller) Emergency medical services complaint investigations appropriated money.

HF2161 (Olson) Traumatic brain injury demonstration project appropriated money.

HF2152 (Otremba) Cancer awareness and prevention funded, health data classification provided, and money appropriated.

HF169 (Mulder) MinnesotaCare provider tax exemption provided for free of charge services.

HF217 (Rhodes) Chana Malka Oppen provision for least invasive procedure; mandated autopsy religious exemption created.

HF500 (Mulder) Nonmetropolitan county prepaid Medical Assistance (MA) and prepaid General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) program contract rates increased.

HF952 (Mulder) Health care providers authorized to designate credential verification entities.

HF789 (Goodno) Annual health care provider rate adjustments provided for the purpose of medical assistance, and inflation index modified.

HF1745 (Knobloch) Adult foster care provider respite care supplementary payments provided.

Note: If necessary, this meeting will continue from 12 noon to 2 p.m., and from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: To be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Construction of judiciary finance omnibus bill.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: K-12 education omnibus bill.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Omnibus transportation bill.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: HF875 (Bakk) Small business government contract bid preference limited to two years.

HF879 (Knoblach) Local units of government regulatory relief provided.

HF899 (Dawkins) Spanish-American War corrective historical information plaque commissioned and displayed in the state capitol; and money appropriated.

HF1124 (Smith) Bleacher safety requirements provided, penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF1206 (McGuire) Data access procedures published, data practices compliance required in privatization contracts, model policies prepared, historical director required to assist in records management; information policy training program appropriated money.

HF1654 (Osskopp) Open competition provided for state telecommunications services, state competition with the private sector prohibited, and other conforming changes provided.

HF2101 (Hilty) Government training service provided an exemption from the solicitation process and money appropriated.

10 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: To be announced.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: HF1083 (Swenson) Crop or revenue insurance assistance, and feedlot manure processing and odor control technology development assistance provided; and money appropriated.

HF1088 (Westfall) University of Minnesota crop

disease research funding provided and money appropriated.

HF1528 (Skoe) Wheat and barley scab disease research funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF1091 (Westrom) Minnesota Marketplace grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1200 (Harder) State agricultural experiment stations appropriated money.

HF1204 (Rostberg) Commissioner of agriculture appropriation provided for the county agriculture inspection program.

HF1269 (Ness) Urban agricultural high school created, planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF1270 (Finseth) Urban agricultural high school created, planning grant provided, and money appropriated.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Omnibus finance bill.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: To be announced.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF2219 (Hasskamp) Property tax market value increases limited.

HF2314 (Lenczewski) Bloomington obligation to fiscal disparities areawide tax base eliminated under certain conditions.

HF2265 (Lenczewski) Bloomington fiscal disparities obligation eliminated under certain conditions, and Mall of America tax revenue study authorized.

HF2133 (Finseth) East Grand Forks and Warren provided temporary local government aid increases, and money appropriated.

HF2153 (Gray) Property tax and state aid special taxing districts expanded to include the middle Mississippi River watershed management organization.

1:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Salary and Budget/ Legislative Coordinating Commission

400N State Office Building
Chr. Sen. Roger Moe

Agenda: Review/approve budget proposals for commissions and joint agencies.

2:30 p.m.

Legislative Coordinating Commission

400N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Sviggum

Agenda: Report of the Subcommittee on Salary and Budget (budget proposals for commissions and joint agencies).

3 p.m.

RULES & LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

400S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Pawlenty

Agenda: Calendar for April 8.
House budget.

4 p.m.

WAYS & MEANS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: To be announced.

6 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Omnibus finance bill.

JOBS & ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: To be announced.

7 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: HF1586 (Swenson) Certain land authorized to be enrolled in more than one state or federal conservation program.

HF1747 (Westfall) Agricultural chemical response reimbursement eligibility expanded.
HF1759 (Juhnke) Turkey respiratory disease control and prevention research funded, and money appropriated.

HF1815 (Fuller) Beaver damage control program authorized activities clarified and money appropriated.

HF2012 (Harder) Veterinary practice requirements modified and procedures clarified.
HF1558 (Westfall) Board of Grain Standards provisions and duties modified, rulemaking authorized, and definitions clarified.

HF2251 (Cassell) Temporary permit provided for producers of Grade A or manufactured grade milk for adulterated milk.

HF2293 (Dorman) Minnesota Grown agricultural promotion program expansion and administration appropriation provided.

THURSDAY, April 8

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF177 (Mulder) Partial-birth abortions prohibited, and criminal and civil penalties provided.

HF178 (Boudreau) Abortion informed consent required and civil remedies provided.

HF377 (Goodno) Abortion notification data reporting required and civil penalties imposed.

HF807 (Howes) Rural hospital improvement grant program expanded, Medical Assistance coverage of telemedicine conferences and critical access hospital outpatient fee cost-based system provided, uniform billing established, and money appropriated.

HF990 (Mulder) Health care purchasing alliances development grants provided to local organizations and money appropriated.

HF1023 (Haas) Employer-subsidized health coverage program established.

HF1620 (Greenfield) Community health clinic grant programs appropriated money.

HF1688 (Bradley) Adult mental health day treatment and consolidated chemical dependency treatment fund requirements modified.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: To be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: Construction of judiciary finance omnibus bill.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: Omnibus transportation bill.

9 a.m.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: K-12 education finance omnibus bill.

10 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: To be announced.

10:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: House of Representatives budget presentation.
Legislative Coordinating Commission budget presentation.
Children's Museum budget presentation.
Bills may be added to the agenda.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness
Agenda: HF1203 (Kubly) University of Minnesota farm safety and health program appropriated money.
HF2054 (Wenzel) Dairy farming task force created and money appropriated.
HF2291 (McElroy) Relating to agriculture; repealing the weather modification regulatory laws.
HF1370 (Rostberg) Organic agriculture promotion and funding provided, advisory task force expiration date extended, and money appropriated.
HF1496 (Kubly) Family farm advocates and agriculture information centers appropriated money.
HF1530 (Finseth) Potato aphid research appropriation provided.

HF1531 (Finseth) Seed potato inspection appropriation provided.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach
Agenda: To be announced.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: Omnibus finance bill.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

30 minutes following session

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

6 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: To be announced.

FRIDAY, April 9

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: HF1071 (Rifenberg) Persons with developmental disabilities crisis intervention project carryforward authorized.
HF1449 (Wilkin) Persons with mental retardation day training and habilitation rate variance criteria modified.
HF1650 (Greenfield) Day training and habilitation providers reimbursed for days the provider was closed due to severe weather.
HF429 (Bradley) Programs for persons with developmental disabilities alternative licensing system pilot project duties transferred to the Region 10 Quality Assurance Commission, federal waiver request required, and money appropriated.
HF1127 (Abeler) Noncertified boarding care homes provisions, Medicaid reimbursements, and client records for assisted living home care providers modified.
HF1562 (Bradley) Developmental disabilities provisions modified, consolidated standards intent clarified and expanded to include respite sites, medication administration clarified, and family support program provisions modified.
HF1784 (Goodno) DeafBlind Services Minnesota appropriated money.
HF1794 (Greenfield) Peoples, Inc. deaf and hard-of-hearing services grant provided, and money appropriated.
HF1655 (Greenfield) Minnesota commission serving deaf and hard of hearing people appropriation provided.
Note: Meeting will continue at 12 noon, 10 State Office Building.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: To be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: Construction of judiciary finance omnibus bill.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: K-12 education finance omnibus bill.

10 a.m.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: To be announced.

10:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

400S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: To be announced.

12 noon

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

SATURDAY, April 10

9 a.m.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: Construction of judiciary finance omnibus bill.

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Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Farming in Minnesota

Farms in Minnesota in 1997	87,000
States with more farms than Minnesota in 1997	4
Acres of Minnesota farmland in 1997, in millions	30
Total acres of land and water in Minnesota, in millions	87
Average number of acres per Minnesota farm, 1997	343
Average per acre value of farmland and buildings in Minnesota, 1997	\$1,040
National average	\$942
Average state and local taxes paid per acre of farmland in Minnesota, 1994	\$7.86
In Rhode Island	\$56.75
In Alabama	\$1.32
National average	\$5.86
Minnesota's net farm income in 1997, in billions	2.2
As percent of net national farm income	4.3
Acres of Minnesota farmland planted in 1997, in millions	20.5
National rank	6
Acres of Minnesota farmland harvested in 1997, in millions	20.1
National rank	5
Acres of soybeans harvested in Minnesota in 1997, in millions	6.7
National rank	3
Acres of grain harvested in Minnesota in 1997, in millions	6.5
National rank	4
Acres of corn harvested in Minnesota in 1997, in millions	4.6
National rank	5
Dairy cows in Minnesota in 1996	598,000
National rank	5
Hogs and pigs in Minnesota in 1997, in millions	5.4
National rank	3
Chickens in Minnesota in 1997, in millions	47.5
National rank	20
Eggs produced in Minnesota in 1997, in billions	3
National rank	9

Sources: CQ's State Fact Finder 1999, Congressional Quarterly Inc.; State Rankings 1998: A Statistical View of the 50 United States, Morgan Quitno.

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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ April 9, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 14



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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • April 9, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 14

Reflections



When the lawmakers returned from a spring break this week of April 5, they took up the work left in committee by debating bills that will fund state programs. Eight of those bills addressed money to be appropriated for constructing new recreation and scenic trails or improving some already in place.

Minnesota's trail systems are approximately 18,000 miles of multi-use surface used for hiking, biking, running, walking, and skiing. Other trails get used for snowmobiling, horseback riding, and off-highway motorized vehicle use. These pathways, like 789 miles of cross-country skiing trails, are supervised by the Department of Natural Resources. Others are part of some state, city, and county facilities, with grants-in-aid from the DNR.

Trails, for the most part, are constructed through old rail passages — paths that serve as natural, scenic routes for users to take advantage of the outdoors. An old 12-mile railroad stretch between Rochester and Pine Island became the first trail to be completed in 1974. Of all the railroad pathways in the United States, comprising a total of 10,000 miles, Minnesota is second only to Wisconsin in use of corridors that once were railroad beds.

At a time when legislators are trying to help save the livelihood of small towns across the state, multi-use trails are a boon to municipalities. Bills for funding trails would help connect some towns and help add to their economic well-being. A bill sponsored by Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown), for example, would make a snowmobile trail connection to the Willard Munger State Trail and the North Shore State Trail. Also, a bill sponsored by Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) would provide planning funds for a Cannon River Valley trail.

Some of the other state-funded trails across the state include the Gateway State Trail, the Minnesota Valley Trail, and the Casey Jones Trail. Others are the Root River, Luce Line, Forestville, Heart-land, Gandy Dancer, and Sakatah Singing Hills trails.

Two easily recognizable state trail names are the Paul Bunyan State Trail and the Lake Wobegon Regional Trail between Albany and Avon.

The Paul Bunyan State Trail has only 57 miles completed on its 100-mile route from outside Brainerd to Bemidji. The trail is named for the famous folk hero, who, with his blue ox, Babe, tramped out 15,261 lakes across the state of Minnesota. According to folklore, Bunyan did some other phenomenal things in his job as a logger. As the story goes, he scooped out Washington State's Puget Sound to float logs to the mill.

The first large statue of Bunyan in Minnesota was built in Bemidji in 1937. He and Babe guard Lake Bemidji. Legislators are now helping to hook them up with another Paul Bunyan statue 100 miles away in Brainerd, through a multi-purpose pathway so that many people may use it and other trails connecting with it.

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Springtime light fills the Capitol dome.

— Photo by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

Farmers in crisis . . .

Several plans aim to ease agricultural struggles



From low hog prices to wheat scab disease, Minnesota farmers are facing hard times this year, and lawmakers are considering several proposals aimed at helping the agriculture industry.

By Paul Wahl

Things aren't great down on the farm.

Whether they're hog producers or wheat or barley growers, most farmers agree they're facing a down-cycle the likes of which hasn't been seen in years.

No one is willing to say for sure what has caused the price of hogs to plummet over the past year. But one vocal group of producers and at least one House member believe they've found the culprit — contracts between those who raise pigs and those who buy them.

By one estimate, nearly two-thirds of the hogs raised in Minnesota are sold under contract to meat processors. And that has ruined the free market, critics say.

Two bills are being considered to address the issue.

Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake) would like the state to spend \$25,000 to establish a task force to review issues related to concerns about contracts.

Westrom told the House Agricultural and Rural Development Finance Committee on April 6 that he's trying to keep an open mind, but he believes there are "some changes that could be made" in the contracting process.

His bill (HF479) would create a 20-member task force charged with looking at all aspects of the producer-processor relationship.

Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda) is sponsoring a bill (HF447) that would shine the light of public scrutiny on the contracting process.

The bill would prohibit meat packers from paying different prices for livestock received from different producers, unless there is a clear and specific reason for the price variance — other than simply the existence of a contract.

Winter told the committee that the bill also

would require the bid process to be open and public with daily price reports by packers to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Supporters of Winter's plan claim meat processors — not supply-and-demand market forces — are dictating the prices. Knowing who is being paid what would help put farmers in a better negotiating position, they argue.

Jim McTeak, president of Babcock Swine, a breeding operation in Martin County, testified that he believes contracts are to blame for the failure of the swine market to function as it has in the past. He said contracts have created a false security in the industry, which is harmful in the long run.

Those who favor contracts maintain they are simply part of a business practice that assures farmers of a fair price and packers a sufficient supply of high-quality livestock.

And the defenders of contract pricing, such as the Minnesota Pork Producers Association and Hormel Foods Corp., argue that contracts have actually saved the hog industry in Minnesota. Most of the contracts are between processors and small operators.

Earlier this session, a Hormel spokesman told the committee that his company is simply protecting its investment at its plant in Austin by sewing up much of its animal supply.

Hog farmers say that if they want to expand their operations, banks require them to be locked into contracts as a form of security on their loans.

The problems in Minnesota agricultural industry extend beyond the dip in hog prices. If you're growing crops instead of livestock, you're not immune to the economic troubles.

For wheat and barley growers, help from the Legislature may take the form of increased

dollars for researching scab, or blight, a crop disease that has caused over \$2 billion in losses to producers in the state since 1993. Scab is linked to the persistent wet weather experienced in northwestern Minnesota.

A bill (HF1528) aiming to spend \$1.6 million over and above existing research dollars currently allocated for the next biennium was discussed April 7 by the Agricultural and Rural Development Finance Committee. Bill sponsor Rep. Rod Skoe (DFL-Clearbrook) said farmers in his northwestern Minnesota district have been particularly hard hit by the disease and that all available resources must be turned toward finding a solution.

The outlook is bleak.

Gary Lemme, a plant researcher for the University of Minnesota and co-coordinator of the school's Scab Initiative, said the investigation of scab — also called *Fusarium* head blight — has been ongoing since 1994 and that Minnesota now leads the country in its commitment of both money and resources to solving the problem.

Twenty researchers in three locations are working on hundreds of test plots. Thus far, they've developed four new varieties of grains, but none have proved to be scab resistant.

In addition to searching for more hearty varieties, researchers are also trying to determine how farmers can better manage scab infestations, including developing a machine that will replace human eyes in determining the level of scabby kernels in wheat.

In addition to state money, federal dollars are being thrown into the effort, along with money from the Minnesota Wheat Research and Promotion Council and a similar organization formed by barley growers.

Despite the massive effort, Lemme said the

complete solution might not be discovered for more than five years.

While some farmers are willing to wait for researchers to find an answer to the blight problem, others are moving on to other crops.

To assist those growers, Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet) is sponsoring a bill (HF1083) that would boost funding for the Agricultural Utilization and Research Institute in Crookston to provide technical assistance and grants. The proposed \$3 million would also fund market research for the alternative crops. Swenson said his idea is that the money would be in addition to appropriations already targeted for the institute.

Swenson's bill also contains money for feedlot manure process and odor control technology research, and it would provide money to help farmers pay for crop insurance. In all, the bill includes more than \$20 million in spending proposals.

All bills mentioned above are being considered for inclusion in the omnibus agriculture funding bill, but Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), who chairs the agriculture finance panel, warned lawmakers that there may not be enough available money to fund all proposals.

Lawmakers have begun the final push to assemble the omnibus bill.

Legislators are also considering other plans to help farmers survive. The grandest one is a proposal to spend \$80 million in direct payments to farmers, included in a budget surplus rebate bill (HF1) that is currently before a House-Senate conference committee. 🐾

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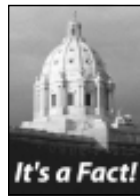
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An early model of independent politics



Gov. Jesse Ventura was not the first Minnesota politician to spurn the support of special interest groups.

When Hannah Kempfer was elected to the House in 1922, she was adamant that she would only represent her district as a whole and she refused party or special interest endorsements during her campaign. She ended up serving nine non-consecutive terms as an independent from Otter Tail County.

She was one of four women elected to the House in the first election year that women were allowed on the ballot. Hailing from the small town of Erhard, near Fergus Falls, Kempfer was also the first rural woman elected to the Legislature.

Running at the urging of her Otter Tail County friends, the former schoolteacher and farmer's wife even rejected an endorsement offer from the Nonpartisan League.

"I would rather stand for the principle of representing all of the people of Otter Tail County and be defeated than to be elected under circumstances that oblige me to vote according to the dictation of any party or individuals," she wrote to the league's leaders on Oct. 25, 1922, following a primary election victory.

"My guiding principle will be 'equal opportunities for all with special privileges to none,'" she said.

Kempfer served on House committees including game and fish, public welfare, public health and hospitals, and appropriations. Her committee membership reflected her legislative interests, which included preserving wildlife, improving medical institutions, and providing for the welfare of women and children. She pushed for lowering taxes, although she never served on a taxes committee.

In 1927, she chaired the game and fish committee, securing the passage of legislation that required anglers to obtain licenses annually at a fee of 50 cents. The new law

angered some of her constituents, and she narrowly won re-election in 1928. But because of some lingering resentment from Otter Tail anglers, Kempfer was defeated in 1930, only to be re-elected in 1932.

Throughout her House career, she retained her fierce independent political stance. "I never depend on lobbyists to instruct me, but I do listen to the pro and con arguments and then do what seems to me the best," she wrote in a campaign advertisement.

Once a female colleague introduced a bill that would have repealed all discriminatory laws against women. Kempfer requested after the bill's first reading that it

be postponed indefinitely. She opposed the bill because she thought women should have some protection in law, and she succeeded in getting a majority to agree with her. The bill's sponsor reportedly never forgave Kempfer.

H a n n a h

Kempfer's childhood experiences of being both an orphan and an immigrant flavored her later legislative career. She was born Dec. 22, 1880, on an English ship at sea to a stewardess and an unknown sailor. She was left at an orphanage in Stavanger, Norway, and adopted in 1881. Her new family emigrated to America in 1886, settling in Minnesota's Mower County and later moving to Otter Tail County.

At age 17, she became a rural schoolteacher, teaching her first school of 60 students in 1898. Five years later, she married Charles Taylor Kempfer. They did not have any children, but they were foster parents to many orphaned boys and girls.

Articles about Kempfer during her first House campaign focused heavily on her humble beginnings. A headline in the St. Paul Daily News following her election proclaimed, "Minnesota Woman, Once Norwegian Waif, Will Take Seat in Legislature January 2."

Continued on page 23



Reps. Hannah Kempfer, left, and Mabeth Hurd Paige confer in the House Chamber.

Photo courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Processing plant subsidies

Lawmakers are considering a bill that would provide low-interest loans to help develop new meat processing facilities and would provide subsidies for the meat produced at the plants.

Financing from state coffers would enable the Prairie Farms Cooperative to begin construction on a meat processing facility in Dawson, and state money would aid the owner of a South St. Paul meat processing plant who must relocate his operation.

A bill offering loans of up to \$500,000 through the Rural Finance Authority of the Department of Agriculture was considered April 6 by the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee.

The bill (HF543) is sponsored by Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison).

The bill also calls for subsidies that would be distributed in a way similar to the practice currently used to promote ethanol production. The state pays ethanol producers a subsidy for each gallon produced.

Peterson's bill would give the meat processors 10 cents per pound of beef or pork produced for human consumption. The subsidy would be one-half that amount for poultry products.

Livestock would have to come from Minnesota farms, and the subsidy would be available for only the first five years of operation of the new facilities.

The total of all meat producer payments would be capped at \$1.6 million per year.

Peterson said Prairie Farms is a public and private initiative, and Gov. Jesse Ventura lauded the cooperative's efforts in his State of the State message.

Dennis Timberman, spokesman for Prairie Farms, said the idea of a processing plant came about because of the lack of market access for producers in western Minnesota.

Timberman added that state funds would be used as a guarantee for the project, because bond underwriters are reluctant to participate in agricultural projects due to the current economic downturn in the industry.

Building the plant would bring 45 jobs paying \$12 per hour or more, according to David Bovee, city manager of Dawson.

"In a city of 1,800, that means a lot," Bovee said.

The community would also make a sizeable investment to provide infrastructure to accommodate the new processing plant, Bovee added.

Peterson's bill would also provide a similar low-interest loan for a livestock processing program that would offer meat slaughtered according to Hmong customs. The loan would help Paochang Yang, owner of Long Cheng-Hmong Livestock and Meat Processing Market in South St. Paul.

Yang told the committee he has been in business at his location on Hardman Avenue for nine years, but he was thwarted by zoning laws when he attempted to expand there. Now he needs a new site and hopes to build a new plant, which would offer meat slaughtered in accordance with Hmong customs.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), chair of the agriculture panel, praised the ideas in the bill, but he expressed concerns that the price tag could be too high.

Research continues



Dr. Gary Lemme, the Fusarium head blight coordinator at the University of Minnesota's West Central Experiment Station, testifies in favor of continued crop disease research funding April 7. See related story on page 3.

The bill was laid over for possible consideration in the omnibus agriculture and rural development funding bill.

More on manure board

Including more voices in the debate over how manure should be managed in Minnesota is the aim of a bill considered by the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee.

The measure (HF816) would expand the state's Feedlot and Manure Management Advisory Committee by four members — adding two solid manure applicators and two commercial liquid manure applicators, none of whom could be livestock producers. There are currently 20 members.

Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison), the bill's sponsor, said the people applying manure to agricultural ground as a natural fertilizer should have as much say as the producers, politicians, environmentalists, and others who already sit on the committee.

Applicators use a variety of methods to receive and spread manure, in accordance with state and federal laws.

Steve McCourquodale, a solid manure applicator from Paynesville, told lawmakers April 6 that applicators needed a voice to help balance the interests at the table. He said there about 100 businesses such as his in the state and that the decisions made by the committee can greatly impact their livelihood.

The committee was created in 1994 as a cooperative effort between the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the Pollution Control Agency. It is charged with suggesting policies for research, monitoring, and regulatory activities regarding feedlot and manure management.

The change is expected to cost the state less than \$1,000 a year.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the Agriculture and Rural Development Finance omnibus bill.

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BUSINESS

Mechanics get raw deal

The House passed a bill April 6 that would tune up the law to allow repair shops to collect fees owed to them by customers. The vote was 90-33.

Bill sponsor Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) said that the plan was brought to him by auto repair shops who rent cars to their customers to use while their cars are being repaired. He said some people are skipping out on the charges for the rental cars and the auto repair shops have little recourse.

Seifert's bill would give auto repair shops the authority to hold the cars being repaired until the owner pays the rental fees on the borrowed car, as long as the fees are reasonable.

"This is an objective fraud, and the bill will stop the fraud," Seifert said.

The bill (HF793) now goes to the Senate.



CHILDREN

Millions targeted for kids

The House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee on April 7 approved a half-billion dollar spending bill that would boost funding for some child-care programs, early childhood education, and adult basic education.

The bill (HF1467) would spend \$467.5 million in state money, which would be matched by \$70 million in federal funds. The measure totals about \$15 million more than Gov. Jesse Ventura's budget proposal.

Nearly \$4 million would go to support adult basic education programs in rural Minnesota, and \$2.8 million would be appropriated for early childhood education.

The state's basic sliding fee child-care program would get an 11-percent funding increase, and the at-home infant care program would be expanded.

Lawmakers said those two initiatives are aimed at removing more families from an already burdensome waiting list for child-care programs. However, family co-payments for child-care subsidies would be increased to fund the expansions.

The committee spent much of its time debating how to divide funds between a list of multi-million dollar grant requests for several programs, including transitional housing, lead-poisoning education, teen-age pregnancy prevention, child care for immigrants, and early childhood education.

Under the bill, appropriations for those programs range from \$965,000 for early childhood education, and \$88,000 for adolescent parenting programs.

A small portion of special state revenue funds would be used for grants to educate young fathers, prevent teen-age violence, and support a community housing program in St. Louis Park.

In addition, the committee approved a plan that would investigate child-care assistance fraud. The bill includes a proposal for a new universal form for applicants seeking public child-care subsidies. The proposed form is aimed at helping county and state officials keep track of families receiving child-care assistance.

The bill, sponsored by committee chair Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), moves to the House Taxes Committee.



CRIME

When a day is not a day

The House approved a bill April 6 that would make a day in jail mean a day in jail. The vote was 113-13.

The bill would require that each offender spend an actual 24 hours in a county jail or the workhouse for each day sentenced. For the first and last days, the offender would be required to spend at least 12 hours in confinement.

Bill sponsor Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center) called his bill "an attempt to get at truth in sentencing."

He said that some jurisdictions in the state are being very liberal in their interpretation of what constitutes a day in jail, and often any time spent in jail counts as a day, even if it is just a couple of hours.

Carruthers said that a person could be put in jail at just before midnight, get released just after midnight, and have that period counted as two days.

"That's not right," he said. "That's what makes the public cynical about sentences."

The bill (HF1128) now goes to the Senate.

Making no-shows pay



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a law April 1 that will help prosecutors recoup costs when defendants don't show up for court appearances.

Under current law, criminal defendants who skip a court appearance can be charged with the additional crime

of failure to appear in court. Judges can order jail time and fines for defendants found guilty of failing to appear.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will also allow judges to order those defendants to pay any costs incurred by the county or city attorney.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure.

HF732/SF99*/CH27

Chipped teeth and broken bones

The House rejected a bill April 6 that would have changed the legal definition of substantial bodily harm. The vote was 100-20 against the measure.

Substantial bodily harm is a definition used in the state's criminal law to establish the degree of crimes committed and the subsequent punishment for those crimes.

The term outlines the level of physical harm suffered from the crime. Substantial bodily harm falls between bodily harm and great bodily harm under the law.

For example, a person commits assault in the third degree when that person inflicts substantial bodily harm, and upon conviction can be sentenced to up to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$10,000.

The bill (HF172) would have stated that substantial bodily harm includes the fracture of a bone or cartilage, or the chipping or loss of a tooth.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), the bill's sponsor, said that judges interpret the current law to include broken bones. But he said breaking a person's nose or chipping a tooth should also be treated as substantial bodily harm in all cases.

Critics of the bill argued that the bill would go too far in specifying the exact nature of these crimes and that judicial discretion should be applied in each individual case.

Punishing domestic abuse

The House passed a bill April 6 that would expand the law allowing for increased penalties for repeat domestic assault offenders. The vote was 124-0.

Under current law, judges can impose an increased penalty for those found guilty of a second domestic assault within five years of the first offense.

The law also provides a list of prior convictions — such as criminal sexual conduct or making terroristic threats — where the increased penalty can be applied for a first time domestic assault conviction.

The bill, sponsored by Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), would add the crime of malicious punishment of a child to the list of prior convictions.

Pawlenty said that malicious punishment of a child is a form of domestic abuse and should be in the list of prior offenses.

The bill (HF143) now goes to the Senate.



DEVELOPMENT

Limiting preferential treatment

Preferential treatment in bids for state projects is given to small construction companies that are located in economically disadvantaged parts of the state, or companies owned by women, people with disabilities, or people of color.

Companies that meet those requirements can be awarded a bid if their bid is up to 6 percent higher than the lowest bid.

The preferential treatment program is administered by the Minnesota Department of Administration. A bill (HF875) that would limit a company's eligibility in the program may be included in this year's omnibus state government finance bill.

Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook), sponsor of the bill, said that some companies have received preferential treatment for many years and should now be left to stand on their own. The bill would allow companies to be eligible for only five years. It was considered April 7 by the House State Government Finance Committee.

"When it started, the program had laudable goals, and it had a window of time for companies (to be eligible), but that window was taken out by rule," Bakk said. "If our intent is to get minority-owned businesses established, I don't think this program accomplishes that."

Bakk described one example where a company from Little Falls was awarded a bid for a \$1.7 million park project in Grand Rapids even though a company based in Grand Rapids had the lowest bid.

A company that has received the special treatment for five years should be able to figure out how to submit the lowest bid, Bakk said.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) disagreed, saying the state has subsidized farmers and other special interests on an ongoing basis and that businesses that meet the requirements should continue to receive the preferential treatment.

"We have this program for good reason, and I think it works well," she said.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the committee's omnibus bill.



EMPLOYMENT

Job training program

The House passed a bill April 7 aimed at helping the state implement the new federal Workforce Investment Act. The vote was 116-8.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), would amend the state's data practice law to allow information sharing between job training providers and the Minnesota Department of Economic Security required under the federal law.

The bill would also require the department to release summary information on the performance of these training programs based on the data provided.

The Workforce Investment Act, signed by President Clinton in August 1998, seeks to make current job training resources more effective.

Borrowing from Minnesota's Workforce Centers, the Workforce Investment Act stresses the "one-stop" approach, where job services are housed in one neighborhood office.

The federal law also establishes workforce investment boards made up of representatives of business, labor, and community organizations to establish state and local job training strategies. And the law provides criteria to assess the individual program's success based on employee and employer expectations.

Boudreau's bill (HF1038) now goes to the Senate.



ENVIRONMENT

Tobacco bucks for recreation

A bill that would appropriate \$500 million from the state's settlement with major tobacco companies to fund state parks, trails, wastewater systems, and recreational programs may be included in the House environment and natural resources omnibus finance bill.

The bill (HF2135), sponsored by Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), would divide the funds among six different areas that Holsten said promote healthy lifestyles or better air and water quality.

The plan would give \$50 million to the Amateur Sports Facilities Commission for youth sports facilities, \$100 million to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission for parks and trails in the seven-county metropolitan area, \$100 million to the commissioner of natural resources for grants to local units of government, \$100 million to the Public Facilities Authority to upgrade waste-

water infrastructure, and \$100 million to the commissioner of agriculture for revolving accounts for best management practices such as rural septic systems.

"So far we've had such a narrow scope of where those (tobacco settlement) dollars go," Holsten said. "If they are not returned to the taxpayers, they have been targeted toward health, but the question is, what is health?"

Lawmakers on the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee considered Holsten's bill April 7.

The committee, which Holsten chairs, has heard several bills aimed at repairing recreational trails or building new trails throughout the state. Paying for all of those requests would cost about \$65 million, and Holsten said that money is not available in the environment and natural resources budget.

He said the bill has some support from other committee members, but it will have to compete with many proposals to spend the tobacco settlement dollars.

"This is a step in the right direction," said Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul). "Health isn't just smoking cessation."

The bill will be considered for inclusion in the environment and natural resources omnibus finance bill.

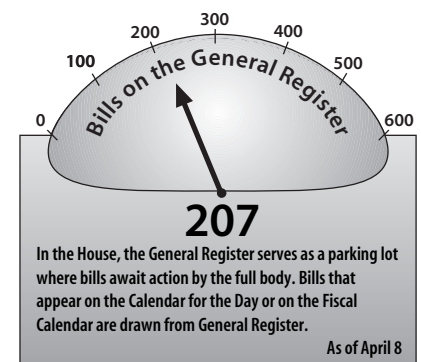
Drainage issues considered

A bill that would appropriate money to three counties for unpaid ditch assessments on Consolidated Conservation Lands in northwestern Minnesota may be included in the omnibus environment and natural resources finance bill.

The House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee considered the bill (HF1705) April 7.

The lands are state-owned lands designated for conservation. The state received the lands in exchange for paying off ditch bonds issued by those counties in the 1920s and 1930s.

The bill is sponsored by Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji), who said an agreement was



reached between the Department of Natural Resources, the attorney general's office, and three of the seven counties where the lands are located. The agreement will involve surveying land to re-determine the benefits of drainage ditches to property owners.

Fuller estimated the cost of studying the benefits would be \$460,000. Property owners would then be assessed fees to pay for improvements to those drainage ditches in Beltrami, Marshall, and Roseau counties.

The bill was held over for possible inclusion in the House environment and natural resources omnibus bill.



GOVERNMENT

More pay for politicians?

A legislative advisory panel is recommending a pay increase for the governor, lawmakers, judges, and heads of state agencies.

The Compensation Council submitted its biennial report containing these suggestions to House and Senate leadership April 7.

The council suggests that the governor's salary be increased 7.5 percent in January 2001 and 2.5 percent in January 2002. The governor currently receives \$120,303 annually.

For legislators, the council recommends a 5-percent increase beginning in January 2001 and a 2.5-percent increase in January 2002. Legislators currently earn \$31,140.

The recommendation also includes a possible pay chart for constitutional officers. Under the proposal, the attorney general would receive 85 percent of the governor's pay, the state auditor would receive 75 percent, the secretary of state would receive 65 percent, and the lieutenant governor and state treasurer would receive 55 percent.

Also under the recommendation, the salaries for judges would be increased 3.5 percent in both 2001 and 2002, and judges also would be given an increase based on the average increase of state employees' salaries.

And the council recommends that the governor be given the authority to raise the salary of an agency head without approval of the Legislature. Currently, new salary raises don't take effect until the Legislature approves the increase.

The Compensation Council is charged by state law with making salary recommendations for constitutional officers, agency heads, judges, and legislators.

The 16-member council is made up of lawmakers and appointees of the governor and of the chief justice of the state Supreme Court.

Lawmakers have yet to take any action on the recommendations.

No go on zoo dough

A bill that would fill holes in the budget for the current fiscal year was defeated April 6 in the House. The vote was 74-49 against the proposal.

The bill (HF878) included appropriations to the Minnesota Zoological Board, the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board, and the departments of Children, Families and Learning, Economic Security, Human Services, and Public Safety.

The measure, which is likely to be reconsidered this session, would provide \$17.6 million to those agencies and departments.

The two major areas of debate were a proposed \$600,000 for the Minnesota Zoo in Apple Valley and an \$829,000 request from the Department of Public Safety.

The zoo's request would offset losses from lower-than-expected attendance. Of the Department of Public Safety's request, \$629,000 would pay for license plates for new automobiles, and \$200,000 would fund additional security for Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), sponsor of the bill, said the state already pays one-third of the zoo's budget and that the zoo has been in the same financial situation several times before.

The zoo asked for \$1 million in aid, but the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee moved to reduce the amount in the bill to \$600,000 and to allow the zoo to increase gate fees to make up the remaining deficit.

But some House members disagreed with that logic.

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) said the Senate and Ventura both advocate honoring the zoo's original request. But Bishop argued that he and other legislators have told zoo officials that they need to resolve these budget problems.

"What are we here for if we just say to these state agencies, 'When you get into a hole we'll bail you out?'" Bishop asked.

On a lopsided vote, the House rejected an amendment to restore the \$1 million request to the bill.

Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul) objected to allowing the zoo to increase fees. He said the Legislature had allowed the zoo to stop scheduling "free days," but only if the zoo's fees would not increase. Trimble proposed an amendment to allow the zoo to increase fees only if one or two free days are scheduled per month, but the amendment failed.

House members also disagreed on whether

Kids in kilts



Four-year-old Angus Jameson, left, Brooklyn Park, and his sister Anna, 2, donned traditional Scottish attire with their mother Christine in a celebration of Scottish heritage in the Capitol rotunda April 6. The event was sponsored by Clann Tartan, a Minneapolis-based historical group dedicated to teaching Scottish history.

the state should pay for additional security for Ventura. Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) said no other Minnesota governor has been as widely known as Ventura and he said State Patrol officers have put in overtime to accommodate the increased demands for security.

But Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) said that money has also gone toward some questionable expenses, such as a driver for Lt. Gov. Mae Schunk.

"I've never heard of a lieutenant governor being afforded a driver," Kahn said.

Among the other proposals in the bill, about \$11.7 million would go to the Minnesota Department of Human Services to make up for a budget shortfall due to a delay in federal reimbursements for MinnesotaCare, a state-subsidized health care plan. Although the state and the federal government have reached an agreement concerning the delayed funds and reimbursements began March 1, the deficiency funding is still needed to cover costs the department has had to cover in the past months.

Also under the bill, the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning would receive \$3.5 million primarily to pay legal costs from two major lawsuits. Both suits — one in Minneapolis and one in St. Paul — involve claims that school districts are providing constitutionally inadequate education.

Other appropriations proposed in the bill are \$15,000 in legal fees for a lawsuit involving the Campaign Finance and Disclosure Board and a \$370,000 boost for the State Services for the Blind.

Revamping the IRRRB

House Speaker Steve Sviggum's plan to replace lawmakers who serve on the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) with appointed citizens was reviewed April 7 by the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.

Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie), who was recently appointed to the IRRRB by Sviggum (R-Kenyon), presented the bill to the committee.

He said the IRRRB's current makeup causes constitutional problems, because legislators are prohibited from holding other public offices.

The IRRRB oversees six different accounts that appropriate money for environmental or economic development projects in northeastern Minnesota. The board administers funds received through a specific tax paid by mining companies in the area.

Under current law, the House speaker appoints five state representatives to serve on the

board, and the Senate Subcommittee on Committees appoints five state senators.

Sviggum's bill would require the governor to appoint 10 board members who are not legislators. No more than six board members could support the same political party and all would have to live in the Iron Range tax relief area.

Kielkucki said the IRRRB is a unique agency and that the speaker's plan would encourage more citizen participation in the work of the board.

"I don't believe it is the speaker's intention to alter that uniqueness," he said. "It's to enhance the uniqueness."

The bill (HF249) was laid over by the committee for possible inclusion in its omnibus finance bill.

Council faces elimination

The Internet and other advances in information technology have helped improve communication between various units of government, but a group that facilitates that communication is scheduled to be disbanded this year.

A bill (HF987) that would continue to appropriate state funds to the Intergovernmental Information System Advisory Council was considered April 8 in the House State Government Finance Committee.

Funding for the council is not in Gov. Jesse Ventura's budget proposal, but Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), sponsor of the bill, said questions surrounding the year 2000 prob-

lem and other issues make this the wrong time to get rid of the group.

The council includes members from various cities, counties, libraries, and school districts throughout the state and officials from several state agencies and departments, including the Office of Technology.

Tim Breza, executive director of the council, said its responsibilities include acting as a liaison among different units of government, training employees on electronic financial reporting, helping local units of government avoid potential Y2K problems, and other related duties.

The bill was held over for possible inclusion in the omnibus state government finance bill.



HEALTH

Abortion bills considered

Three bills relating to abortion were discussed April 8 by the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee. All three were laid over for possible inclusion in the committee's omnibus finance bill.

HF177, sponsored by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), would ban certain procedures, called partial-birth abortions. It also would establish criminal penalties for violating the ban and would allow civil penalties to be sought.

HF178, sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), would prohibit a woman from receiving an abortion unless she receives cer-

Conservation corps



Minnesota Conservation Corps crew leader Dana Hall, a Savage resident, testifies in American Sign Language in favor of a bill that would provide funds for the corps and its projects. Hall appeared April 7 before the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.



Jackie Schweitz, spokeswoman for Minnesota Citizens Concern for Life, *right*, and Teresa Melson, spokeswoman for the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union, *left*, listen from different sides of the aisle as Rep. Richard Mulder explains his bill that would prohibit certain abortions. Schweitz testified in favor of three abortion-related bills that were before the health and human services committee, while Melson testified against the measures.

tain information and completes a 24-hour waiting period before the procedure.

HF377, sponsored by Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), would amend the state's abortion reporting statutes to include abortions performed on minors with a judge's permission, rather than a parent's consent.

In several committee hearings this year, opponents of all three bills have argued that they are unconstitutional and would make it difficult for women to obtain a legal procedure.

Supporters claim the bills are reasonable and responsible ways to address legitimate concerns about abortion issues.

Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls) questioned why the committee would consider including the proposals in the omnibus finance bill, when each is a significant policy issue in and of itself. He said they might more properly belong in separate bills sent to the House floor.

Goodno, chairman of the committee, said he determined that the bills would have fiscal effects and therefore the omnibus bill was the proper spot.

Mulder's bill, calling for the ban on certain late-term abortions, is expected to cost \$27,000 for the biennium primarily to pay for two mailings to physicians alerting them to the new requirements.

Boudreau's bill, which would require a waiting period, carries a \$192,000 price tag for the biennium, mostly to pay for the printed material that would be used to meet the "informed consent" language.

Goodno's bill, dealing with judicial consent for minors, would cost over \$100,000 for the biennium, the largest portion devoted to staffing in the Minnesota Department of Health to accumulate, verify, and disseminate the information required to be collected.

Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) said he fears Gov. Jesse Ventura would veto the committee's omnibus bill if abortion-related sections were included.

Goodno said that message has not been communicated to him by the governor or his staff.

Hands off tobacco bucks



Gov. Jesse Ventura agrees with lawmakers from both bodies on one thing — the U.S. Congress should not be casting its eyes upon Minnesota's tobacco settlement money.

Ventura put his name on a resolution March 29 that reminds the federal government it was not part of Minnesota's suit against the tobacco companies and informs it that the federal government has no right to the money.

The federal government has said it may be entitled to a portion of state tobacco settlements as repayment for its share of Medicaid costs.

But the resolution notes that Minnesota's lawsuit was based on business issues, not health issues. It calls on Minnesota's U.S. congressmen to support legislation — already introduced in Congress — that would prohibit federal recovery of any state tobacco settlement payments.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) and Sen. Ember Reichgott Junge (DFL-New Hope) sponsored the resolution.

HF719/SF757*/Res. 2

Traveling medical training

Rural health care providers have a difficult job.

Most of them work long hours for small organizations that don't have an abundance of funding for ongoing training. Many of them cannot escape their work to travel to the Twin Cities for specialized training.

So how do you assure that they can recognize and treat life-threatening emergencies? Take the classroom to them.

That's the concept behind a bill (HF215), sponsored by Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack), which proposes \$206,000 in funding directed toward the Comprehensive Advanced Life Support (CALS) project.

Howes told the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee on April 6 that a pilot program established in 1997 has been extremely successful.

The primary focus of CALS is training medical personnel in a team approach to anticipate, recognize, and treat emergencies before serious injury or cardiac arrest occurs.

A major component of the program is a two-day advanced training course conducted in community hospitals throughout Minnesota, designed for physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, and allied health care professionals.

Kari Ebert, program coordinator for CALS,

Final deadline ahead

The third and final committee deadline of the 1999 session is fast approaching.

All omnibus finance bills will have to pass out of committee by Friday, April 16. The omnibus spending bills were exempt from the first two committee deadlines.

The first deadline was for committees to approve bills in the house of origin. The second deadline was for committees to approve bills that met the first deadline in the other chamber.

Of course, there are exceptions to the deadlines. The House Ways and Means, Taxes, and Rules and Legislative Administration committees are exempt, as are the Senate Finance, Taxes, and Rules and Administration committees. Also, a bill can be heard after the deadlines if the rules committee in either body allows it.

After the committee deadlines pass, much of the action shifts to the House floor and to conference committees, where differences between House and Senate bills are reconciled.

told the committee that 13 courses have been given since the program began with about 20 health care professionals attending each one.

Several on the committee asked why the program couldn't be supported entirely with revenue from fees and without a grant from the state.

Ebert said each course costs about \$8,000 to produce and participants are charged from \$200 to \$350 each, depending upon their specialty.

Without the state money, the courses would not be affordable, defeating the purpose of the program, Ebert said.

"Most of the hospitals we work with have very little in the way of budget for ongoing education," Ebert added.

In some cases, the hospitals don't have the equipment needed for the training, so it is donated by CALS.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), a physician who has had the training, said one of the primary benefits of the traveling classroom is that it encourages medical personnel to keep their training current. While many may make the effort and absorb the expense of traveling to Minneapolis for the training once, they are not likely to do it a second or third time, he said.

Besides the provider course, the program also offers a day-long benchmark skills lab at Hennepin County Medical Center. The lab covers more than 50 skills necessary for critical stabilization of emergency patients.

In addition to state money, physician groups, foundations, and educational facilities support the program. It also depends heavily on hours donated by medical personnel who help coordinate CALS.

Ebert said funds have also been used to provide courses to instructors.

CALS is also exploring other educational formats, such as videotapes and instruction via the Internet.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus health and human services finance bill.

address misstatements of fact or law, or if the defense's argument is prejudicial or inflammatory.

The bill, sponsored by Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), would guarantee the prosecutors a right to respond following the defense's final arguments. The response could address only issues brought up by the defense's argument.

Pawlenty said it is only fair that prosecutors who have the heavy burden of proving the case be allowed to go last. He said that Minnesota is the only criminal system in the nation that allows the defense to go last.

"The current process does not work," he said. "We are out of step with the rest of the world."

Pawlenty also said that crime victims and victims' families suffer under the current system. He said sometimes the last thing that victims' families hear in the courtroom are disparaging remarks from the defense about the victim, and the prosecution doesn't get a chance to challenge the claims.

Critics argue that the bill violates the separation of powers clause in the state constitution and that the Legislature shouldn't interfere in court procedures, an area that should be overseen by the courts themselves.

"If there is a problem, let's let the courts look into it," said Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin).

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) said that only about 5 percent of all criminal cases go to trial and that about 80 percent of those result in convictions.

He said that means prosecutors have about a 99 percent conviction rate (when plea agreements and trial convictions are taken together). That, he said, shows the system to be working well for prosecutors.

"Changing final arguments is a poor idea," he said.

The bill (HF197/SF198*) now goes to the governor.

give the same authority to Minnesota's 1,793 townships.

The measure came as a result of a case in New Scandia Township in Washington County. In 1994, prosecutors charged the township's former chief of police with misconduct by a public employee while serving as chief.

Although the case was dismissed by a judge in 1995, the former employee incurred \$4,500 in legal fees.

And because she worked for a township and not a city or county, the employee could not seek reimbursement from the local government.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Springs) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy) sponsored the measure.

HF475*/SF517/CH30

Challenges to state rules

Rules adopted by state agencies could be contested by local units of government under a bill approved April 7 by the House State Government Finance Committee.

The bill (HF879) would allow a local unit of government, such as a city council or a county board of commissioners, to petition an agency to amend or repeal a rule. The local unit of government would have to provide evidence that the rule is unnecessary or that there would be a less costly or intrusive way to achieve the rule's purpose.

A state agency that receives a petition would have 30 days to respond to the petition and 90 days to act on the request. If the agency disagrees with the petition, the issue would be settled by an administrative law judge.

The local unit of government that starts the petition would have to pay half the costs of the administrative hearing.

Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), sponsor of the bill, said the costs to a local unit of government make it unlikely that the petition process would be used more than once or twice in a year.

The bill now moves to the House Rules Committee.

For an unofficial list of Minnesota commissioners and appointed agency heads on the World Wide Web go to: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/comm.htm>



LAW

Last word for prosecutors

Prosecutors would get the last word in criminal trials, under a bill the House passed April 8. The vote was 97-29.

Current Minnesota law states that the prosecutor goes first in final arguments and is followed by the defense attorney. The law allows the judge to give the prosecutor a response to the defense's final arguments only to



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Employees' legal fees



The governor signed a law that will allow townships to reimburse certain legal costs to employees.

Under current law, cities and counties can reimburse legal costs of employees charged with committing crimes while performing their official duties. The law requires that the payment must be approved by the district court.

The new law, effective April 2, will simply



SAFETY

Making bleachers safer

A bill that would establish safety requirements for bleacher seats may be included in the House state government finance omnibus bill.

The bill (HF1124), sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), would require bleachers, such as those in sports arenas or other facilities, to include guardrails or safety nets. Open spaces between floorboards, seats, and guardrails would have to be four inches or less, or safety nets would have to be installed.

The bill also would provide money for grants to help pay for upgrades to make bleachers comply with the safety standards, but no amount has been specified.

Smith said there have been at least 40 accidents involving children falling from bleachers this year, including one death. Six-year-old Toby Lee of Mound died in January after falling from a set of bleachers while attending a hockey game at a Hutchinson arena.

Current state building code requires bleachers to have a maximum gap of nine inches between floorboards, seats, and guardrails. But some older bleachers, such as those in Hutchinson, are exempt from those guidelines under a grandfather clause. Smith said Toby fell through a 13-inch gap in those bleachers.

"This bill is the first step in an area that's been ignored," Smith said.

Considering the bill April 7, lawmakers on the House State Government Finance Committee debated the proposed effective date of Jan. 1, 2001. Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) said there is less risk of injury from bleachers that meet the current nine-inch safety standards and that establishments that meet those standards should be allowed more time to comply with the proposed stricter rules.

But Smith said he opposes any grandfather clause because of the accidents that have occurred. He said the Hutchinson arena recently spent \$750,000 on remodeling but did not have to fix the bleachers.

The 2001 effective date would allow enough time to bring bleachers into compliance, Smith said.

However, the committee did accept another amendment offered by Kahn that would make the requirements effective immediately for new bleachers that are built after July 1, so that bleachers built this summer and fall would not need to be upgraded in two years.

Similar legislation has been introduced in Congress that would regulate all bleachers manufactured in the United States, said Rep. Doug Reuter (R-Owatonna). He said if Min-

nesota laws are different from federal requirements, every set of bleachers that is built in Minnesota would need special modifications.

U.S. Rep. Jim Ramstad, sponsor of the federal bill, said his plan is compatible with the state proposal and that he has worked with Smith to make the federal and state safety standards the same.

"We believe people should have a reasonable expectation of safety in public venues," he said. "The federal guidelines will provide that in an economical way."

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus state government finance bill.



TAXES

Rebate maneuver stalls

House members scuttled a once-innocuous tax bill March 31, refusing to vote on the measure after the Senate attached a plan for a \$1.3 billion sales tax rebate to the otherwise minor measure.

House Republicans have said that they would not support the Senate-favored sales tax rebate unless it included permanent, across-the-board income tax cuts.

The House passed a rebate bill (HF1) based on income taxes paid. That proposal is now in a House-Senate conference committee along with the Senate's sales tax rebate plan. The bills have been tied up in conference committee for weeks.

The original version of the bill recently caught up in the tax-rebate debate aimed only to get Goodhue County through a sticky tax situation.

HF50, sponsored by Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings), would increase Goodhue County's levy limit base for taxes payable in 1999 by \$422,323 and allow the county to recertify an increased levy up to the new limit.

The bill was initially passed by the House March 18 and sent to the Senate. It returned with a significant and controversial amendment. The amendment basically called for a sales tax rebate like the one Gov. Jesse Ventura has endorsed.

After 90 minutes of parliamentary maneuvering on the House floor, the bill was laid on the table. It could be resurrected later in the session.

Both Dempsey and Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) criticized the move by the Senate. Osskopp said the measure is a local bill to help Goodhue County and nothing more, adding that he resents the games being played.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the House Taxes Committee, said he regrets

allowing Dempsey's bill to travel on its own, rather than rolling it into the larger omnibus tax bill. That decision, he said, was based on the need to take action before the end of March to keep the county's tax process unimpeded.

The problem for Goodhue County arose out of a tax court decision in 1996 in which Northern States Power Co. challenged its tax assessment and won.

The result was a hole in Goodhue County's levying ability, and Dempsey's bill would allow the county to fill that hole.



TRANSPORTATION

Setback for light rail

An omnibus transportation measure advancing in the House would not fund a light-rail transit program advocated by Gov. Jesse Ventura. In fact, the bill would spend \$28.8 million less than what Ventura has recommended in his budget.

Ventura's proposal includes \$60 million for construction and design work on the proposed light-rail line running through the Hiawatha corridor from downtown Minneapolis to the Mall of America in Bloomington.

But the funding plan approved by the House Transportation Finance Committee on April 8 does not include any money for the project, which has been in the planning stages for more than a decade.

The committee did recommend an 11-percent increase for the Twin Cities bus system, but Metro Transit officials said that amount would not be enough to keep up with expected service expansions.

Also not part of the bill was a \$776,000 request for additional security for Ventura. The committee did approve a request for a transfer of three state troopers for executive protection, but lawmakers did not include the additional funding in the bill for more Capitol Security personnel to guard the governor.

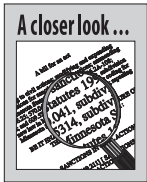
The bill, sponsored by Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska), who chairs the transportation committee, would spend a total of \$3.32 billion.

It would provide \$20 million for a revolving loan fund that could be used by municipalities for road or bridge repair. In addition, state road construction spending would increase by \$60.5 million over the next two years. The measure also would establish a major transportation projects commission that would recommend construction projects to the Legislature each year.

The measure will be introduced as a committee bill and has not yet been assigned a House File number. It moves next to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Small plaque in rotunda prompts emotional criticism

By Sarah Hallonquist



For half a century, a Spanish-American War plaque has hung on a wall in the Capitol rotunda, much to the dismay of many Filipino-Americans.

The plaque honors the 13th Minnesota Volunteer regiment, sent in 1898 to fight the Spanish in the Philippines. However, Americans actually ended up fighting the Filipinos, who had been seeking independence from Spanish rule. The Spaniards had relented by the time the Minnesota regiment arrived, and they granted control of the Philippines to the United States.

One account estimates that 220,000 Filipinos and 4,000 Americans died in the war, which lasted from 1898 to 1901.

But, critics say, the plaque doesn't tell that

ment the information contained on the existing one. The second plaque would have hung adjacent to the current plaque, which was placed in the Capitol in 1948.

Critics of the 51-year-old plaque include many Filipino-American organizations that charge that it is racially offensive and historically inaccurate. It refers to General Emilio Aguinaldo, then-president of the Philippines, as a "chief," which some say makes an incorrect reference to Aguinaldo as an Indian tribal leader.

"It's very degrading to our people who have contributed to our fight for freedom," said Jocelyn Ancheta, a member of the Filipino American Women's Network. "We will not remain silent."

While lawmakers recognized the plaque's inaccuracies, some committee members objected

Lawmakers on the committee accepted an amendment offered by Rep. Doug Reuter (R-Owatonna) that would simply call for removing, and not correcting or replacing, the plaque.

In 1997, members of the Philippine Study Group of Minnesota approached the Capitol Area Architecture and Planning Board about changing the information on the plaque. In anticipation of the 100th anniversary of Filipino independence, the group wanted the plaque changed to reflect what really happened.

That move prompted the architecture board to re-evaluate its policy regarding inaccurate artwork or requested changes to the Capitol's design. In addition, the board set up a temporary display in the rotunda for the centennial celebration. The untold story was the focus of the display, which stayed in the Capitol from June 1998 to February 1999.

Along with the Minnesota Historical Society, the architecture board is charged with preserving the Capitol's design. It oversees major renovations and has the final word on monuments, works of art, and other additions to buildings on the Capitol complex.

In late 1998, the board adopted a new process of review, and the study group's request is the first to embark on the board's formal process. The request must first be considered by the historical society, which will judge the plaque's historical accuracy. However, if the bill passes and the plaque is removed, the board's process would be superseded.

"I don't really care what the historical society thinks," Oskopp said, who offered to personally take the plaque down after the committee meeting. "It's historically inaccurate."

Nancy Stark, the board's executive director, said she would rather see the plaque proposal go through the review process because there are options to consider apart from what is laid out in the bill.

Stark said it is unfortunate that the Philippine Study Group chose to work through the Legislature instead of the board, which has accepted the group's application for review.

Lawmakers did not approve or reject Dawkins' bill, but the panel will consider it for inclusion in the omnibus state government finance bill. 🐼



Keith Severson, *right*, and Gavin Johnson, both of Roseau, take a closer look at the Spanish-American War plaque in the Capitol rotunda while visiting the Capitol with the 4-H Club on April 8.

whole story; instead it reads, "They battled to free the oppressed peoples of the Philippine Islands, who suffered under the despotic rule of Spain."

A bill considered April 7 by the House State Government Finance Committee would remove the plaque from the Capitol and donate it to the Minnesota Historical Society, which could display it along with a "corrected" explanation of Minnesota's involvement in the war.

The bill (HF899), sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), originally called for \$10,000 to design a second plaque to supple-

ment the idea of a corrective plaque and argued that it should be taken down completely.

Rep. Mike Oskopp (R-Lake City) said such plaques should be reserved only for "awesome moments in our history." For that reason, he said a corrective plaque is not needed.

Plaques are not commissioned whenever American troops are sent off to fight, especially when those troops are ordered to do something they might not be proud of doing, Oskopp said.

"It isn't a piece of art anymore, it's a piece of garbage," he said.

Legislative information is plentiful, helpful, and free

Keeping track of what's happening in the Minnesota Legislature has never been easier. The latest technology is being used in all areas of communication.

Whether you call or visit the Capitol, receive information via e-mail, watch the action on television, or follow the proceedings via the Internet, your choices have never been better.

Give a ring

Begin your quest for information by calling the House Public Information Office (651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550. Staff will answer general questions regarding the legislative process, identify your legislators, or connect you to other offices for additional information.

For copies of House bills, call the Chief Clerk's Office at (651) 296-2314. To discover the sponsor of a bill, or to find a House File number, call House Index at (651) 296-6646. If you have a concern about a pending bill call your legislator.

You may also access a voice version of the House committee schedule by calling (651) 296-9283.

For Senate information,
begin by calling (651)
296-0504.

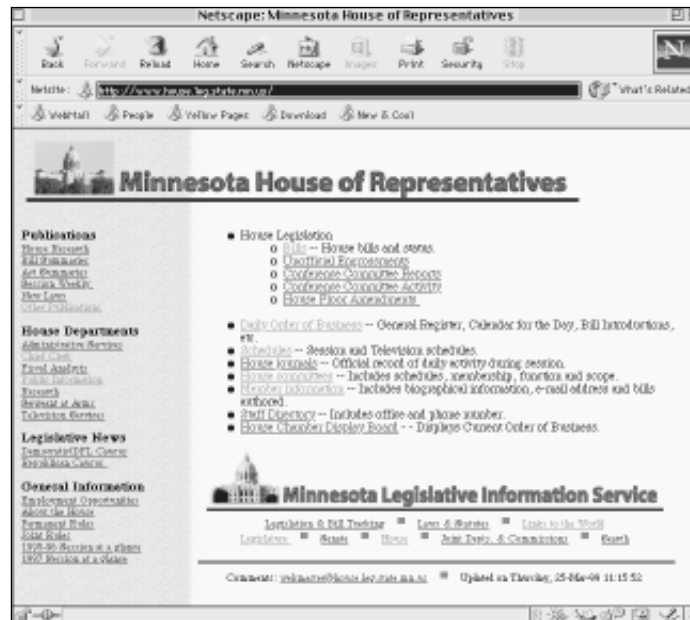
Come on down

The best way to get the full flavor of what's happening in the Legislature is to pay a visit. Start your trek at the House Public Information Office on the first floor of the State Office Building directly west of the Capitol.

The office has a series of informational and educational publications designed to make the legislative process understandable for all.

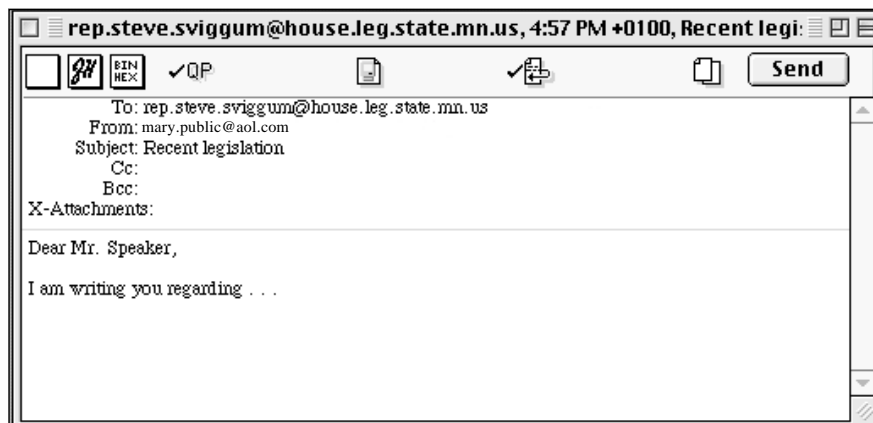
Using your home address, staff can quickly determine in which House and Senate district you live and provide you with the name, office number, and phone number of your representative and senator.

Pick up a copy of committee schedules for the day or week for both the House and Senate and you're on your way.



Through the Legislature's Web site, the public can access information including bill descriptions and status, committee meeting schedules and agendas, and weekly publications of both the House and Senate.

You may also take a moment to request a subscription to *Session Weekly* newsmagazine, a free publication covering weekly House activities during session. To sign up for *Senate Briefly*, covering weekly Senate activities, stop



E-mail is an increasingly common and efficient way for constituents to contact their legislators. Lawmakers regularly respond to signed messages, and they prefer that correspondents include their full names and addresses.

by Senate Information in Room 231 of the Capitol.

Tune in

Residents of most communities in Minnesota have access to a variety of programming from the State Capitol.

Beginning in 1996, coverage of the House and Senate, including committee meetings and floor sessions of both bodies, began airing in the Twin Cities on KTCI-TV, Channel 17.

Previously, coverage was available only to cable subscribers. Minnesota was the first state to make such extensive coverage available at no charge to viewers.

Since then, broadcasts have also been made available via satellite statewide. Outstate residents should consult with cable operators for time and channel information, or view a program listing on the House Television Services' Web site at <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/htv/htv.htm>.

All televised floor sessions and committee hearings are closed-captioned.

Three committee hearing rooms in the State Office Building are equipped for television broadcast. Two of the rooms have remotely-operated cameras mounted at three different angles.

From these rooms, legislative proceedings can be broadcast live or recorded for later broadcast with minimal interruption.

The televised committee hearings and floor sessions are carried by about 10 cable companies serving dozens of Minnesota cities from Warroad to Worthington.

There is also an interactive television site in Room 5 of the State Office Building. Connected to more than 80 sites throughout Minnesota, the technology allows members of the public from across the state to testify in legislative hearings without having to travel to St. Paul.

You've got mail

If you have e-mail service, you already have a tremendous link to the Legislature. Anyone with

e-mail can receive daily and weekly committee schedules from both the House and Senate without having to request them each day.

Here's how it works.

Send a message to: listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us. Leave the subject line blank and in the body of the message type: subscribe h-schedules

To receive the Senate schedule, send a message to: listserv@senate.leg.state.mn.us.

Again, leave the subject line blank and in the body of the message type: **subscribe sen-schedules**.

Messages are updated each day and sent to over 1,600 subscribers.

Get on the Web

Perhaps the most comprehensive way to follow activities in the Legislature is through the Internet.

Since 1994, anyone with access to the Internet has had access to legislative information. In January 1996, the Legislature debuted on the World Wide Web, which provides a user-friendly format that anyone, regardless of computer prowess, can navigate.

Begin your quest by directing your Web browser to <http://www.leg.state.mn.us>, the Legislature's Web site.

The site offers access to a variety of pages, including the House, Senate, bill tracking, Minnesota Statutes and Session Laws, Minnesota Rules, schedules and joint legislative departments and commissions.

Both the House and Senate pages provide access to bill tracking functions, and you can find easy-to-understand bill summaries on the Web. You may search for a bill by number or by using key words likely to be found in the bill's title. You can also search by chief author, other authors, statutory citation, or revisor's number.

Bills from previous sessions are also available for search.

If you are interested in a current list of bills being heard by a particular committee, select the committees link and click on the commit-



A committee hearing room in the State Office Building features interactive television technology through which lawmakers can communicate with people at more than 80 sites around Minnesota.

tee of your choice and then choose the "legislation" option.

You can also find schedules of bills to be heard on the floor, committee schedules, television schedules, house journals, and a staff directory of the House and Senate.

If you're not sure where to find information on the Legislature's Web site, take advantage of a new searching capability added this year.

Direct your browser to <http://search.state.mn.us/leg/> and enter your topic. A high-powered search engine will bring up links to relevant information.

All of the information on the site can be

read, sent to a printer, or saved as files on your computer for future reference. The site is also compatible with browsers used by the visually impaired.

You can also view *Session Weekly* on the Internet, with all graphics and photos intact, at <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/swkly.ssi>. *Senate Briefly* can be accessed from the Senate Web page.

Questions or comments regarding the House Web site may be sent via e-mail to the webmaster at: webmaster@house.leg.state.mn.us.

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How a Bill Becomes a

Idea

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

Legal form

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

Authors

3 Each bill must have a legislator to sponsor and introduce it in the Legislature. That legislator is the chief author whose name appears on the bill along with the bill's file number to identify it as it moves through the legislative process. There may be up to 34 co-authors from the House and four from the Senate. Their names also appear on the bill.

General Register

7 In the House, the General Register serves as a parking lot where bills await action by the full body. Bills chosen to appear on the Calendar for the Day or the Fiscal Calendar are drawn from the General Register.

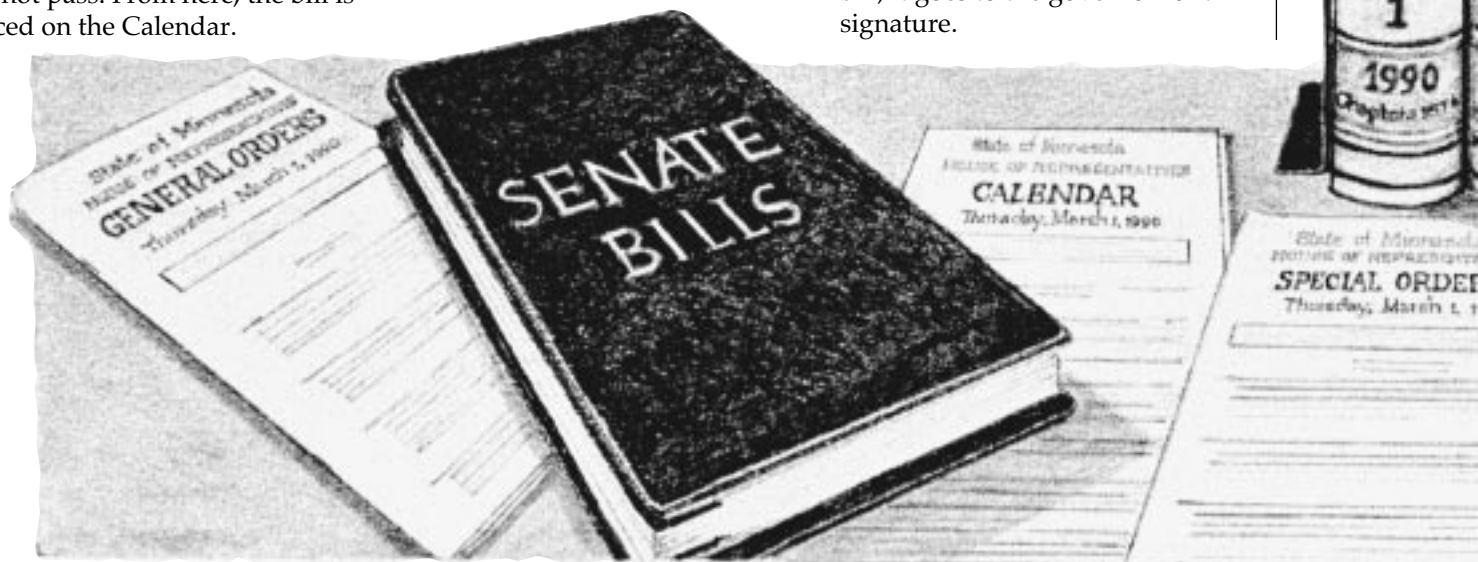
In the Senate, a different procedure is used. Bills are listed on the General Orders agenda. Senate members, acting as the "committee of the whole," have a chance to debate the issue and offer amendments on the bill. Afterwards, they vote to recommend: passage of the bill, progress (delay action), or further committee action. And sometimes they recommend that a bill not pass. From here, the bill is placed on the Calendar.

Calendar for the Day

8 In the House, the Calendar for the Day is a list of bills the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee has designated for the full House to vote on. Members can vote to amend the bill, and after amendments are dispensed with, the bill is given its *third reading* before the vote of the full body is taken. The House also has a Fiscal Calendar, on which the chair of the House Ways and Means Committee or House Taxes Committee can call up for consideration any tax or finance bill that has had a second reading. The bills are debated, amended, and passed in one day.

In the Senate, bills approved by the "committee of the whole" are placed on the Calendar. At this point, the bill has its *third reading*, after which time the bill cannot be amended unless the entire body agrees to it. Toward the end of the session, the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration designates bills from the General Orders calendar to receive priority consideration. These Special Orders bills are debated, amended, and passed in one day.

A bill needs 68 votes to pass the House and 34 votes to pass the Senate. If the House and Senate each pass the same version of the bill, it goes to the governor for a signature.



Introduction

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

Conference

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

Committee

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

Floor

10 The conference committee's compromise bill then goes back to the House and the Senate for another vote. If both bodies pass the bill in this form, it is sent to the governor for his or her approval or disapproval. (If one or both bodies reject the report, it goes back to the conference committee for further consideration.)

Floor

6 After the full House or Senate accepts the committee report, the bill has its *second reading* and is placed on the House agenda called the General Register or the Senate agenda called General Orders. (A committee can recommend that non-controversial bills bypass the General Register or General Orders and go onto the Consent Calendar, where bills usually pass without debate.) After this point, House and Senate procedures differ slightly.

Governor

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

1999 Minnesota House Membership by Seniority

22nd term

Munger, Willard (DFL)*

14th term

Anderson, Irv (DFL)*
Carlson, Lyndon R. (DFL)
Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)
Wenzel, Stephen G. (DFL)

13th term

Kalis, Henry J. (DFL)
Osthoff, Tom (DFL)

12th term

Jaros, Mike (DFL)*
Murphy, Mary (DFL)
Skoglund, Wes (DFL)*

11th term

Greenfield, Lee (DFL)
Sviggum, Steve (R)

10th term

Clark, Karen (DFL)

9th term

Bishop, Dave (R)
Solberg, Loren A. (DFL)
Tunheim, Jim (DFL)

8th term

Jennings, Loren Geo (DFL)
Lieder, Bernie L. (DFL)
Ozment, Dennis (R)
Rest, Ann H. (DFL)

7th term

Carruthers, Phil (DFL)
Dawkins, Andy (DFL)
Dorn, John (DFL)
Johnson, Alice M. (DFL)
Milbert, Bob (DFL)
Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)
Rukavina, Tom (DFL)
Trimble, Steve (DFL)
Wagenius, Jean (DFL)
Winter, Ted (DFL)

6th term

Abrams, Ron (R)
Hasskamp, Kris (DFL)
Hausman, Alice (DFL)
McGuire, Mary Jo (DFL)
Pugh, Thomas W. (DFL)

5th term

Davids, Gregory M. (R)
Erhardt, Ron (R)
Goodno, Kevin (R)
Krinkie, Philip (R)
Leppik, Peggy (R)
Mariani, Carlos (DFL)
Orfield, Myron (DFL)
Peterson, Doug (DFL)
Smith, Steve (R)
Wejcman, Linda (DFL)

4th term

Dehler, Steve (R)
Dempsey, Jerry (R)
Finseth, Tim (R)
Greiling, Mindy (DFL)
Holsten, Mark William (R)
Huntley, Thomas (DFL)
Lindner, Arlon (R)
Luther, Darlene (DFL)
McCollum, Betty (DFL)
Molnau, Carol L. (R)
Ness, Robert "Bob" (R)
Olson, Mark (R)
Opatz, Joe (DFL)
Pawlenty, Tim (R)
Rhodes, Jim (R)
Seagren, Alice (R)
Tomassoni, David J. (DFL)
Van Dellen, Henry Todd (R)
Wolf, Ken (R)
Workman, Tom (R)

3rd term

Anderson, Bruce (R)
Bakk, Thomas (Tom) (DFL)
Boudreau, Lynda (R)
Bradley, Fran (R)
Broecker, Sherry (R)
Daggett, Roxann (R)
Entenza, Matt (DFL)
Gunther, Bob (R)
Haas, Bill (R)
Harder, Elaine (R)
Knoblauch, Jim (R)
Larsen, Peg (R)
Leighton, Rob (DFL)
Mares, Harry (R)
Marko, Sharon (DFL)
McElroy, Dan (R)
Mulder, Richard (R)
Osskopp, Mike (R)
Paulsen, Erik (R)

Rostberg, Jim (R)
Schumacher, Leslie J. (DFL)
Stanek, Rich (R)
Swenson, Howard (R)
Sykora, Barb (R)
Tuma, John (R)

2nd term

Biernat, Len (DFL)
Chaudhary, Satveer (DFL)
Clark, James T. (R)
Erickson, Sondra (R)
Folliard, Betty (DFL)
Hackbarth, Tom (R)*
Hilty, Bill (DFL)
Juhnke, Al (DFL)
Kielkucki, Tony (R)
Koskinen, Luanne (DFL)
Kubly, Gary W. (DFL)
Kuisle, William (R)
Mullery, Joe (DFL)
Nornes, Bud (R)
Otremba, Mary Ellen (DFL)
Paymar, Michael (DFL)
Reuter, Doug (R)
Rifenberg, Michelle (R)
Seifert, Marty (R)
Stang, Doug (R)
Tingelstad, Kathy (R)
Vandever, Ray (R)
Westfall, Robert L. (Bob) (R)
Westrom, Torrey (R)

1st term

Abeler, Jim (R)
Buesgens, Mark (R)
Cassell, George (R)
Dorman, Dan (R)
Fuller, Doug (R)
Gerlach, Chris (R)
Gleason, Mark S. (DFL)
Gray, Gregory (DFL)
Haake, Barb (R)
Holberg, Mary Liz (R)
Howes, Larry (R)
Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (DFL)
Larson, Dan (DFL)
Lenczewski, Ann (DFL)
Mahoney, Tim (DFL)
Seifert, Jim (R)
Skoe, Rod (DFL)
Storm, Julie (R)
Westerberg, Andrew (R)
Wilkin, Tim (R)

* non-consecutive terms
House members serve two-year terms.

Governor's Desk

CH1-CH45

Bills await governor's action

Once a bill has passed both the House and the Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill. The governor 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 results in the bill becoming law in the first year of the biennium.

The timing of these actions is as significant as the actions themselves.

In the first year of the biennium, the important thing to remember is that the

governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill. If the governor doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law with or without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

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 objects. As with all vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

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.mainserver.state.mn.us/governor/>
(Select "It's a New Day" and then click on "Legislative Logs")

Key:

CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
Res. 1	544*	638	Resolution for Minnesota/Ontario border lakes trade agreements violation resolution.	3/26/99	
Res. 2	719	757*	Resolution to prohibit federal recoupment of state tobacco settlement recoveries.	3/29/99	
1	88	139*	Campaign finance and public disclosure board member qualifications specified.	2/17/99	
2	29	26*	Mississippi education center previous grantee changed to the city of Grand Rapids, and condition imposed.	2/17/99	
3	107	133*	Minneapolis and St. Paul residency requirements repealed.	3/4/99	
4	40	6*	Snowmobile metal traction device use restrictions modified and recreational vehicle rulemaking authority modified.	3/4/99	
5	121*	171	Health-related licensing board licensees infection control.	3/8/99	
6	424*	370	Nonregistered pesticide distribution permitted for certain uses outside the state.	3/8/99	
7	324	248*	Crooked Lake detached banking facility.	3/15/99	
8	241	214*	Emergency medical services volunteer ambulance attendant definition.	3/15/99	
9	464*	536	Carisoprodol classification as controlled substance effective date delay.	3/15/99	
10	73*	356	Consumer support program for persons with functional limitations financial eligibility criteria modification.	3/15/99	
11	343*	382	Real estate provisions modifications.	3/15/99	
12	162	49*	Peace officers or firefighters killed in line of duty spouse health insurance coverage.	3/16/99	
13	579	302*	Ambulance services shared service purchasing.	3/16/99	
14	301*	74	Health care directive form modification.	3/16/99	
15	416	453*	Minneapolis skilled workers and apprentices deferred compensation plan participation.	3/18/99	
16	379	157*	Laura Ingalls Wilder historic highway route modification.	3/18/99	
17	564	454*	Nursing home administrators sharing authority expansion.	3/18/99	
18	610	649*	Safe drinking water act public water supply definition modification.	3/25/99	
19	812	914*	Legislative Electric Energy Task Force membership modification.	3/25/99	
20	434	593*	St. Cloud paramount arts district regional arts center grant recipient change.	3/25/99	
21	48	50*	Public utilities performance based natural gas purchasing plans sunset repeal.	3/25/99	
22	137*	463	Collector watercraft license numbers and display requirements exemption.	3/26/99	
23	56*	90	Health care provider actions statute of limitations modification.	3/26/99	
24	193	255*	Emergency telephone (911) calls interference crime expansion.	3/29/99	
25	165	460*	Special disability license plates for modified motor vehicles.	3/29/99	
26	438	407*	McLeod West School District #2887; secondary educational facility grant.	3/29/99	

*The legislative bill marked with an asterisk denotes the file submitted to the governor.

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
27	609*	564	Landscape irrigation systems rain check installation requirement.		4/1/99
28	99*	732	Criminal offenders costs payment for failure to appear after release.	4/1/99	
29	1280	1305*	Kenyon Trunk Highway #56 relocation easements transfer.	4/1/99	
30	517	475*	Town officers or employees criminal charges defense costs reimbursement.	4/1/99	
31	381	379*	Mortgage registry and deed taxes technical corrections and administrative changes.	4/1/99	
32	183*	144	Civil Commitment; minors voluntary chemical dependency admission and treatment parental consent conditions modifications.		
33	413*	418	Physicians, acupuncturists and athletic trainers licensing and registration requirements modifications.		
34	492*	518	Minnesota State University, Mankato authorized to construct the Taylor Center multipurpose facility.		
35	766*	739	Motorcycle blue lights display.		
36	1126*	862	Family day care licensure child age groupings definitions.		
37	1258*	487	Marriage dissolution summary process revival.		
38	733	117*	Criminal offenders restitution challenge hearing requests time limit.		
39	640*	488	Mental Health State Advisory Council membership representation requirements modification.		
40	1336	727*	Contracts continuity under European currency.		
41	2024	1660*	Government innovation and cooperation board local government services delivery laws or rules exemptions.		
42	1986	1888*	Otter Tail veterans memorial drive designation.		
43	1184	794*	One call excavation notice system requirements modifications.		
44	1265	1150*	Rural residential districts speed limit.		
45	414*	428	Pseudorabies control program continuation appropriation and vaccine reimbursement requirement.		

Ventura uses first veto to kill sprinkler bill

By Jon Fure

Gov. Jesse Ventura vetoed his first bill April 1, calling it "a classic example of unnecessary government intervention."

The bill, aimed at ensuring that lawns and gardens are not over-watered when it rains, was sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) and Sen. Leonard Price (DFL-Woodbury).

Landscape irrigation systems can be equipped with a sensor, called a "rain check," that shuts off the system when there is sufficient moisture in the soil. The bill would have required the sensors to be installed on all new irrigation systems but would not have applied to agricultural systems.

Proponents of the measure said it would save millions of gallons of water. The devices cost about \$35.

Ventura, in his veto message, wrote that the problem is "better left to the judgment of manufacturers and consumers."

"Citizens who are heavy users of irrigation systems and are concerned about the conservation of water should be willing to pay a little extra for these devices in return for lowering their water bills, without the burden of a government mandate that will be virtually impossible to enforce," the governor continued. "Manufacturers who are concerned about being competitive would do well to either absorb the costs of these devices or demonstrate the value to consumers, without turning to government to force all competitors to act in a similar manner."

Ozment said manufacturers have tried to solve the problem but have been unsuccessful.

When the bill (**HF564/SF609*/CH27**) was discussed in the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee, proponents said landscape irrigation systems are often contracted through a competitive bidding process. If a company voluntarily adds extra costs for a rain check, it could mean the project would be awarded to a competitor.

"My concern is if people don't do it voluntarily, millions of gallons of water will go through the treatment process, which is very expensive, and then go through the irrigation systems while it's raining. [That] doesn't make any sense," Ozment said. "However, I agree that [Ventura's] solution is best, and I will work even harder to make that occur."

Ventura's first veto came earlier in his term than the first vetoes of other governors in recent history.

Former Gov. Arne Carlson's first veto was in early May of his first term. He vetoed a bill that would have imposed tougher regulations for pipe fitters handling lines that contain chlorine. Carlson said existing regulations were sufficient.

Gov. Rudy Perpich did not veto a single bill in his first term. The bill that eventually broke his streak of 1,054 bills signed into law came during his second term, when he vetoed a measure that would have prohibited any city, county, or township from imposing rent controls.

Gov. Al Quie's first veto was of a bill that would have allowed children under age 18 into public dance halls or discos. Children ages 15 and under could have gone to those establishments with their parents, and 16-

and 17-year-olds could have gone with their parents or with a written note from their parents. Quie pointed out that many dance halls served liquor, and he said allowing younger children into those places was not in the public interest.

The bill Ventura vetoed was returned to the Senate, which did not exercise its option to attempt to override the veto. If at least two-thirds of the senators voted to override, the measure would have gone on to the House for similar consideration.

Ozment said he didn't expect an override attempt on such a relatively minor bill, and he said that the veto has increased the public's awareness of the issue.

The last time a veto override attempt was successful was in 1982. That year, two vetoes by Quie were overridden. One was a bill to remove the education commissioner from the State University Board. The other bill allowed the state to pay medical insurance benefits to state employees who take early retirement.

Those two were the first successful overrides since 1967, when a 3-percent state sales tax was established. Gov. Harold LeVander had said he would veto the bill unless the public was allowed to vote on the issue. The measure also increased corporate taxes, and it authorized the corporate and sales tax revenue to be allocated along with \$70 million in state surplus revenue to reduce property taxes. LeVander vetoed the bill as promised, and both chambers voted to override the veto. The House vote was 93-41, and the Senate vote was 47-20.

Bill Introductions

HF2347-HF2373

Wednesday, April 7

HF2347—Larsen, P. (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
 HIV; sexually transmitted infections prevention and treatment appropriated money.

HF2348—Larsen, P. (R)
Taxes
 Automatic income tax rebate provided and money appropriated.

HF2349—Schumacher (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Private sale of state land in Benton County authorized.

HF2350—Broecker (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
 Ramsey County intermediate care facility for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR) field audit disallowances reimbursed, spend-up limit exemption provided, and money appropriated.

HF2351—Abrams (R)
Taxes
 Petroleum tank release cleanup and inspection fees agreements with American Indian tribes authorized.

HF2352—Abrams (R)
Taxes
 Qualifying housing facilities property tax classification, tax increment financing, and tax abatement previous provisions re-enacted; and retroactive application provided.

HF2353—Greiling (DFL)
Taxes
 Education homestead credit extended to qualifying low-income rental housing.

HF2354—Greiling (DFL)
Taxes
 Homes eligible for valuation exclusion for certain improvements provided increased market value.

HF2355—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Fishing license requirement exemption authorized for area learning center supervised at-risk teens.

Thursday, April 8

HF2356—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
 Home health services nursing supervision medical assistance coverage provided.

HF2357—Carruthers (DFL)
Taxes
 Rent constituting property taxes percentage increased.

HF2358—Knoblach (R)
Taxes
 Central Minnesota events center and other projects city referendum options modified, and construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF2359—Hilty (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
 Independent School District No. 577, Willow River, early childhood education center and community resource center construction grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF2360—Hilty (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
 Carlton County children and family services collaborative grant provided and money appropriated.

HF2361—Clark, J. (R)
Taxes
 Redwood Falls community center construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF2362—Murphy (DFL)
Taxes
 Hermantown community indoor sports and physical education complex and Proctor community activity center construction materials sales and use tax exemptions provided.

HF2363—Hasskamp (DFL)
Taxes
 Home care income tax credit provided and money appropriated.

HF2364—Rostberg (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Youth ice facilities municipal debt refund obligations issuance authorized and conditions provided.

HF2365—Clark, J. (R)
Taxes
 Springfield community center construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF2366—Reuter (R)
K-12 Education Finance
 Commissioner of Children, Families, and Learning required to provide protective software to school districts and money appropriated.

HF2367—Dempsey (R)
Taxes
 Qualifying public utilities limited property tax relief authorized.

HF2368—Fuller (R)
Capital Investment
 Bureau of Criminal Apprehension satellite facility design and construction provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2369—Swenson (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Employers licensed for pest control or agricultural applications provided work place accident and injury reduction program requirements exemption.

HF2370—Luther (DFL)
Transportation Finance
 Brooklyn Park; Edinburgh trail pedestrian bridge construction over Trunk Highway No. 252 provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2371—Finseth (R)
Capital Investment
 East Grand Forks and Warren dike construction provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2372—Wolf (R)
Commerce
 Minnesota retail electric competition act adopted, civil remedies provided, and money appropriated.

HF2373—Ness (R)
Education Policy
 Learning Network of Minnesota II (LN II) established, and activities developed by the Minnesota Education Telecommunications Council (METC) and the Higher Education Advisory Council (HEAC).

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 231 Capitol 296-0271
 Voice mail/order bills 296-2343
Chief Clerk of the House
 211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate
 110 Capitol 296-2887
Index, House
 211 Capitol 296-6646
Information, Senate
 231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House
 175 State Office Building 296-2146
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Committee Schedule

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MONDAY, April 12

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF1769 (Abeler) Senior citizen drug program eligibility expanded and money appropriated.

HF1602 (Abeler) Prescription drug coverage for the senior drug program clarified, Medical Assistance eligibility and income provisions modified, and other health care provider provisions clarified.

SF194 (Berglin) Health plan companies essential community provider status application deadline elimination.

HF1955 (Goodno) Regional coordinating boards provisions modified, radioactive material regulatory authority provided, speech pathologist and audiologist fees modified, lead safety provisions modified, penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF1959 (Bradley) Human services county-based purchasing implementation date and provisions modified.

HF2047 (Mulder) University of Minnesota rural preventative health care program established, rural medical community information resource system operation provided, and money appropriated.

Member bills.

Note: This meeting will continue at 3 p.m. in 10 State Office Building, if necessary.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Construction of omnibus bill.

10 a.m.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF36 (Erickson) Onamia permitted an extension for commencement of tax increment financing district activities.

HF612 (Seifert, M.) Minneota tax increment financing district expenditures authorized.

HF1397 (Stang) Stearns County tax increment financing district housing and redevelopment actions ratified.

HF2159 (Harder) Jackson tax increment financing district duration extended.

HF2258 (Chaudhary) Fridley tax increment financing district duration extended.

HF1572 (Dawkins) St. Paul tax increment financing district extended.

HF2126 (Abrams) Fiscal disparities abatement authorized, school district uniform abatement authority provided, and provisions clarified.

HF2227 (Abrams) Local contribution rate reduced for housing districts relating to tax increment financing.

HF1226 (Ozment) Use of tax increment revenues for social or recreational facilities prohibited.

HF1167 (Lenczewski) Tax increment financing district pooling authorized for deficits caused by property tax changes.

HF985 (Workman) Chanhassen tax increment financing district extended and requirements modified.

HFXXXX (McElroy/Rest) General Law pre-1982 pooling.

HF1410 (Knoblach) St. Cloud tax increment financing district housing and redevelopment expenditures authorized.

HF1916 (Solberg) Itasca County tax increment financing district creation authorized, and taconite mine direct reduction plant and steel mill adjacent power plant development powers provided.

11:45 a.m.

RULES & LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

316 State Capitol

Chr. Rep. Tim Pawlenty

Agenda: Calendar for the Day.

12 noon

The House meets in session.

30 minutes after session

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

3:30 p.m.

WAYS & MEANS

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: Transportation finance omnibus bill.

Higher education finance omnibus bill.

Jobs & economic development finance omnibus bill.

TUESDAY, April 13

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF1600 (Goodno) Tobacco settlement money disposition provided, Minnesota families foundation established, health-related endowment funds created, and money appropriated.

HF223 (Leppik) Tobacco prevention board and endowment fund created, and money appropriated.

HF1609 (Storm) Long-term care provisions and nursing facilities payment rates modified.

Member bills.

Note: This meeting will continue 30 minutes after session in 10 State Office Building, if necessary.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Construction of omnibus bill.

10 a.m.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

Immediately following session

TAXES

*****Room to be announced*****

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF2333 (Seagren) K-12 Education Finance omnibus bill.

HFXXXX (Sykora) Family & Early Childhood Education Finance omnibus bill.

HF73 (Larsen, P.) Year 2000; local government units mutual aid authority clarified, health department required to collect and disseminate information regarding possible problems and solutions, immunity provided, and money appropriated.

6 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Omnibus agriculture bill.

WEDNESDAY, April 14

8 a.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Omnibus agriculture bill.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: To be announced.

Note: This meeting may continue 30 minutes
after session in the Basement Hearing Room,
State Office Building, if necessary.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Construction of omnibus bill.

12 noon

The House meets in session.

2 p.m.

Topic Selection Subcommittee/ Legislative Audit Commission

400S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Selection of program evaluation topics
for consideration by the full Legislative Audit
Commission.

6 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Omnibus agriculture bill.

THURSDAY, April 15

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Health and human services omnibus
bill.

Note: This meeting will continue 30 minutes
after session in 10 State Office Building.

10 a.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Omnibus agriculture bill.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

30 minutes following session

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

FRIDAY, April 16

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Health and human services omnibus
bill.

Note: This meeting will continue 30 minutes
after session in 10 State Office Building.

10 a.m.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

12 noon

The House meets in session.

30 minutes following session

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Continuation of morning meeting.

Continued from page 4

Securing rights for illegitimate children became a favorite cause of Kempfer's. She successfully sponsored legislation that gave children born out of wedlock the same rights as children of married parents.

"A child should not be punished for what is no fault of its own," she said in response to a floor debate over her bill during which some crude remarks were made about illegitimate children.

"I want to do all I can to improve the lot of these poor children because I am one of them," she told her colleagues. "I am an illegitimate child; I know what it means."

Kempfer is also remembered as the first woman to sit in the House Speaker's chair. She took the gavel for one day on Jan. 28, 1925, and the press reported she had difficulty presiding over a heated debate concerning the gasoline tax.

She died Sept. 27, 1943, at the age of 62, barely a year after retiring from the Legislature.

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

Former House doorman Charlie Ward dies

The House observed a moment of silence April 6 to honor Charlie Ward, who died April 3, about a year after he retired from his post as doorman of the House chamber.

Ward, who was 79 years old, worked for the House Sergeant-at-Arms Office for 15 years, including 11 years as doorman. He was known for his good sense of humor and for his good-natured manner of keeping uninvited guests out of the House chamber. He also was known for requiring credentials of anyone he didn't know, including governor's staff, journalists, senators, or new House members.

Before working for the sergeant's office, Ward had worked for 35 years in the Anoka

post office. He retired in 1980 as postmaster.

Ward was born and raised in Anoka and attended St. John's University. He joined the National Guard in 1939 and was on

active duty from 1941 until the end of World War II in 1945. He was wounded during the invasion of Italy, but he returned to duty in France and Germany. And he was involved in the invasion of Southern

France, the invasion of the Aleutian Islands, and the North Africa campaign.

Ward is survived by his wife, Bernice, six children, two brothers, two sisters, and many grandchildren, nieces, and nephews and friends in the Legislature.



Charlie Ward



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

Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Motor vehicle crash facts

Minnesotans with a driver's license, December 1997	3,487,770
Vehicles registered in Minnesota, December 1997	3,769,845
Traffic crashes in 1997	98,625
In 1996	105,332
Crash fatalities in 1997	600
In 1996	576
Fatal crashes in 1997 involving male drivers under age 14	2
Involving female drivers under age 14	0
Fatal crashes in 1997 involving male drivers over age 85	14
Involving female drivers over age 85	3
Crash injuries in 1997	46,064
In 1996	47,161
Minnesota traffic fatalities per 100 million miles of travel in 1997	1.3
In U.S.	1.7
In Minnesota in 1968	5.3
Known alcohol-related traffic fatalities in 1997 (record low in Minnesota)	178
Number of those that involved pedestrians who had been drinking	11
Drunken driving arrests in 1997	30,168
Percent male	81
Percent under age 21	11
Percent of known alcohol-related crashes that occurred between	
1 a.m. and 2 a.m.	14
Motorcycles involved in fatal crashes in 1997	24
Snowmobiles involved in fatal crashes in 1997	6
Police vehicles involved in fatal crashes in 1997	3
Crashes in which illegal or unsafe speed was a contributing factor in 1997	5,623
In which weather was a contributing factor	2,212
In which talking on a CB radio or phone was a contributing factor	43
Percent increase in fatal crashes between 1991 and 1998 on roads where	
speed limit was raised in July 1997	66
Percent increase on roads where speed limit was not increased	2

Sources: *Minnesota Motor Vehicle Crash Facts, 1997*, Office of Traffic Safety, Minnesota Department of Public Safety; *Traffic Safety Impacts of Speed Limit Increases, 1998*, Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

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SESSION WEEKLY

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SESSION WEEKLY

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Reflections



About 142 years ago, legislators from the most northern part of the Minnesota Territory traveled to St. Paul by dog sled or oxcart. Lawmakers from the area, like Joe Rolette and Norman Kittson, helped to build state government early in Minnesota history. When they went back north, they took with them many stories about life in the capital city for those who never ventured as far south.

Today, residents who live over 350 miles away still make the long trip to St. Paul, and when they arrive, they find out for themselves how people live in the

Twin Cities and how government works.

Last week, on April 8, two groups of visitors from District 1A in Minnesota's far north came separately, in vans, to learn firsthand about the Legislature. They also visited such sites as Como Zoo, The Mall of America, and the Science and Children's museums.

The first group to arrive and meet with Rep. Jim Tunheim (DFL-Kennedy) were 15 4-H Club members who attend the junior and senior high school in Roseau on this the second stage of their three-day "capitol experience." To complete their legislative assignments, they met with Sen. LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls), had questions for lobbyist, Sandra Neren, and sat in on a session in the House chamber. The other group, made up of nine grade-school students, two pre-schoolers, and six parents, arrived at Tunheim's office about an hour later.

Roseau students with chaperons Deon and Paul Willcox traveled 370 miles one-way to get to St. Paul, but it was not so simple for the second group. Those in the second group were unique.

Three of these youngsters and their parents trekked 10 miles by snowmobile across Lake of the Woods, from a place called Oak Island, then traveled 18 miles to their charter school in Angle Inlet. There they joined their six classmates before leaving for St. Paul.

This second group, led by teacher Linda Kastl and parents, actually came from a distance 60 miles farther north than Roseau. The hearty crew first had to travel across 50 miles of Manitoba, Canada to get to the accessible southern shores of "The Lake" as they headed south.

Angle Inlet students, like Roseau visitors, took stories home about St. Paul. But two of their own are more interesting. For example, at the Treaty of Paris in 1783, heavyweights John Adams, Ben Franklin, and others held major debates to keep the land as part of the United States. More interesting news is the recent stir about seceding from the United States due to fishing restrictions by Canada.

Angle Island visitors and the 67 residents left at home know that they are unique. These Northwest Angle residents are proud Minnesotans who live at 49° 23' 04" — farther north than anyone else in the lower 48 states of the United States.

— LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: The State Capitol is reflected in the hubcap of a 1948 Chrysler. The Minnesota Street Rod Association displayed more than a dozen vintage automobiles in front of the Capitol April 13 in an effort to promote the hobby of street-rodding.

— Photo by Andrew Von Bank

First Reading

Giving it back . . .

House unites behind tax cut, rebate package

By Paul Wahl

A relatively minor budget deficiency bill has become the vehicle for a massive tax-cut and tax-rebate plan that many hope will end a weeks-long deadlock over opposing visions of how to return to taxpayers some of the state's budget surplus.

After a surprising turn of events on the House floor April 13, a bipartisan agreement on a \$1.3 billion sales-tax rebate and an income-tax cut that would total more than \$1 billion passed easily. The vote was 129-1.

The plan would cut taxes for people in all three of the state's income-tax brackets. The middle bracket — presumably made up of middle-class Minnesotans — would get the largest cut.

The bill under consideration was a \$17 million plan to provide emergency funding for the Minnesota Zoo, State Services for the Blind, security for Gov. Jesse Ventura, and government agencies.

The deficiency bill (HF878) is a largely routine measure designed to fill gaps in expenses incurred during the current fiscal year. The measure, sponsored by Rep. David Bishop (R-Rochester), had failed to pass on the floor earlier this month and was being reconsidered when the tax-related amendments began to fly.

With colleague Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul) hoisting a "Day 96" sign behind him (referring to the days since a key tax rebate bill was introduced), House Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) offered a 19-page amendment containing the rebate based on a sales-tax formula, \$70 million in agricultural tax relief, and cuts in income-tax rates.

"This isn't normally my style, but this is a proposition the taxpayers of Minnesota have been wondering about for a long time," Pugh said. "This is a chance to have a conversation on the topic, and I'm thrilled the speaker has given us the opportunity to take a step toward that."



House Speaker Steve Sviggum, top, and Minority Leader Tom Pugh meet with the press the day after the House passed a sales-tax based rebate and income-tax reduction plan. The measure was approved late April 13 after it was added to a routine deficiency bill on the House floor.

Pugh acknowledged that the forthcoming omnibus tax bill could contain a similar permanent income-tax cut proposal to the one in his amendment. Pugh's plan called for income tax cuts only for the two lowest of the state's three income brackets, both by 0.5 percent.

Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope) said the amendment would "send a very strong message to the Senate."

"The message is that the House is serious about permanent income tax cuts," Rest said.

She added that although the mechanism was irregular, "these are extraordinary times."

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chairman of the House Taxes Committee, said he wasn't pleased that the minority leader had decided to bring up the rebate and tax cuts at the time. Abrams said he would prefer to see the provisions contained in the omnibus tax bill.

But Abrams offered, and the House accepted, an amendment that he said represented "the real deal."

Among the provisions in Abrams' proposal was a call to speed up the rebate and require the state to pay interest if the rebate checks aren't in the hands of taxpayers by the end of July.

And the amendment boosted the income-tax cut plan, expanding the proposed cuts to benefit earners in the top tax bracket.

With the Abrams amendment, the bill would reduce income tax rates from 6 to 5.5 percent on the first \$34,500 in taxable net income, from 8 to 7 percent for income from \$34,501 to \$113,360, and from 8.5 to 8 percent on all income over \$113,360.

The bill also would eliminate the so-called "marriage penalty," a hitch in state law that forces married couples filing jointly to pay more taxes than single filers with the same income.

The bill would require the state to begin processing sales-tax rebates by June 1 and to offer taxpayers the opportunity to sign their rebate checks over to the

state for one of five specially designated funds or for the general fund.

The bill would give \$1 million to the revenue department to finance the rebate process.

During floor debate, several lawmakers argued that giving a break to the 6 percent of the state's residents who fall into the highest income levels wasn't proper.

Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin) said that high-income earners already get two breaks on the first two tax levels and that adding a cut at the top would make that break even larger.

But Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) said giving a break at the top wouldn't take anything away from anyone.

"It just gives fairness to every Minnesotan," he said.

Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie) summed up the feelings of some lawmakers

when he objected to another House member terming the rebate a "reward."

"This is not a reward, it's their money," he said. "We're returning what we took from them because we don't need it. It's not a reward, and until we get out of that mentality, we have real problems."

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) cast the lone vote against the measure. The bill was sent to the Senate, where its future is uncertain.

Early in the session, the House passed a bill (HF1) that would provide a tax rebate based on income taxes paid. The Senate approved a rebate based on a sales tax formula, which has the support of Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The two bills have been in conference committee for weeks.

On March 31, the House declined to vote on a rebate plan the Senate had attached to a local tax bill (HF50), sponsored by Rep. Jerry Dempsey. That bill was laid on the table.

Almost no one expected the rebate plan to be attached to the deficiency bill — a measure which had earlier drawn debate mainly because of provisions to provide \$600,000 for the Minnesota Zoo in Apple Valley and \$829,000 for the Department of Public Safety.

The zoo's request would offset losses from lower-than-expected attendance. Of the Department of Public Safety's request, \$629,000 would pay for license plates for new automobiles and \$200,000 would fund additional security for Ventura.

The bill also would require the zoological board to study alternative management structures, such as converting to a private non-profit organization instead of remaining a state agency. The board would have to submit a report to the governor and Legislature by Feb. 1, 2000, analyzing how changes would impact employees and what the ongoing costs would be to the state.

Among other proposals in the bill, about \$11.7 million would go to the Minnesota Department of Human Services to make up for a budget shortfall due to a delay in federal reimbursements for MinnesotaCare, a state-subsidized health care plan.

And the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning would receive \$3.5 million primarily to pay legal costs arising from two lawsuits.

Other appropriations proposed in the bill are \$15,000 in legal fees for a lawsuit involving the Campaign Finance and Disclosure Board and a \$370,000 boost for the State Services for the Blind. 🐾

State's grand gesture made a modest gift



Most visitors to the recently re-opened Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. walk right past the red stone that simply says "Minnesota" and cast their eyes instead at one of

the more ornate memorial stones embedded in the granite staircase leading to the top.

But Minnesota's contribution to the monument — although it may look unimpressive — represents a truly unique gesture.

In 1848, Henry H. Sibley was sent to the nation's capital to lobby Congress for the creation of a new Minnesota territory. While there he heard the call from the Washington Monument Association for memorial stones.

In 1849, after Sibley had successfully convinced Congress to grant Minnesota territo-

rial status, he returned to Minnesota and acquired a block of pipestone for Minnesota's gift to the monument honoring the first U.S. president. In September 1849, he submitted the stone to the new territorial Legislature for approval.

"Minnesota should not be backward in her contribution to a work which is intended to perpetuate the memory of the 'Father of his Country,'" Sibley wrote in a letter reprinted in the legislative journals. "The offering should be that of the constituted authorities of the territory, rather than the act of a private individual."

The Territorial Legislature followed Sibley's suggestion and passed a resolution authorizing the donation of the rock. Territorial Gov. Alexander Ramsey signed the resolution on Oct. 11, 1849.

Minnesota's stone is one of 192 memorial stones, including gifts from each of the 50 states, various municipalities, individual donors, and several foreign nations.

All 50 states have dedicated memorial stones. The first state stone was Alabama's stone, which was installed in 1849. And

Alaska was the last state to have its stone placed in 1982.

The red stone offered by Minnesota is about 2 feet long, 1 foot high, and 2 inches thick. It has no other writing besides the uppercase, block letters that spell out "Minnesota."

The red pipestone, also called Catlinite, was quarried from the historic quarry outside of what is now Pipestone, Minn. Stone from that quarry has been used by Native Americans for centuries to make ceremonial pipes.

Sibley, in his letter to the Territorial Legislature, took issue with the name Catlinite.

He wrote that the rock was named after George Catlin, who was alleged to be the first white settler to see the pipestone quarry. Sibley disputed this fact and claimed that many settlers had seen the quarry before Catlin.

"This designation is therefore clearly improper and unjust," he wrote. "The

Sioux term for the stone is Eyanskah, by which, I conceive, it should be known and classified."

The geological community didn't take Sibley's advice and the stone is still referred to as Catlinite.

The Washington Monument was finally completed Dec. 6, 1884, and the structure is now enjoying a full-scale restoration. It was re-opened in February, after a temporary shutdown to allow work crews to do their job.

Minnesota's stone is far from the most famous stone. That honor belongs to the original stone dedicated by Pope Pius IX. The marble stone was originally a part of the Temple of Concord in Rome.

On March 6, 1854, members of the Know Nothing Party, an anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic group, stole the stone and allegedly destroyed it. Some speculate that it still sits at the bottom of the Potomac River. The Vatican donated a replica in 1982.

Luckily, the masked thieves passed up the Minnesota stone on that night in 1854.



This piece of pipestone was the state's contribution to the Washington Monument.

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Omnibus ag bill advances

Disaster relief, marketing initiatives, and record ethanol producer payments head the list of provisions in a \$139 million spending package approved April 13 by the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee.

The omnibus bill (HF2389) was hailed as the biggest farm bill in Minnesota history. It comes in response to the deepening crisis in the state's agricultural sector, according to Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), who chairs the committee and is sponsoring the bill.

By far the largest single item in the spending package is a proposed \$74.7 million appropriation for ethanol producer payments to plants around Minnesota.

The state purchases about one-fifth of all bushels of the state's largest crop — corn — through ethanol subsidies.

The new funding would bring plants in Albert Lea, Bingham Lake, Buffalo Lake, Luverne, and Preston to maximum production capacity.

An additional \$500,000 would go to the state's newest proposed ethanol plant, which would be part of the operation at the Minnesota Brewing facility in St. Paul.

The bill also would provide funding for a Little Falls plant, which began production in March.

The omnibus bill includes about \$8.2 million for the Agriculture Utilization and Research Institute and another \$1.3 million to allow the commissioner of agriculture to develop collaborative efforts to expand direct marketing efforts.

Nearly \$500,000 would go to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Farm Advocate Program, which provides assistance with preparing cash flow sheets, loan applications, and other financial documents to struggling farm families across the state. Another \$400,000 would be targeted for helping farmers with management options in disaster counties.

The bill also would establish a rapid response fund of \$250,000 for crop and livestock diseases. When a crisis develops and the Legislature is not in session, the opportunity to take quick action to prevent the spread of disease can be lost, supporters of the fund said.

And the measure would provide another

\$250,000 for pseudorabies eradication in hog herds in the state. The governor has already signed a separate bill (HF414*/SF428/CH45) appropriating \$1.25 million to purchase pseudorabies vaccine.

Ness' omnibus spending bill includes an appropriation of \$316,000 to help farmers who experience crop damage by protected wildlife, rounding out the nearly \$2 million in the bill for disaster relief.

Also under the measure, \$300,000 would go toward planning for an urban agricultural high school. The school would teach agricul-

tural skills and farm awareness, with the eventual aim of providing a pipeline for agricultural industry employees.

A plan to allow farmed cervidae — the animal family that includes deer and elk — to be hunted on game preserves is also included in the finance bill.

Finally, the bill includes a provision backed by Ness that calls for legislative review of any regulation or fee the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency might assess on livestock, poultry, or feedlot operations.

The bill moves to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Liquid protest



Milk runs down the street and into a storm sewer on the Capitol grounds after Mark Rohr, a dairy farmer from Otter Tail County, opened the spigot of the holding tank on the back of his pickup truck and released 100 gallons of milk to protest low milk prices on April 15.

Funds vetoed, vaccine OK'd



More than \$1.25 million in state funding for pseudorabies vaccine is on its way to swine producers in Minnesota whose herds are infected, under a new law effective April 13.

The vaccine is being provided to quell an outbreak of the highly contagious disease, which is not harmful to humans but causes pigs to have reproductive problems and to gain weight more slowly.

But another \$245,000 aimed at helping farmers with financial management was sliced from the measure, the victim of Gov. Jesse Ventura's first line-item veto.

Money for the Center for Farm Financial Management at University of Minnesota was added to the House version of the bill in the Senate. It survived a conference committee, but not the governor's pen.

In his veto message, Ventura said that the state must do everything it can to eradicate pseudorabies and help hog farmers, but he said he believes the appropriation to provide about 500 farmers with assistance to apply for spring operating loans had no place in the bill.

"In my view, all such relief proposals belong in an omnibus bill, especially now that the legislative process has already taken too long to ensure adequate and timely financing application assistant to farmers for this planting season," Ventura said.

Supporters of the measure to provide the vaccine said farmers had done a good job over the years working to decrease incidences of pseudorabies, but in recent months, there has been a resurgence of infected herds.

Bill opponents claimed pseudorabies flared

because farmers facing declining pork prices decided to gamble and not vaccinate.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) and Sen. Paula Hanson (DFL-Ham Lake) sponsored the measure.

HF414*/SF428/CH45



BONDING

Setting bonding priorities

The House passed a bill April 8 that would give the Legislature a tool to better evaluate local capital improvement requests. The vote was 97-25.

Under the proposal, the Minnesota Department of Finance would review each local bonding request and submit its recommendations to the Legislature for consideration in the bonding bill.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), outlines a set of nine criteria that the finance department would use in evaluating each proposal.

Those include considering whether each project has additional local, private, and user financing; helps fulfill an important state mission of regional or statewide importance; will not require additional state funding for operation; does not expand the state's role into a new policy area; does not create serious inequities among local jurisdictions; has a credible plan for ongoing maintenance and funding throughout the life of the project; does not compete with other local facilities; and has resolutions of support from all governing bodies immediately affected by the project.

The measure also would limit state funding to one-half of the project's total costs, unless the project comes as a result of a natural disaster or would be located in an economically depressed area.

While the bill would encourage local governments to submit their requests directly to the department, it also states that neither the Legislature nor the governor would be bound by the recommendations of the department and that legislators and the governor could introduce projects for consideration that have not been reviewed by the finance department.

Knoblach's bill, which would apply to requests for the 2000 bonding bill, would require local governments to submit their proposals to the finance department by June 1, 1999.

The measure (**HF726**) now goes to the Senate.

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



CRIME

Waiting in the workhouse



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law April 15 that will authorize county sheriffs to transfer prisoners waiting for trial from the county jail to the county workhouse.

Current law allows sheriffs to transfer only prisoners who have been sentenced. The new measure, effective Aug. 1, will allow sheriffs to do the same with pretrial prisoners.

Under the new law, sheriffs and workhouse administrators are required to have an agreement in place on the conditions of the transfer, including how costs will be handled.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove) and Sen. Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington) sponsored the measure.

HF216*/SF236/CH49

Challenging court orders



The governor signed a measure April 12 that will place a time limit on when criminal defendants can challenge court-ordered restitution.

Under current law, courts can order that a person convicted of a crime pay the victim expenses resulting from the crime. Restitution can include medical bills, therapy costs, or the replacement of lost wages.

Current law also outlines a process whereby defendants can challenge the amount claimed by the victim.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will give the defendant 30 days to challenge the amount of the restitution. The clock starts ticking when the defendant is informed of the amount requested or is sentenced to pay, whichever is later.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure.

HF733/SF117*/CH38



DEVELOPMENT

Omnibus development bill

The House passed the 1999 jobs and economic development finance bill April 15. The vote was 72-55.

The \$444 million appropriations bill, sponsored by Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville), would provide funding for two dozen state agencies over the next two years, including the

departments of commerce, economic security, housing, labor, and trade and economic development

The bill (**HF2390**) was approved by the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee on April 9 and by the House Ways and Means Committee on April 12.

The bill also includes House Speaker Steve Sviggum's plan to replace lawmakers who serve on the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) with appointed citizens.

Sviggum (R-Kenyon) has argued that the IRRRB's current makeup causes constitutional problems, because legislators are prohibited from holding other public offices.

Sviggum's proposal would require the governor to appoint 10 board members who are not legislators. No more than six board members could support the same political party, and all would have to live in the Iron Range tax relief area.

The IRRRB oversees six different accounts that appropriate money for environmental or economic development projects in northeastern Minnesota. The board administers funds received through a specific tax paid by mining companies in the area.

Under current law, the House speaker appoints five state representatives to serve on the board, and the Senate Subcommittee on Committees appoints five state senators.

The omnibus bill also includes a housing proposal originally sponsored by Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan). The plan seeks to provide stable housing for families with school-aged children.

Specifically, the measure would enable organizations to apply for grants through the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program, which was established by the Legislature in 1993. That program provides grants to counties and nonprofit organizations for efforts to prevent homelessness.

Under Pawlenty's plan, a new project aimed at providing stability for homeless children would be added to the existing program.

The program would combine the housing services with job training, social services, and the schools. The bill would provide \$1 million for the project.

The bill also would split the regulation of health maintenance organizations (HMOs) between the departments of health and commerce. Under current law, the Department of Health is the agency responsible for regulating those organizations.

Under the omnibus bill, the Department of Commerce would be responsible for the financial regulation of these entities, and the Department of Health would regulate quality of care issues.

Other risk-bearing health organizations, such as community integrated service networks (CISNs), health care cooperatives, and community purchasing arrangements, would also fall under the change.

Here are some other highlights of the bill.

- The Department of Trade and Economic Development would receive \$81.2 million over the next two years. Of that amount, \$2 million would fund the Wastewater Infrastructure Fund grant program for statewide wastewater improvement projects. Also included in that amount, \$5 million would go to the Office of Tourism to increase marketing and advertising.
- The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency would get \$96.2 million over the next two years. Of that amount, \$10 million of additional funding would go toward preserving federally subsidized rental housing. The bill also would provide \$1.6 million to an innovative housing demonstration project. The program would seek to develop innovative building techniques that could keep housing costs affordable.
- Also under the bill, the Department of Economic Security would receive \$83.5 million over the next two years. Included in this appropriation, State Services for the Blind would receive \$10.9 million. The department is required under the bill to audit State Services for the Blind to find the cause for the deficit that occurred in the agency's 1999 budget.
- The bill would provide \$38 million to the Department of Commerce over the next two years. Of that amount, \$1.4 million would fund an upgrade of the database systems used by the department, and \$90,000 would go toward the development of an online licensing web-site. The bill would also provide \$100,000 for an educational campaign to alert home buyers to the mortgage flipping scam.
- The bill would also provide \$1.1 million to the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, \$638,000 to the Chicano Latino Affairs Council, \$563,000 to the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, and \$649,000 to the Council on Black Minnesotans. Of the appropriation to the Council on Black Minnesotans, \$25,000 would go to the annual planning of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.
- Also under the bill, the Minnesota Historical Society would get \$50.4 million, the Department of Labor and Industry would be appropriated \$48 million, and the Department of Public Service would receive \$21 million. Several boards would also receive funding. The Board of Accountancy would get \$1.3 million, the architecture board would receive \$1.6 million, and the Board of Barber

Examiners would get \$293,000. But the state Board of Boxing would be eliminated under the bill. This provision came as a result of recommendations made by the legislative auditor in a report on occupational regulation. The auditor suggested that the functions of the board could best be handled by a private organization.

Limits on locals

A bill that would restrict cities and counties from a practice of using zoning ordinances to achieve certain goals was approved by the House April 13. The vote was 100-32.

The bill (SF854*/HF896) would prohibit cities and counties from setting a deadline for a nonconforming land use to cease. That process, known as "amortization," gives local units of government a loophole in laws regarding the public taking of private property, said Rep. Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland), sponsor of the bill.

Larsen said amortization allows local units of government to take, or condemn, private property by saying it has no value due to the nonconforming use, such as a home located in a business district.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) objected to the bill, saying Minnesota would be the only state to prohibit that practice and that court rulings have found amortization to be constitutional.

Paymar and Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul) each offered amendments to allow amortization to be used to reduce the number of billboards throughout the state, but those proposals were rejected.

The bill now goes to the governor.



EDUCATION

K-12 funding hike

Schools would receive about \$127 more per student from the state next year, under a \$7.7 billion omnibus K-12 finance bill advancing in the House.

The 3.6-percent increase on the state's general formula would be \$42 per pupil more than Gov. Jesse Ventura's proposed hike, but it would come in almost \$275 short of the increase called for by DFLers on the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

That committee approved the omnibus finance bill (HF2333), sponsored by Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington), on April 12.

General formula funding for school districts is figured on weighted per-pupil units, with secondary students receiving more revenue than elementary students.

School districts receive the bulk of their funding from the general formula, currently set at \$3,530 per pupil. The House plan would follow next year's increase with a 3-percent formula boost for the 2000-01 school year.

The increase in per-pupil funding would cost the state \$204 million, which would be part of the \$6 billion sent to districts in general formula funding.

The omnibus bill also includes key provisions designed to reduce class sizes, boost summer school programs, support charter schools, and reduce the funding disparities between local school districts.

Class-size reduction

The measure would spend about \$107 million over the next two years for class-size reduction initiatives. That's about \$43 million less than the governor proposed.

But the House plan closely resembles Ventura's plan in all other ways. The funds would be targeted to kindergarten through third grade, with the goal of reducing class sizes, primarily in reading and math, to 17 children to each teacher.

Districts would have to submit a plan to the commissioner of the Department of Children, Families and Learning, and upon approval, they would receive up to \$250 per student. Districts that have already met that 17-to-1 goal in those grades could use the funding for reducing class sizes in higher grades, providing all-day kindergarten, increasing staff, or improving technology and other programs.

Targeted programs

The measure also would provide almost \$2.3 million over the next biennium to fund basic skills summer school programs. Districts could receive the funding for students who do not pass a basic skills test in reading, writing, or mathematics.

The governor's proposal did not include funding for that provision, but in other areas, the House plan follows Ventura's recommendations. For instance, both proposals would earmark almost \$6 million over two years to expand the Fast Break to Learning program, which provides in-school breakfasts and has been shown to have a positive impact on test scores and attendance rates at certain pilot sites.

But the House plan would not continue to fund all-day kindergarten pilot programs around the state. The first-grade preparedness program was initiated in 1996, with \$5 million in biennial spending, and it was given a \$1.5 million funding boost in 1998's omnibus education law.

Charter schools

Fledgling charter schools would see more state money under the House plan. Funding for both start-up and lease costs for those schools would be increased to almost \$12 million for the biennium — almost \$2.5 million more than the governor proposed.

Other provisions are aimed at making it easier to create new charter schools. Cities, towns, and educational cooperative boards would be added to the list of entities that can sponsor charter schools, and districts would be required to convert existing schools to charter schools if the majority of full-time teachers at a school petition for the change. Under current law, 90 percent of those teachers must petition to necessitate the conversion.

Funding disparities

The bill also includes provisions to address statewide funding disparities between districts. Currently, about 32 percent of school districts' budgets come from local property tax levies, and districts that, for whatever reason, have trouble getting voter approval for levy hikes face recurring funding crunches.

The House proposal would direct almost \$28 million over the upcoming biennium to a new funding component called equity revenue. Equity revenue would provide additional money, on a sliding scale, to districts that have less than the state's average per-pupil funding based on combined state and local revenue.

The plan also would increase the level at which the state "equalizes" local referendum funding. Currently, additional state funds are provided for districts' first \$315 in per-pupil funding from local levies, based on the districts' property tax base. The House plan would raise that level to \$350 for fiscal year 2000 and to \$415 the following year.

Also, the bill would create an equity component for the current spending, called compensatory funding, that is directed to districts with high concentrations of poor and non-English speaking students. Compensatory equity funding would share that money with more districts, and the bill would add about \$12 million over two years in compensatory funding for districts that don't have high enough concentrations of poor students to qualify under the current formula.

The measure was approved by the House Taxes Committee April 14 and moves next to the House Ways and Means Committee.



ENVIRONMENT

Seeking waste solutions

The House passed a bill April 8 that would make the Office of Environmental Assistance responsible for part of the state's Waste Management Act. The vote was 123-1.

The Waste Management Act is a state law that requires the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and the commissioner of public service to recommend policy changes to help the state reduce the amount of waste that is sent to landfills. Goals of the program include purchasing products that contain recycled material, conducting tests on agencies' experiences using those products, and keeping other data related to recycling.

Under current law, the Pollution Control Agency and the commissioner of public service recommend policy changes to the governor and the Environment and Natural Resources committees in the House and Senate. The bill (SF1176*/HF1151) would shift the MPCA's responsibility to the Office of Environmental Assistance.

The bill now moves to the governor's desk.

Protecting lake waters

The House passed a bill April 13 that would modify the state's policy for controlling the spread of Eurasian water milfoil and other exotic species. The vote was 132-0.

Signs of spring



Daffodils bloomed on the Capitol grounds this week, a sure sign that spring is really here.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed the Exotic Species Program after Eurasian water milfoil was found in Lake Minnetonka in 1987 and zebra mussels were found in Duluth harbor. The program includes inspection of boats and trailers at launching sites of lakes that are known to be infested.

The bill (SF1528*/HF1248) would extend those inspections to lakes that are not infested, and it would allow more time for those inspections. Under current law, the DNR inspects boats from May 1 to Oct. 15 each year. The bill would extend those dates to the entire open water season.

Current law also prohibits people from harvesting bait from infested waters. The bill would allow the DNR to grant permits for that purpose to people who have had training in handling exotic species.

The bill is sponsored by Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack) and Sen. Leonard Price (DFL-Woodbury).

The measure now goes to the governor.



FAMILY

Kids in treatment



Parents of teen-agers with chemical dependency problems often find their hands are tied when dealing with their children, but a new law signed by the governor April 12 aims to give them aid.

Under current law, children under the age of 16 can be admitted by their parents to a chemical dependency treatment program, provided that an independent evaluator confirms the need for treatment. But for minors ages 16 and 17 the treatment must be voluntary.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will make 16- and 17-year-olds subject to the same requirements as children under the age of 16.

"It is highly questionable that a 16- or 17-year-old who is chemically dependent can make this choice by themselves," said Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), who sponsored the measure in the House.

Sen. Claire Robling (R-Prior Lake) sponsored the Senate bill.

HF183*/SF144/CH32

Child care terms



A new state law extends a temporary legal definition of day care terms including newborn, infant, toddler, preschooler, and school age. The measure is effective April 13.

The definitions were adopted in 1997 because of concerns regarding adequate day care options in light of welfare reform. They were part of new guidelines aimed at allowing day care operations to take a greater mix of children than was allowable under the prior definitions.

State law dictates how many children in a certain age group — newborns, for example — can be under the care of one day care provider at one time. The 1997 changes were designed to give greater flexibility and to make available more child care options.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. Claire Robling (R-Prior Lake) sponsored the bill.

HF1126*/HF862/CH36



GOVERNMENT

New veto authority

The governor would be able to veto rules that are adopted by state agencies, under a bill the House passed April 8. The vote was 93-32.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) is sponsoring the bill (**HF1905**), under which the governor would receive a copy of all new rules promulgated by state agencies and would have the authority to veto all or part of a rule and send the vetoed measure to the Legislature for consideration.

Seifert mentioned two recent controversial rules — the so-called diversity rule and the Profile of Learning — that were considered or created by the State Board of Education and Seifert said the state would have benefited by having the rule veto in place.

In those examples, the governor could have vetoed the entire rules or only certain parts, such as the much-criticized paperwork requirements that accompanied the Profile of Learning initiative. The Legislature could then have proposed alternatives to address the problems, Seifert said, instead of allowing the agency to impose the rules on school districts.

Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) said that the public currently enjoys considerable input in the rulemaking process, and she said that input would be diminished if the governor could veto rules. She also said rules often involve complicated scientific data, and the Legislature might have less time than the agencies to hear from experts regarding that data.

But Seifert said the governor would not have ultimate veto power. If the Legislature were to fail to act on a governor's veto of a rule, the rule would automatically go into effect. He described the bill as a "modest proposal to give the governor and the Legislature some oversight in the rulemaking process."

The measure now moves to the Senate.

Time limit on confirmation

People who are appointed by the governor as commissioners of state agencies would have to be confirmed by the Senate within one year of the appointment, under a bill the House passed April 8. The vote was 115-7.

The bill (**HF118**), sponsored by Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), would prevent an acting or temporary commissioner from serving in that role for more than one year.

Under the bill, if the Senate did not confirm an appointment within one year, the governor would have to make a new appointment.

The measure now moves to the Senate.



HEALTH

Allowing bed rails

A bill that would clarify the permitted uses of bed rails in Minnesota nursing homes is on its way to Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The bill won final passage in the House on April 12. The vote was 127-0.

Under provisions of the measure (**HF40**), a nursing home resident's right to bed rails and other restraints would be reaffirmed. Fear of falling would be included as a legitimate medical reason for prescribing bed rails, and a study of the use of restraints would be initiated.

The bill was proposed after a number of nursing homes were fined by the Minnesota Department of Health last spring for improperly using bed rails according to the department's interpretation of federal regulations.

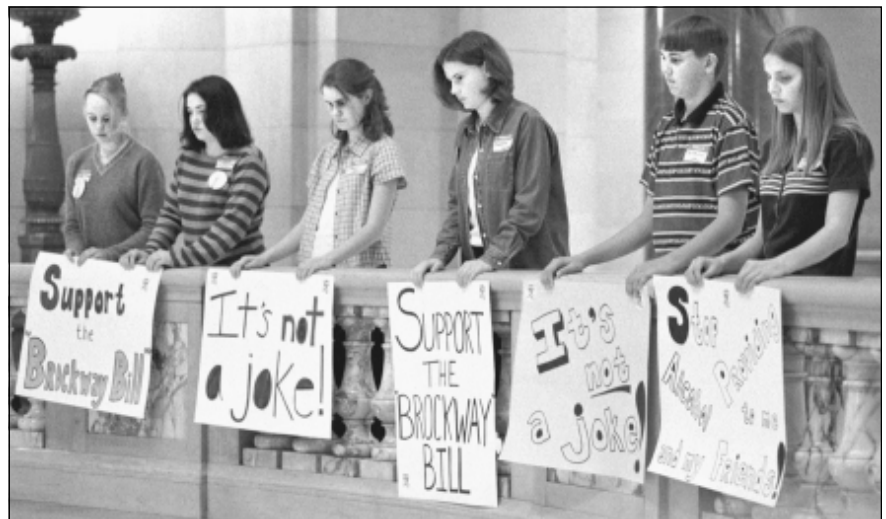
Concern about use of bed rails arose because of injuries and even deaths caused when patients became entangled in the rails. The federal regulations called for a moratorium on rail use in cases where a patient would be put in "immediate jeopardy." Many nursing homes subsequently removed bed rails entirely, hoping to avoid fines but leaving some residents and their families upset.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), said the idea was to craft a bill at the state level that would spell out patient rights under federal guidelines but wouldn't jeopardize the state's Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements. He said action in the Senate was delayed as long as possible awaiting comment from federal sources.

Bradley told his House colleagues that in the "best guess of the professionals," the bill would be acceptable to the federal Health Care Finance Authority, although there is no guarantee.

If the measure becomes law and is eventually found objectionable in the eyes of the federal government, it may have to be revisited next session, Bradley said.

S.A.D.D. at the Capitol



School representatives from Students Against Drunk Driving (S.A.D.D.) listen as Tom Brockway describes dealing with the death of his son, Kevin Brockway. The boy died at age 16 in a car crash on New Year's Eve in 1997, after leaving a party where an adult had provided alcohol. S.A.D.D. students came to the Capitol from around the state on April 15 to support a bill that would allow felony charges to be brought against certain adults who provide alcohol to minors. Students are, left to right, Lidsey Ruliffson and Maggie Snetting, from South High School in Minneapolis; Laura Skidmore and Jennifer Wisnew, from Lakeville High School; and Talman Wiles and Laurie VanPeursen, from Stewartville High School.

Health-related regulations



The governor signed a bill April 12 implementing changes in licensing for physicians, acupuncture practitioners, and athletic trainers.

Effective Aug. 1, medical students enrolled in dual-degree programs will have additional time to pass portions of the state licensing exam. The increasing number of double-majors studying at the Mayo Clinic and other facilities has made the current time restrictions unrealistic.

The new law also will provide protection from charges of practicing medicine without a license for acupuncturists, and will authorize a temporary permit for athletic trainers, similar to what is currently in law for other regulated health occupations.

The Board of Medical Practice requested the changes in the law.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure.

HF413*/SF418/CH33



HIGHER EDUCATION

College campus cash infusion

Lawmakers on the House Higher Education Finance Committee narrowly approved a \$2.6 billion spending bill April 9 to support the state's higher education institutions.

The bill would provide funds to increase financial aid for students, provide salary increases for faculty at Minnesota colleges, create a University of Minnesota campus in Rochester, and make changes to the way University of Minnesota regents are selected.

DFLers on the committee voted against the measure, saying the bill's appropriations — which don't include a \$350 million proposed endowment fund for medical education — are not adequate to provide for colleges and universities throughout the state.

The endowment, proposed by Gov. Jesse Ventura, was considered by the committee but was not included in the omnibus measure. The \$350 million would have come from the state's tobacco lawsuit settlement funds.

Apart from that provision, the bill (**HF2380**) proposes the same spending amount called for in Ventura's recommendations. However, funds would be distributed differently than under Ventura's plan for the four major higher education organizations the state finances.

The bill, which is sponsored by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), was approved by the House Ways & Means Committee April 12 and now moves to the House floor.

Here's a look at key provisions of the omnibus bill.

MnSCU spending

The bill would provide \$1.13 billion to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (MnSCU), about \$3.3 million less than the governor's recommendation.

Under the bill, about half of MnSCU's requested increases would be funded. MnSCU officials had originally asked the Legislature for an additional \$230 million to fund a long list of initiatives for the 53-campus system. That list included faculty pay raises, technology improvements, and joint training programs with industries to fill job market needs.

Instead of targeting dollars for specific programs, lawmakers chose to appropriate money by category, leaving MnSCU to decide how to spend it.

For technology improvements, the bill includes \$3.5 million increase in funding over two years. The committee did not appropriate money for the industry partnerships and job training programs, for which MnSCU had requested \$46 million.

Lawmakers approved \$84.1 million for faculty salary increases, institutional operating expenses, and facility repair. A total of \$10 million also would be appropriated for under-funded campuses in the system.

In other projects, the bill would provide funding for a rural research center at Southwest State University and expand farm business management programs at MnSCU institutions. And \$20 million is included in the bill for equipment purchases and other expenses left to the discretion of MnSCU officials.

University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota would receive \$1.2 billion, also \$3.3 million less than the governor's proposal. About 60 percent of the U of M's requests for new dollars would be funded under the plan. The bill would not provide as large an increase as requested for medical education, which officials say is badly needed.

Ventura's proposal called for \$1.3 million for four endowment funds that would come from the state's tobacco settlement. Under that proposal, a \$350 million endowment would go toward the university's Academic Health Center. However, the committee's bill does not include the endowment fund, which could provide \$13 million annually for the U of M's medical programs.

Of the Academic Health Center's \$37 million requested budget increase, the measure would provide \$6 million.

In other areas, the bill would target \$69.4 million to boost salaries of faculty or staff members. Another \$20.1 million would go toward undergraduate education programs, and \$10.1 million would fund facilities upkeep.

The bill also would allow for the establishment of a new, non-residential U of M campus in Rochester and would direct \$5.3 million in funding toward the project. Another \$1.2 million would be divided between other university outreach programs, technology projects, or miscellaneous collaborative programs around the state.

The university's extension service also would receive a \$600,000 funding boost over two years, under the bill.

In addition to the funding provisions, the bill would tinker with the university's Board of Regents election process. It would set up a task force to look at more aggressive recruitment strategies for potential regents and direct the Regent Candidate Advisory Council to automatically forward incumbent candidates for the Legislature's selection.

Financial aid funding

The Higher Education Services Office (HESO), which serves as Minnesota's financial aid bureau, would receive \$292 million to fund the state grant program, operate library systems, and provide informational services to current and prospective post-secondary students. The total HESO appropriation is about \$6.6 million more than the governor's budget proposal.

Through several different programs, the bill provides about \$19 million in aid to Minnesota's higher education students.

First, the minimum state grant is reduced from \$300 to \$200. That means some students who did not previously qualify for grants could be eligible for grants. Also, the assigned student responsibility — the amount the state expects students to contribute to their education — would be lowered from 47 to 46 percent of the total cost.

And the public tuition allowance and private tuition maximum will be capped at or near the inflation rate. A tuition maximum or allowance is the state's tool for calculating state grants, and it is a flat rate of tuition based on tuition at public and private colleges all over the state.

Because colleges raise their tuition almost every year, increasing the state's tuition maximum takes the actual increases into account when calculating grant awards. However, capping that cost at inflation does not mean college costs would necessarily rise at the rate of inflation, and proponents say it could

encourage institutions to keep their tuition increases at a low level.

Much of the financial aid package would be funded with an expected increase in the federal Pell Grant amount per student, which results in about \$10 million in savings from the state grant program.

In Minnesota, the state grant is decreased when the federal grant goes up, so students receive the same amount of money. For the 1999-2000 school year, the Pell Grant will increase to \$3,125 from \$3,000.

The bill would eliminate two programs that provide grants for nursing students, but it would appropriate \$500,000 to add more students into work study programs.

Mayo Medical School

The Mayo Foundation would receive its full funding request of \$3.2 million for the biennium, under the omnibus plan. That amount would fund an increase in the base budgets for the Mayo Medical School, a family medicine residency program, and a residency program at St. Cloud Hospital.

The increases would make more grant dollars available to students attending the medical school and would make up for student costs incurred by recent and potential tuition increases.

In addition, the bill would increase the state's share of some residency program participants' stipends and maintain the same level of funding for other participants. The programs are designed to encourage students to practice medicine in Minnesota, particularly in rural or under-served geographical areas.

Other changes

Other provisions in the bill include an updated policy on private career school regulation and how information on hazing rules is distributed to students.

Lawmakers also approved a plan for general education requirements for technical college students. According to the bill, general education courses such as math or English would only be included in a technical course of study if they are occupational requirements or part of a two- or four-year degree program.

Building is Taylor made



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a bill April 12 approving the construction of the Taylor Center, a privately-funded building at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

The Legislature was required to approve construction because the building will be on a

campus of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, which is a state entity.

Formerly known as Mankato State University, the school raised \$16.5 million in private donations to pay for the center. It is named in honor of alumnus Glen Taylor, chief executive officer and chair of the Taylor Corporation and owner of the Minnesota Timberwolves basketball team.

Taylor donated \$9.2 million toward the project, which consists of a 5,000-seat arena, athletic programs and facilities, and a student welcome center. The law took effect April 13, and construction is scheduled to begin this spring.

Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure.

HF492*/SF518/CH34



HOUSING

New regulations on renting

The House passed a bill April 8 that would regulate the pre-lease deposits required by some landlords. The vote was 123-3.

Currently, landlords sometimes require prospective tenants to pay a deposit before entering into a rental agreement. Under the bill (**HF1178**), sponsored by Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville), landlords could demand such a deposit only if they specify in writing the circumstances under which the deposit will be returned.

The bill also would require landlords to return the deposit within seven days.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

Oversight of building code

The House passed a bill April 8 that would partially consolidate authority over the state building code. The vote was 92-30.

Several state departments currently develop and enforce various sections of the state building code. The bill (**HF1568**), sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), would transfer authority over the energy code from the Department of Public Service to the Department of Administration.

The administration department currently oversees many provisions of the state building code. However, other parts of the code are developed and enforced under the departments of health, public safety, or public service. Several state agencies and boards also have input in inspecting and reviewing building plans for public buildings.

Disagreements and poor coordination between the various state agencies and depart-

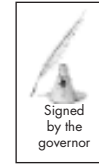
ments have caused unnecessary delays in construction, according to a January report by the Office of the Legislative Auditor.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



HUMAN SERVICES

Mental health council



The governor signed a bill April 12 that will modify membership and reporting requirements for the State Advisory Council on Mental Health. The new law takes effect Aug. 1.

The new law will add a representative from the Mental Health Consumer/Survivor Network of Minnesota to the council. It also will require one or more of the council members to be a person of color.

Finally, the law will require the council to report on its activities to the Legislature, in addition to the executive branch.

The 30-member panel is charged with providing input on policy, programs, and services affecting people with mental illness.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) and Sen. Sheila Kiscaden (R-Rochester) sponsored the bill.

HF640*/SF488/CH39



LAW

Divorce law correction



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a bill April 12 correcting an error made in the state's marriage dissolution law.

In 1991, the Legislature created a simplified process for couples without children and with limited property to file for divorce.

Then in 1997, the Legislature amended the summary process but unintentionally failed to remove a provision that discontinued the program in the summer of that year.

The new measure, retroactively effective July 1, 1997, restores the summary process and makes it permanent.

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Leo Foley (DFL-Coon Rapids) sponsored the new law.

HF1258*/SF487/CH37

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Saving shooting ranges

Some lawmakers say existing shooting ranges are important for promoting safe hunting and need additional legal protections.

The House passed a bill April 8 that would provide new protections for such shooting ranges. The vote was 99-26.

Bill sponsor Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) said shooting ranges are important for promoting gun safety and education, and he said that his bill would help implement the new constitutional protections for hunting and fishing approved by voters on the November 1998 ballot.

The bill would prohibit local governments from passing ordinances that would limit the operation of shooting ranges. The bill also would outline the process by which local governments could close or relocate shooting ranges.

And the bill would mandate that shooting ranges that are in compliance with the operation practices could not be subject to a nuisance action and that courts would not be able to restrict these facilities bases on such a claim.

Critics of the bill said it would take an important zoning power from local govern-

the more than 200 tax-related bills already heard this session, the taxes panel focused attention on the property tax provisions aimed at lowering commercial/industrial tax rates and the apartment class rate.

Dorman said Minnesota businesses are not able to be competitive with surrounding states because of the property tax formula.

Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) questioned the need for the commercial/industrial tax breaks, noting that despite the relatively high taxes, Minnesota has been "beating the day-lights" out of its neighbors when it comes to economic development and job creation.

Besides, Orfield said, property taxes paid by businesses have been coming down over the years.

"Wouldn't it make more sense to concentrate our efforts on helping middle-income families with their property taxes?" Orfield questioned.

Bill Blazar, senior vice president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, said that it is true the rates have come down but more needs to be done.

"After the first round of reforms, our national ranking for a \$1 million commercial property improved only slightly in the metropolitan area — falling from first to third highest — and actually deteriorated in Greater Minnesota — increasing from third to second," Blazar said.

Jack Horner, who heads the Minnesota Multi Housing Association, said the tax break for apartment owners would help spur development of more units.

That assertion drew fire from Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center), who said he wants to be assured that if apartment owners get a tax break, it would be reflected in stable or lower rental rates.

"Rent increases are a common complaint in my district," Carruthers said.

Horner maintained the only way to guarantee lower rents is to build more units and ease the 1- to 2-percent vacancy rate currently found in the Twin Cities metro area.

Property tax reforms outlined in the bill would result in just over \$222 million less in revenue collections for the coming biennium. The income tax proposals would cost about \$1.3 billion to implement, or about \$249 per taxpayer for tax year 1999.

The bill was laid over for possible consideration in the omnibus tax bill.



TAXES

Tax cut mulled

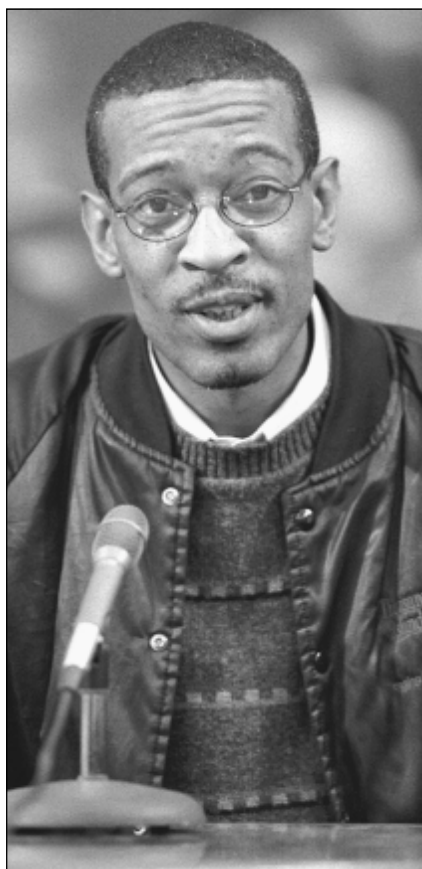
The House Taxes Committee considered a measure April 9 expected to be the heart of the House version of this year's omnibus tax bill.

Sponsored by Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea), the bill (HF2) calls for an across-the-board income tax cut, an end to the so-called marriage penalty, and property tax breaks for certain residences as well as commercial and industrial property owners. It also includes a provision that would eliminate the health care provider tax and would fund MinnesotaCare through the general fund.

The plan was initially offered as a partner to HF1, a proposed rebate of the state's budget surplus based on income taxes paid. That bill was eventually passed by the House and sent to the Senate. There, a rebate based on a sales tax formula was substituted. A conference committee has been attempting to reconcile the two versions for weeks. (The House has since passed a sales-tax based rebate plan and a permanent across-the-board income tax reduction in a separate bill. See related story on page 3.)

Since most of the initiative contained in Dorman's bill had already been considered in

Teen challenge



Steve Fair of Minneapolis testifies in favor of the Teen Challenge, a Christianity-based residential drug-treatment program, during a hearing of the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee on April 9.



TRANSPORTATION

Penalties for illegal vehicles

In a move to avoid the risk of losing \$30 million in federal highway funding, the House passed a bill April 13 that would increase penalties for drivers who use trucks that have been ordered out of service. The vote was 116-15.

Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) is sponsoring the bill.

An out-of-service order means that a truck is damaged or defective and cannot be driven until repairs are made. Under current law, penalties for driving such a vehicle involve fines for drivers and their employers.

But Workman said the federal highway funding could be in jeopardy if Minnesota does not increase its penalties.

Under the bill, drivers would be disqualified from driving commercial motor vehicles for 90 days after the first offense. A second offense in five years would disqualify drivers for one to five years, and a third offense within five years would result in three to five years disqualification.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation would be required to impose fines of at least \$1,000 for drivers and up to \$10,000 for

employers who knowingly violate out-of-service orders.

The bill (HF1046/SF1324*) moves to Gov. Jesse Ventura's desk.

Blue lights on bikes



A new law effective April 13 allows motorcycles to display blue rear brake lights.

Previously, only emergency vehicles, snowplows, and road maintenance vehicles could display a blue light.

Proponents of the new law said the blue lights would improve safety for motorcycle riders by increasing the visibility of their vehicles on the road.

Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights) and Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the measure.

HF766*/SF739/CH35

Slowdown on town roads



A new law effective Aug. 1 reduces speed limits in residential areas of rural townships. It was signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura April 12.

The law sets a speed limit of 30 miles per hour on town roads that run through residential developments.

Under existing law, many of those roads had limits of 55 miles per hour. The roads currently do not qualify for a lower speed limit because they do not pass through areas that meet the state's current definition of an urban district.

In an urban district, the speed limit is 30

miles per hour where buildings are within 100 feet of each other.

The new law, sponsored by Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) and Sen. Janet Johnson (DFL-North Branch), creates a separate definition for rural residential districts, allowing the reduced speed limit when houses are within 300 feet of each other for a distance of at least one quarter of a mile.

HF1265/SF1150*/CH44

Title transfer time limit

A bill that would close a legal loophole that can cause car dealerships to break the law passed the House April 13. The vote was 132-0.

The bill (SF778*/HF790) would decrease the amount of time banks are allowed to release a title after a car is paid off. Under current law, banks have 15 days to do so. The bill would reduce that to seven days when the cars are sold by most types of auto dealerships.

Car dealers have only 10 days to transfer titles to buyers after a vehicle is sold. This can present a problem when dealers need to obtain titles from a bank. If the bank takes longer than 10 days, the dealer's deadline has not been met and they break the law.

Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) is sponsoring the measure, which would require banks to release a title within seven days for new and used auto dealerships and leasing companies.

Kuisle's bill also includes a proposed change in state law regarding the mounting of television screens in motor vehicles.

That provision — originally in a separate bill (HF745) sponsored by Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) — would allow television screens

in any place except where visible by the driver of an automobile.

If it becomes law, Kuisle's bill it would ultimately let Minnesota dealers sell the Oldsmobile Silhouette minivan. The van's television screen does not fit current state law, which restricts screen mounting to a space specifically behind the driver.

The bill now moves to the desk of Gov. Jesse Ventura.



VETERANS

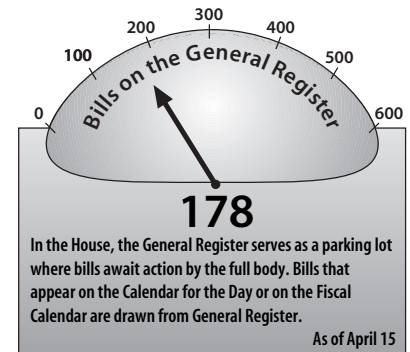
Drive to honor veterans

A new law honoring veterans in Otter Tail County was signed April 12 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The law, effective Aug. 1, designates a portion of Minnesota Highway 59 running through the county as "Otter Tail Veterans Memorial Drive."

Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls) and Sen. Cal Larson (R-Fergus Falls) sponsored the legislation.

HF1986/SF1888*/CH42



Grade school students and parents from Angle Inlet Charter School visited the state Capitol and their legislator, Rep. Jim Tunheim, April 8. Some of the group started out on snowmobiles to cross Lake of the Woods before joining other students for the 430-mile journey to St. Paul.



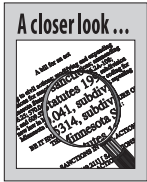
The industrial hemp issue continues to flame up, but lawmakers just keep refusing to inhale. The House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee rejected a hemp study amendment to their omnibus finance bill April 9. The amendment was defeated on a 5-5 vote.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), would have directed the Department of Trade and Economic Development to study industrial hemp production in Canada.

Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul), a supporter of Gunther's amendment, brought a bottle of California beer made from hemp seeds to show other possible uses of the product. Referring to the old Hamm's beer commercials, Gunther told the committee that brewery of this sort could "return Minnesota to the land of sky blue water and the dancing bear." The bottle of beer remained capped during the meeting.

Billion-dollar bill aims to cut crime in Minnesota

By Grant Martin



A \$1.1 billion crime bill approved by a House panel would crack down on repeat felons, help to avoid accidents that result from high-speed chases, and build a database of DNA samples from dangerous criminals.

Crime rates across Minnesota appear to be on the decline, and lawmakers want to provide the tools to continue that trend. To that end, members of the House Judiciary Finance Committee completed and approved their omnibus judiciary finance bill April 13.

The spending bill would fund the state court and correctional systems, law enforcement and public safety agencies, and agencies such as the human rights department and the crime victim services center.

The measure also contains several policy provisions that have an impact on the state's criminal justice budget.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights), now goes to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Here are some highlights of the omnibus bill (HF2404).

Three strikes

The proposal includes provisions from the so-called three strikes sentencing bill, originally sponsored by Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury).

The omnibus bill would require courts to sentence a person who is convicted of a third violent felony to a life sentence. Offenders serving a life sentence could not be released into a supervised release program until they had served a minimum of 30 years in prison.

For second-offense violent felons, the bill would lower the threshold necessary to use increased sentences already in place in current law.

Seifert's proposal would limit the scope of crimes that could be counted toward the mandatory sentence and allow some judicial discretion.

The measure would exempt several felony-level crimes from consideration, including certain drug crimes, third-degree assault, second-degree arson, and burglary.

The measure also would give judges the power to waive the mandatory life sentence if the court finds substantial and compelling reasons to do so.



Judge R. Joseph Quinn, of the 10th Judicial District Court, sentences an offender during a hearing in his Anoka County courtroom April 14. An omnibus judiciary finance bill advancing in the House would provide funding for six additional district court judges to assist with the increasing workload throughout the state.

Police pursuit

The omnibus bill also addresses several issues involving police chases. The provisions were originally sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove).

The bill would mandate additional training time for officers, create a statewide pursuit policy, provide new technologies for training and pursuit, and strengthen the current laws against fleeing an officer.

Under the bill, the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board would establish a pursuit training course for police officer cadets. The bill would mandate that each cadet receive at least seven hours of training and that all current officers receive at least eight hours of training every two years. And the bill would provide \$800,000 in grants to local law enforcement agencies to assist with the new training requirements.

The bill also would require the POST board to develop a statewide model pursuit policy. The policy would be used to develop guidelines for each local law enforcement agency. Under current law, local agencies are given wide latitude to establish their own procedures for pursuit.

And the bill would provide funding for technologies that would both train officers and, supporters hope, end pursuits more quickly. The measure would provide \$1.4 million over the next two years for the purchase of computer controlled driving simulators, and \$250,000 to pay for so-called "stop-stick" tire

deflators to be distributed to local agencies.

DNA database

The omnibus bill also includes provisions, originally sponsored by Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji), that would increase the state's database of DNA samples.

Current law requires only sex offenders to submit DNA samples to a statewide database kept by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

The bill would add several crimes not considered sex offenses to the list of crimes for which offenders must submit samples. Those crimes would include murder, assault, kidnapping, and burglary.

The bureau would get \$125,000 to update its facilities to handle the new data, under the bill.

Public safety spending

The Department of Public Safety would get \$77.8 million over the next two years, under the bill.

Of that amount, the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension would get \$50.3 million, the division of Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement would receive \$3.6 million, and the state Fire Marshal would get \$6.4 million.

Also included in the department's appropriation, the Emergency Management Division would be given \$7.7 million. Of that amount, \$55,000 would go to an existing program that allows police departments to seek reimbursements for costs incurred from using

Continued on page 23

Sick building prompts costly office relocations

By Sarah Hallonquist

Just across Interstate 94 from the Capitol complex sits the recently emptied Capitol Square building, waiting for a wrecking ball to come its way.

In 1998, the state health department recommended that the employees working in the building vacate the building as soon as possible.

An air quality study — the last of 17 conducted since 1990 — had revealed fungi, mold, and bacteria within the walls, carpeting, and ductwork of the building. The deteriorating air quality and other problems had employees complaining of sinus infections, congestion, and headaches; some even started working from home.

In the spring of 1998, then-Gov. Arne Carlson requested that the employees be allowed to vacate the building later that year. He also asked the Legislature, as he had done during each of his eight years in office, for funds to tear the building down.

What lawmakers approved was \$3.1 million for the employees to move to a new site, but no money was made available for demolition.

The Capitol Square building, located at 550 Cedar Street, was built in 1912 and was merged with another in the mid-1960s. It originally had only four floors, but five more stories were added in 1968.

The state purchased Capitol Square in 1970 for \$6.4 million. Since then, Minnesota has spent approximately \$9.7 million in renovations and repairs. The last year the blighted building received any money for remodeling or safety repairs was 1987. The air quality complaints began in 1988.

The building housed nearly 600 employees of the state's education agencies: the Department of Children, Families and Learning, the Higher Education Services Office, and the executive offices of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system.



The Capitol Square building, formerly the headquarters for 600 employees of state education agencies, has sat vacant at 550 Cedar St. in St. Paul since an air quality study condemned the building in 1998.

The Department of Children, Families and Learning left the building late last summer and now has a five-year lease at a Roseville office building formerly occupied by State Farm Insurance Co.

A permanent home for the state's education offices is likely at some point; a new education building was included in the 1993 Capitol Strategic Plan for Locating State Agencies.

In its 1998 appropriation, the Legislature included \$175,000 for pre-design work on such a building, and construction could start within the next few years, depending on when the funds

are allocated. The plan lists the existing Cedar Street Armory as the site for the new facility. The former Taystee Bakery site, just behind the armory, would host a 530-space parking lot.

Six months before he left office, Carlson laid the groundwork for a new education building on the bakery site with a price tag of \$35 million. But Carlson's hopes for a fast-track construction project like the one developed for the new Minnesota Department of Revenue building haven't been met this year in Gov. Jesse Ventura's budget.

As for Capitol Square, plans have been discussed to put a surface parking lot on the site if and when the building is demolished. Eventually, a new office complex could be built there, according to the long-range Capitol planning document.

But for now, the departments are flung far from the Capitol, though still in St. Paul. MnSCU is housed in the World Trade Center in downtown St. Paul, and the Higher Education Services Office is located on Energy Park Drive, a couple miles from the Capitol.

David Dahlin, a plant management engineer for the south side of the Capitol complex, oversees the mechanical operations in the Capitol Square building. Dahlin keeps the air circulation and cooling systems operating so that mold and mildew build-up does not worsen and cause health hazards for workers that still enter the building.

"I've heard that this is going to come down for a couple of years, but it's still there," Dahlin said.

Nick Turner, the Capitol Square's building manager, said about \$2 million is needed for demolition. However, it isn't likely lawmakers would fund the project this year. Next session — a bonding year — would be the better fit for such a request.

"It is a high priority for us," Turner said.



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Flight from blight . . .

Bold planners put hopes in experimental city plan

By Paul Wahl

How would you like to live in a completely new city? It would be a city where no one has lived before, where your home is next door to your work, everyone has a job, and a whisper-silent automated train stops in front of your home to provide transportation.

If the Minnesota Experimental City had been built, you would have had the opportunity to live in just such a place.

By the dawn of the 1970s, urban centers in the United States — including the Twin Cities — were experiencing serious problems with decay, blight, crime, and pollution. To many, there seemed to be few solutions.

Out of those frustrations, an international group of futurists based at the University of Minnesota began to imagine an ideal urban center — the ultimate planned city, a Utopia they would create on the farmlands of central Minnesota.

The steering committee was headed by Otto A. Silha, publisher of Minneapolis Star and Tribune, and included luminaries such as R. Buckminster Fuller, inventor of the geodesic dome, and Arthur S. Flemming, then president of Macalester College and later U.S. secretary of health, education and welfare.

Researchers from the University of California, Berkeley, the Brookings Institute, Harvard University, and Syracuse University also lent their voices to the effort.

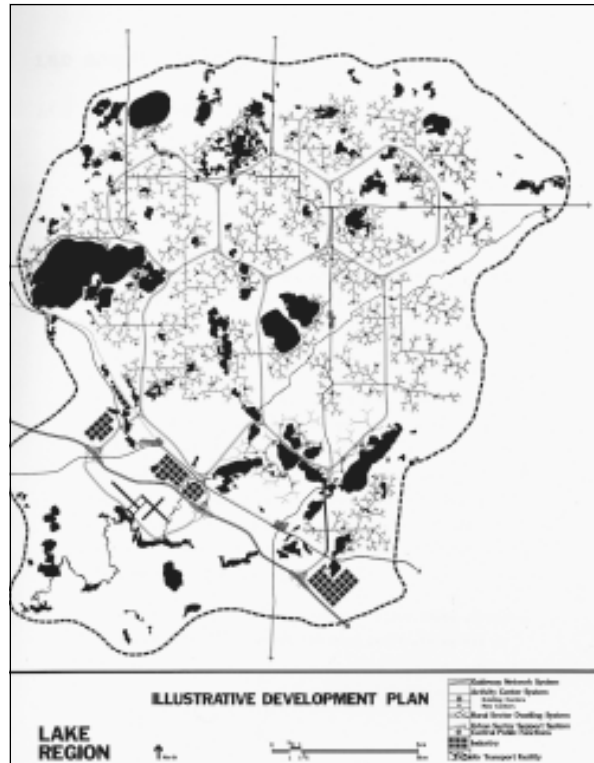
As with so many other good ideas, the experimental city needed both governmental sanction and money. The group approached the Minnesota Legislature in 1970 and \$25,000 was appropriated to study the idea.

The concept had been around since 1966, as a plan to accommodate about 250,000 residents by 1976 in a city “in which the human condition would be improved significantly and where, as a national provingground, technological innovations could be demonstrated and evaluated.”

The city would occupy 45,000 virgin acres, and researchers would come from around the globe to see the experiment.

It was billed as a new direction for urban America, but the idea wasn't exactly novel.

At about the same time, another experimental city was being created on land outside Minneapolis, in an area that would later



A long-since abandoned plan from the early 1970s would have developed the Minnesota Experimental City in Aitkin County. The above plan illustrated potential sites for homes, businesses, and services in what proponents said would be the ideal new city.

become the northern edge of Chaska.

Diamond Bar and Irvine Ranch in California were being studied, along with Columbia, Md., and Seward's Success in Alaska, the world's first totally climate-controlled city.

It was an idea whose time had come. (Several years later a well-known cartoonist from Southern California would unveil something in the same spirit called the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow, or EPCOT, in the swamps of central Florida.)

After a year of testimony, the committee created to study the issue in Minnesota forwarded a report to the Legislature in 1971, filled with glowing reports about the prospects for an experimental city and concluding with a draft of a bill to create a Minnesota Experimental Authority to oversee its construction.

The premise was simple. Old urban practices weren't working, yet there was no way to study new ones because no new cities were being built.

“Since urban systems are complex and interacting and should not be changed without assurance of improvement, and cannot be changed except at great expense, no existing city can serve as a laboratory for total system

experimentation and planning in a coordinated way,” the report read. “A new city, established and brought to substantial completion within a relatively short period, is the only institution by which new techniques of study, planning, and development can be fully used.”

The committee, consisting of House and Senate members, equated the need for the experimental city to the Manhattan Project, the all-out effort at the end of World War II to develop the atomic bomb.

Supporters promised legislators international prominence and reminded lawmakers that Minnesota had always been an innovator. And they said this would be bigger than anything anyone had ever seen.

Rep. John W. Johnson of Minneapolis introduced a bill to establish the Minnesota Experimental Authority. It was eventually passed by both houses and signed into law.

Gov. Wendell Anderson appointed Eugene A. O'Brien of Hopkins to serve as chairman of the authority. Silha also served on the board. A 15-member advisory

committee was also appointed, which included Johnson and Reps. Robert Dunn of Princeton and A. J. Eckstein of New Ulm.

The board was given a two-year time period and \$140,000 to study the experimental city concept thoroughly.

No one seemed clear how much money would be needed or where it would come from. Supporters suggested that \$320,000 in research for Phase I would be sufficient, but they had few solid figures for the succeeding three phases.

Another plan was to secure \$300 million under Title VII of the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Act of 1970, which authorized loans and grants to developers of new cities. That money could be followed with an infusion of private capital, planners hoped.

The authority spent a great deal of its time attempting to find a suitable site for construction. Eventually two potential sites were selected, one in Douglas County and one in Aitkin County. After 12 public hearings in cities in those counties, the authority recommended the Aitkin County site, including the

Continued on page 21

Society unites former lawmakers in promoting service

By Paul Wahl

As the owner of a political consulting firm, former Rep. Doug Ewald found that his client list consisted of just about every conceivable group, except for former lawmakers like himself.

For years, he told friends and colleagues there should be an association for former legislators.

Several tentative attempts to start one had been made by others, but none succeeded. So three years ago, Ewald took action and formally created the Minnesota Legislative Society.

"I felt a real sense of honor for having served in the House and a real sense that if the average citizen could be here and see their legislators at work, they would be very impressed," said Ewald, who served four terms in the House from 1975 to 1982 as a Republican from Minnetonka.

His society is dedicated to preserving "the history and honor of the Minnesota Legislature" and providing social and service opportunities for former lawmakers.

Only former Minnesota legislators and their spouses may belong, and the association is strictly apolitical. The group won't become involved in political campaigns or legislative issues, Ewald said.

To form a board of directors to help run the 130-member organization, Ewald turned to a cadre of former lawmakers he believed had the respect of the community. Former Sens. Ray W. Faricy of St. Paul and Ed Gearty of Minneapolis were chosen, along with former Reps. Otto Bang Jr. of Edina and Rod Searle of Waseca.

To add what Ewald called a "sense of stability," Edward Burdick, chief clerk of the House, and Patrick Flahaven, secretary of the Senate, were added as honorary members.

For Searle, former Republican Speaker of the House, the best part of the society is getting together with the friends who served with him, trading stories, and catching up.

Searle, who served from 1956 to 1981, said he's pleased that with Ewald's leadership the society has prospered. He said other attempts at forming an association were "one night stands."

He strongly supports the society's goal to reach out to the community, particularly young people.

"It could be a positive force for young people who want to be part of the political scene," Searle said. "There's a lot of resources here, and everyone involved would be glad to meet

with young people who are interested in the Legislature."

Gearty, a DFLer, also ranks camaraderie as his chief reason for being involved. He likens the feeling to that he has about his former U.S. Navy buddies.

"It's a good feeling, a feeling of good people getting together to do something important," Gearty said.

Gearty served in the Legislature 18 years and said he got to know some "wonderful people."

Ewald admits that to date, the most successful arm of the society has been the social interaction.

"Legislators love to talk and they love to talk about the good old days and tell stories — some real, some imagined — most of which never got in the newspaper," Ewald said.

Ewald was particularly careful to balance his board politically, although he said party lines tend to blur the longer you're out of office.

"In the Legislature, you tend to be known as partisan," Ewald said. "I knew it couldn't be my organization, there had to be a board of people who may have been partisan at one time or another but couldn't be anymore and they had to be recognizable."

Among society members are former Secre-

Ewald said. "If people will call me and say we've got a meeting of whatever organization — public or private, schools, senior citizens — and they'd like to have a former legislator come in and talk to us, you know there's nothing we'd rather do."

He also sees the society playing the role of a "defense league."

"You don't have to look too far in the media to find someone making fun of or berating the legislative process," Ewald said. "One of my goals is to really help people see the Legislature, the process, and the people who serve in it for what they really are, which is by and large dedicated public servants."

Ewald estimates the society's membership could swell to about 400 if everyone eligible joined. When he pitches membership, he uses a sense of history as a hook.

"They may or may not have a sense of history having served in the Legislature," Ewald said. "But I would tell them, good or bad, by golly, for a number of years you had something to do with establishing the law of the state of Minnesota."

Ewald has seen a number of changes over the 30 years he's been involved with the legislative process, but one major improvement stands out.

"One thing that has really improved has

"I felt a real sense of honor for having served in the House and a real sense that if the average citizen could be here and see their legislators at work, they would be very impressed."

—Former Rep. Doug Ewald

tary of State Joan Growe and U.S. Reps. Jim Ramstad and Martin Sabo.

Board meetings are held quarterly, and two social events are planned each year. This coming summer, the group will hold an event at the Governor's Residence. The organization hopes to make a contribution to the state fund dedicated to upkeep and improvements at the residence following the July 11 gathering.


Ewald's vision is to host more such events and eventually form a foundation within the society to assist other Legislature-related projects with funding.

Another goal for Ewald is public service.

"We would like people of the state to know we see a public purpose for our existence,"

been the involvement of the public, and that has just skyrocketed over recent years," Ewald said. "There's a real need for professional lobbyists, but legislators today are benefiting from a much greater involvement of the public."

He said that has meant more work and in some instances has lengthened an already long process, but the results are in the final product — better legislation.

Ewald will be retiring from his consulting firm in July. His son has purchased the business. But Ewald will continue to serve as executive director of the society, operating from his home. 

Minnesota House of Representatives 1999 Members

District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-	District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-
District/Member/Party	Room*			District/Member/Party	Room*		
49A Abeler, Jim (R)	581	1729		33A Lindner, Arlon (R)	417	7806	
45A Abrams, Ron (R)	585	9934		47A Luther, Darlene (DFL)	371	3751	
19B Anderson, Bruce (R)	411	5063		67A Mahoney, Tim (DFL)	223	4277	
3A Anderson, Irv (DFL)	343	4936		55A Mares, Harry (R)	401	5363	
6A Bakk, Thomas (Tom) (DFL)	345	2190		65B Mariani, Carlos (DFL)	209	9714	
59A Biernat, Len (DFL)	303	4219		57B Marko, Sharon (DFL)	221	3135	
30B Bishop, Dave (R)	453	0573		55B McCollum, Betty (DFL)	239	1188	
25B Boudreau, Lynda (R)	473	8237		36B McElroy, Dan (R)	437	4212	
30A Bradley, Fran (R)	559	9249		54A McGuire, Mary Jo (DFL)	259	4342	
53B Broecker, Sherry (R)	533	7153		39B Milbert, Bob (DFL)	243	4192	
35B Buesgens, Mark (R)	415	1072		35A Molnau, Carol L. (R)	443	8872	
46B Carlson, Lyndon R. (DFL)	279	4255		21B Mulder, Richard (R)	515	4336	
47B Carruthers, Phil (DFL)	217	3709		58A Mullery, Joe (DFL)	387	4262	
10B Cassell, George (R)	421	4317		7A Munger, Willard (DFL)	283	4282	
52A Chaudhary, Satveer (DFL)	311	4331		8A Murphy, Mary (DFL)	357	2676	
23A Clark, James T. (R)	583	9303		20A Ness, Robert "Bob" (R)	509	4344	
61A Clark, Karen (DFL)	307	0294		10A Nornes, Bud (R)	471	4946	
11A Daggett, Roxann (R)	439	4293		19A Olson, Mark (R)	501	4237	
31B Davids, Gregory M. (R)	367	9278		16A Opatz, Joe (DFL)	281	6612	
65A Dawkins, Andy (DFL)	215	5158		60B Orfield, Myron (DFL)	377	9281	
14A Dehler, Steve (R)	491	7808		29B Osskopp, Mike (R)	449	9236	
29A Dempsey, Jerry (R)	549	8635		66A Osthoff, Tom (DFL)	273	4224	
27A Dorman, Dan (R)	579	8216		11B Ottemba, Mary Ellen (DFL)	393	3201	
24A Dorn, John (DFL)	201	3248		37A Ozment, Dennis (R)	479	4306	
64A Entenza, Matt (DFL)	213	8799		42B Paulsen, Erik (R)	445	7449	
42A Erhardt, Ron (R)	591	4363		38B Pawlenty, Tim (R)	459	4128	
17A Erickson, Sondra (R)	407	6746		64B Paymar, Michael (DFL)	331	4199	
1B Finseth, Tim (R)	517	9918		32A Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)	295	8637	
44A Folliard, Betty (DFL)	211	3964		13B Peterson, Doug (DFL)	287	4228	
4A Fuller, Doug (R)	525	5516		39A Pugh, Thomas W. (DFL)	267	6828	
36A Gerlach, Chris (R)	531	5506		46A Rest, Ann H. (DFL)	277	4176	
63B Gleason, Mark S. (DFL)	313	5375		28A Reuter, Doug (R)	507	5368	
9A Goodno, Kevin (R)	563	5515		44B Rhodes, Jim (R)	409	9889	
58B Gray, Gregory (DFL)	229	8659		32B Rifenberg, Michelle (R)	423	1069	
62A Greenfield, Lee (DFL)	207	0173		18A Rostberg, Jim (R)	545	5364	
54B Greiling, Mindy (DFL)	253	5387		5A Rukavina, Tom (DFL)	375	0170	
26A Gunther, Bob (R)	379	3240		17B Schumacher, Leslie J. (DFL)	327	5377	
52B Haake, Barb (R)	429	0141		41A Seagren, Alice (R)	477	7803	
48A Haas, Bill (R)	569	5513		57A Seifert, Jim (R)	577	7807	
50A Hackbarth, Tom (R)	575	2439		21A Seifert, Marty (R)	593	5374	
22B Harder, Elaine (R)	487	5373		2B Skoe, Rod (DFL)	321	4265	
12A Hasskamp, Kris (DFL)	353	4333		62B Skoglund, Wes (DFL)	251	4330	
66B Hausman, Alice (DFL)	245	3824		34A Smith, Steve (R)	503	9188	
8B Hilty, Bill (DFL)	241	4308		3B Solberg, Loren A. (DFL)	309	2365	
37B Holberg, Mary Liz (R)	433	6926		33B Stanek, Rich (R)	543	5502	
56A Holsten, Mark William (R)	381	3018		14B Stang, Doug (R)	597	4373	
4B Howes, Larry (R)	431	2451		24B Storm, Julie (R)	527	7065	
6B Huntley, Thomas (DFL)	351	2228		28B Sviggum, Steve (R)	463	2273	
7B Jaros, Mike (DFL)	291	4246		23B Swenson, Howard (R)	539	8634	
18B Jennings, Loren Geo (DFL)	237	0518		43B Sykora, Barb (R)	403	4315	
48B Johnson, Alice M. (DFL)	349	5510		50B Tingelstad, Kathy (R)	567	5369	
15A Juhnke, Al (DFL)	329	6206		5B Tomassoni, David J. (DFL)	233	0172	
59B Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)	255	4257		67B Trimble, Steve (DFL)	289	4201	
26B Kalis, Henry J. (DFL)	317	4240		25A Tuma, John (R)	369	4229	
60A Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (DFL)	231	0171		1A Tunheim, Jim (DFL)	335	9635	
20B Kielkucki, Tony (R)	521	1534		34B Van Dellen, Henry Todd (R)	571	5511	
16B Knobloch, Jim (R)	451	6316		51B Vandever, Ray (R)	529	4124	
49B Koskinen, Luanne (DFL)	301	4231		63A Wagenius, Jean (DFL)	227	4200	
53A Krinkie, Philip (R)	365	2907		61B Wejcman, Linda (DFL)	203	7152	
15B Kubly, Gary W. (DFL)	315	4346		12B Wenzel, Stephen G. (DFL)	389	4247	
31A Kuisle, William (R)	565	4378		51A Westerberg, Andrew (R)	523	4226	
56B Larsen, Peg (R)	551	4244		9B Westfall, Robert L. (Bob) (R)	553	6829	
40A Larson, Dan (DFL)	225	7158		13A Westrom, Torrey (R)	557	4929	
27B Leighton, Rob (DFL)	261	4193		38A Wilkin, Tim (R)	413	3533	
40B Lenczewski, Ann (DFL)	337	4218		22A Winter, Ted (DFL)	247	5505	
45B Leppik, Peggy (R)	485	7026		41B Wolf, Ken (R)	359	5185	
2A Lieder, Bernie L. (DFL)	323	5091		43A Workman, Tom (R)	537	5066	

Note: Room numbers are subject to change.

List as of April 15, 1999

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

Minnesota Senate 1999 Members

			Phone				Phone
District/Member/Party			(651) 296-	District/Member/Party			(651) 296-
66	Anderson, Ellen R. (DFL)	G-24 Cap.	5537	8	Lourey, Becky (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	0293
41	Belanger Jr., William V. (R)	113 SOB	5975	54	Marty, John (DFL)	326 Cap.	5645
13	Berg, Charles A. (IND)	G-51 SOB	5094	39	Metzen, James P. (DFL)	303 Cap.	4370
61	Berglin, Linda (DFL)	309 Cap.	4261	2	Moe, Roger D. (DFL)	208 Cap.	2577
48	Betzold, Don (DFL)	306 Cap.	2556	29	Murphy, Steve (DFL)	301 Cap.	4264
64	Cohen, Richard J. (DFL)	317 Cap.	5931	25	Neuville, Thomas M. (R)	123 SOB	1279
28	Day, Dick (R)	147 SOB	9457	52	Novak, Steven G. (DFL)	322 Cap.	4334
20	Dille, Steve (R)	103 SOB	4131	43	Oliver, Edward C. (R)	121 SOB	4837
14	Fischbach, Michelle L. (R)	149 SOB	2084	34	Olson, Gen (R)	119 SOB	1282
62	Flynn, Carol (DFL)	120 Cap.	4274	19	Ourada, Mark (R)	145 SOB	5981
49	Foley, Leo (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	4154	65	Pappas, Sandra L. (DFL)	120 Cap.	1802
23	Frederickson, Dennis R. (R)	139 SOB	8138	37	Pariseau, Pat (R)	109 SOB	5252
50	Hanson, Paula E. (DFL)	328 Cap.	3219	27	Piper, Pat (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	9248
58	Higgins, Linda I. (DFL)	227 Cap.	9246	59	Pogemiller, Lawrence J. (DFL)	235 Cap.	7809
24	Hottinger, John C. (DFL)	120 Cap.	6153	57	Price, Leonard R. (DFL)	235 Cap.	297-8060
5	Janezich, Jerry R. (DFL)	328 Cap.	8017	63	Ranum, Jane B. (DFL)	306 Cap.	297-8061
40	Johnson, Dave (DFL)	111 Cap.	9261	45	Robertson, Martha R. (R)	125 SOB	4314
15	Johnson, Dean E. (R)	117SOB	3826	35	Robling, Claire A. (R)	151 SOB	4123
6	Johnson, Douglas J. (DFL)	205 Cap.	8881	53	Runbeck, Linda (R)	107 SOB	1253
18	Johnson, Janet B. (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	5419	11	Sams, Dallas C. (DFL)	328 Cap.	297-8063
46	Junge, Ember R. (DFL)	205 Cap.	2889	12	Samuelson, Don (DFL)	124 Cap.	4875
44	Kelley, Steve (DFL)	321 Cap.	297-8065	31	Scheevel, Kenric J. (R)	129 SOB	3903
67	Kelly, Randy C. (DFL)	323 Cap.	5285	47	Scheid, Linda (DFL)	317 Cap.	8869
32	Kierlin, Bob (R)	127 SOB	5649	7	Solon, Sam G. (DFL)	303 Cap.	4188
30	Kiscaden, Sheila M. (R)	135 SOB	4848	60	Spear, Allan H. (DFL)	120 Cap.	4191
16	Kleis, Dave (R)	143 SOB	6455	17	Stevens, Dan (R)	105 SOB	8075
36	Knutson, David L. (R)	133 SOB	4120	1	Stumpf, LeRoy A. (DFL)	G-24 Cap.	8660
51	Krentz, Jane (DFL)	235 Cap.	7061	4	Ten Eyck, David J. (DFL)	G-24F Cap.	4913
56	Laidig, Gary W. (R)	141 SOB	4351	42	Terwilliger, Roy (R)	115 SOB	6238
9	Langseth, Keith (DFL)	122 Cap.	3205	22	Vickerman, Jim (DFL)	226 Cap.	5650
10	Larson, Cal (R)	153 SOB	5655	38	Wiener, Deanna L. (DFL)	303 Cap.	297-8073
21	Lesewski, Arlene J. (R)	131 SOB	4125	55	Wiger, Charles W. (DFL)	325 Cap.	6820
3	Lessard, Bob (DFL)	111 Cap.	4136	26	Ziegler, Don (R)	149 SOB	5713
33	Limmer, Warren (R)	25 SOB	2159				

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

Minnesota House and Senate Membership

1	A • Rep. Jim Tunheim-DFL B • Rep. Tim Finseth-R Sen. LeRoy A. Stumpf-DFL	15	A • Rep. Al Juhnke-DFL B • Rep. Gary W. Kubly-DFL Sen. Dean E. Johnson-R	29	A • Rep. Jerry Dempsey-R B • Rep. Mike Osskopp-R Sen. Steve Murphy-DFL	43	A • Rep. Tom Workman-R B • Rep. Barb Sykora-R Sen. Edward C. Oliver-R	57	A • Rep. Jim Seifert-R B • Rep. Sharon Marko-DFL Sen. Leonard R. Price-DFL
2	A • Rep. Bernie L. Lieder-DFL B • Rep. Rod Skoe-DFL Sen. Roger D. Moe-DFL	16	A • Rep. Joe Opatz-DFL B • Rep. Jim Knoblach-R Sen. Dave Kleis-R	30	A • Rep. Fran Bradley-R B • Rep. Dave Bishop-R Sen. Sheila M. Kiscaden-R	44	A • Rep. Betty Foliard-DFL B • Rep. Jim Rhodes-R Sen. Steve Kelley-DFL	58	A • Rep. Joe Mullery-DFL B • Rep. Gregory Gray-DFL Sen. Linda I. Higgins-DFL
3	A • Rep. Irv Anderson-DFL B • Rep. Loren A. Solberg-DFL Sen. Bob Lessard-DFL	17	A • Rep. Sondra Erickson-R B • Rep. Leslie J. Schumacher-DFL Sen. Dan Stevens-R	31	A • Rep. William Kuisle-R B • Rep. Michelle Rifenberg-R Sen. Kenric J. Scheevel-R	45	A • Rep. Ron Abrams-R B • Rep. Peggy Leppik-R Sen. Martha R. Robertson-R	59	A • Rep. Len Biernat-DFL B • Rep. Phyllis Kahn-DFL Sen. Lawrence J. Pogemiller-DFL
4	A • Rep. Doug Fuller-R B • Rep. Larry Howes-R Sen. David J. Ten Eyck-DFL	18	A • Rep. Jim Rostberg-R B • Rep. Loren Geo Jennings-DFL Sen. Janet B. Johnson-DFL	32	A • Rep. Gene Pelowski Jr.-DFL B • Rep. Michelle Rifenberg-R Sen. Bob Kierlin-R	46	A • Rep. Ann H. Rest-DFL B • Rep. Lyndon R. Carlson-DFL Sen. Ember R. Junge-DFL	60	A • Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher-DFL B • Rep. Myron Orfield-DFL Sen. Allan H. Spear-DFL
5	A • Rep. Tom Rukavina-DFL B • Rep. David J. Tomassoni-DFL Sen. Jerry R. Janezich-DFL	19	A • Rep. Mark Olson-R B • Rep. Bruce Anderson-R Sen. Mark Ourada-R	33	A • Rep. Arlon Lindner-R B • Rep. Rich Stanek-R Sen. Warren Limmer-R	47	A • Rep. Darlene Luther-DFL B • Rep. Phil Carruthers-DFL Sen. Linda Scheid-DFL	61	A • Rep. Karen Clark-DFL B • Rep. Linda Wejcman-DFL Sen. Linda Berglin-DFL
6	A • Rep. Thomas (Tom) Bakk-DFL B • Rep. Thomas Huntley-DFL Sen. Douglas J. Johnson-DFL	20	A • Rep. Robert "Bob" Ness-R B • Rep. Tony Kielucki-R Sen. Steve Dille-R	34	A • Rep. Steve Smith-R B • Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen-R Sen. Gen Olson-R	48	A • Rep. Bill Haas-R B • Rep. Alice M. Johnson-DFL Sen. Don Betzold-DFL	62	A • Rep. Lee Greenfield-DFL B • Rep. Wes Skoglund-DFL Sen. Carol Flynn-DFL
7	A • Rep. Willard Munger-DFL B • Rep. Mike Jaros-DFL Sen. Sam G. Solon-DFL	21	A • Rep. Marty Seifert-R B • Rep. Richard Mulder-R Sen. Arlene J. Lesewski-R	35	A • Rep. Carol L. Molnau-R B • Rep. Mark Buesgens-R Sen. Claire A. Robling-R	49	A • Rep. Jim Abeler-R B • Rep. Luanne Koskinen-DFL Sen. Leo Foley-DFL	63	A • Rep. Jean Wagenius-DFL B • Rep. Mark S. Gleason-DFL Sen. Jane B. Ranum-DFL
8	A • Rep. Mary Murphy-DFL B • Rep. Bill Hilty-DFL Sen. Becky Lourey-DFL	22	A • Rep. Ted Winter-DFL B • Rep. Elaine Harder-R Sen. Jim Vickerman-DFL	36	A • Rep. Chris Gerlach-R B • Rep. Dan McElroy-R Sen. David L. Knutson-R	50	A • Rep. Tom Hackbarth-R B • Rep. Kathy Tingelstad-R Sen. Paula E. Hanson-DFL	64	A • Rep. Matt Entenza-DFL B • Rep. Michael Paymar-DFL Sen. Richard J. Cohen-DFL
9	A • Rep. Kevin Goodno-R B • Rep. Robert L. (Bob) Westfall-R Sen. Keith Langseth-DFL	23	A • Rep. James T. Clark-R B • Rep. Howard Swenson-R Sen. Dennis R. Frederickson-R	37	A • Rep. Dennis Ozment-R B • Rep. Mary Liz Holberg-R Sen. Pat Pariseau-R	51	A • Rep. Andrew Westberg-R B • Rep. Ray Vandever-R Sen. Jane Krentz-DFL	65	A • Rep. Andy Dawkins-DFL B • Rep. Carlos Mariani-DFL Sen. Sandra L. Pappas-DFL
10	A • Rep. Bud Nornes-R B • Rep. George Cassell-R Sen. Cal Larson-R	24	A • Rep. John Dorn-DFL B • Rep. Julie Storm-R Sen. John C. Hottinger-DFL	38	A • Rep. Tim Wilkin-R B • Rep. Tim Pawlenty-R Sen. Deanna L. Wiener-DFL	52	A • Rep. Satveer Chaudhary-DFL B • Rep. Barb Haake-R Sen. Steven G. Novak-DFL	66	A • Rep. Tom Osthoff-DFL B • Rep. Alice Hausman-DFL Sen. Ellen R. Anderson-DFL
11	A • Rep. Roxann Daggett-R B • Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba-DFL Sen. Dallas C. Sams-DFL	25	A • Rep. John Tuma-R B • Rep. Lynda Boudreau-R Sen. Thomas M. Neuville-R	39	A • Rep. Thomas W. Pugh-DFL B • Rep. Bob Milbert-DFL Sen. James P. Metzen-DFL	53	A • Rep. Philip Krinkie-R B • Rep. Sherry Broecker-R Sen. Linda Runbeck-R	67	A • Rep. Tim Mahoney-DFL B • Rep. Steve Trimble-DFL Sen. Randy C. Kelly-DFL
12	A • Rep. Kris Hasskamp-DFL B • Rep. Stephen G. Wenzel-DFL Sen. Don Samuelson-DFL	26	A • Rep. Bob Gunther-R B • Rep. Henry J. Kalis-DFL Sen. Don Ziegler-R	40	A • Rep. Dan Larson-DFL B • Rep. Ann Lenczewski-DFL Sen. Dave Johnson-DFL	54	A • Rep. Mary Jo McGuire-DFL B • Rep. Mindy Greiling-DFL Sen. John Marty-DFL		
13	A • Rep. Torrey Westrom-R B • Rep. Doug Peterson-DFL Sen. Charles A. Berg-IND.	27	A • Rep. Dan Dorman-R B • Rep. Rob Leighton-DFL Sen. Pat Piper-DFL	41	A • Rep. Alice Seagren-R B • Rep. Ken Wolf-R Sen. William V. Belanger Jr.-R	55	A • Rep. Harry Mares-R B • Rep. Betty McCollum-DFL Sen. Charles W. Wiger-DFL		
14	A • Rep. Steve Dehler-R B • Rep. Doug Stang-R Sen. Michelle L. Fischbach-R	28	A • Rep. Doug Reuter-R B • Rep. Steve Sviggum-R Sen. Dick Day-R	42	A • Rep. Ron Erhardt-R B • Rep. Erik Paulsen-R Sen. Roy Terwilliger-R	56	A • Rep. Mark William Holsten-R B • Rep. Peg Larsen-R Sen. Gary W. Laidig-R		

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Governor's Desk

CH1-CH65

Bills await governor's action

Once a bill has passed both the House and the Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill. The governor 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 results in the bill becoming law in the first year of the biennium.

The timing of these actions is as significant as the actions themselves.

In the first year of the biennium, the important thing to remember is that the

governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill. If the governor doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law with or without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

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 objects. As with all vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

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.mainserver.state.mn.us/governor/>
(Select "It's a New Day" and then click on "Legislative Logs")

Key:

CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
Res. 1	544*	638	Resolutions for Minnesota/Ontario border lakes trade agreements violation resolution.	3/26/99	
Res. 2	719	757*	Resolutions to prohibit federal recoupment of state tobacco settlement recoveries.	3/29/99	
1	139*	88	Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board member qualifications specified.	2/17/99	
2	26*	29	Mississippi education center previous grantee changed to the city of Grand Rapids, and condition imposed.	2/17/99	
3	133*	107	Minneapolis and St. Paul residency requirements repealed.	3/4/99	
4	6*	40	Snowmobile metal traction device use restrictions modified and recreational vehicle rulemaking authority modified.	3/4/99	
5	171	121*	Health related licensing board licensees infection control.	3/8/99	
6	370	424*	Nonregistered pesticide distribution permitted for certain uses outside the state.	3/8/99	
7	248*	324	Crooked Lake detached banking facility.	3/15/99	
8	214*	241	Emergency medical services volunteer ambulance attendant definition.	3/15/99	
9	536	464*	Carisoprodol classification as controlled substance effective date delay.	3/15/99	
10	356	73*	Consumer support program for persons with functional limitations financial eligibility criteria modification.	3/15/99	
11	382	343*	Real estate provisions modifications.	3/15/99	
12	49*	162	Peace officers or firefighters killed in line of duty spouse health insurance coverage.	3/16/99	
13	302*	579	Ambulance services shared service purchasing.	3/16/99	
14	74	301*	Health care directive form modification.	3/16/99	
15	453*	416	Minneapolis skilled workers and apprentices deferred compensation plan participation.	3/18/99	
16	157*	379	Laura Ingalls Wilder historic highway route modification.	3/18/99	
17	454*	564	Nursing home administrators sharing authority expansion.	3/18/99	
18	610	649*	Safe drinking water act public water supply definition modification.	3/25/99	
19	812	914*	Legislative Electric Energy Task Force membership modification.	3/25/99	
20	434	593*	St. Cloud paramount arts district regional arts center grant recipient change.	3/25/99	
21	48	50*	Public utilities performance based natural gas purchasing plans sunset repeal.	3/25/99	
22	137*	463	Collector watercraft license numbers and display requirements exemption.	3/26/99	
23	56*	90	Health care provider actions statute of limitations modification.	3/26/99	
24	193	255*	Emergency telephone (911) calls interference crime expansion.	3/29/99	
25	165	460*	Special disability license plates for modified motor vehicles.	3/29/99	
26	438	407*	McLeod West School District #2887; secondary educational facility grant.	3/29/99	

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
27	564	609*	Landscape irrigation systems rain check installation requirement.		4/1/99
28	732	99*	Criminal offenders costs payment for failure to appear after release.	4/1/99	
29	1305*	1280	Kenyon Trunk Highway #56 relocation easements transfer.	4/1/99	
30	475*	517	Town officers or employees criminal charges defense costs reimbursement.	4/1/99	
31	379*	381	Mortgage registry and deed taxes technical corrections and administrative changes.	4/1/99	
32	183*	144	Civil Commitment; minors voluntary chemical dep. admission & treatment parental consent conditions modifications.	4/12/99	
33	413*	418	Physicians, acupuncturists and athletic trainers licensing and registration requirements modifications.	4/12/99	
34	492*	518	Minnesota State University, Mankato authorized to construct the Taylor Center multipurpose facility.	4/12/99	
35	766*	739	Motorcycle blue lights display.	4/12/99	
36	1126*	862	Family day care licensure child age groupings definitions.	4/12/99	
37	1258*	487	Marriage dissolution summary process revival.	4/12/99	
38	733	117*	Criminal offenders restitution challenge hearing requests time limit.	4/12/99	
39	640*	488	Mental Health State Advisory Council membership representation requirements modification.	4/12/99	
40	1336	727*	Contracts continuity under European currency.	4/12/99	
41	2024	1660*	Government innovation and cooperation board local government services delivery laws or rules exemptions.	4/12/99	
42	1986	1888*	Otter Tail veterans memorial drive designation.	4/12/99	
43	1184	794*	One call excavation notice system requirements modifications.	4/12/99	
44	1265	1150*	Rural residential districts speed limit.	4/12/99	
45	414*	428	Pseudorabies control program continuation appropriation and vaccine reimbursement requirement.	4/12/99	Line item
46	1565*	1677	Eligibility expanded for certain state military service.	4/15/99	
47	1556*	2043	Extending the civil service pilot project in the Housing Finance Agency.	4/15/99	
48	525*	404	Anoka County dangerous dog registration system administration responsibility.	4/15/99	
49	240*	236	DWI investigations county sheriff contingent funds use.	4/15/99	
50	216*	237	County prisoners transfer authority clarification.	4/15/99	
51	614*	913	Community integrated service networks net worth reserve corridor increase and utilization review.	4/15/99	
52	583*	735	Township mutual insurance companies authorized investments expansion.	4/15/99	
53	1066*	1190	Township mutual insurance companies territories of operation regulation modifications.	4/15/99	
54	1660*	1650	Nonprofit organizations human diseases research personnel unlawful practice of medicine exemption.	4/15/99	
55	1216*	1391	Chiropractors licensed in other states practical examination requirement modification.	4/15/99	
56	1403	1173*	Scott County Blue Lake wastewater treatment plant consumptive water use permit approval.	4/15/99	
57	1109	803*	St. Louis River estuary fishing guide license requirement.	4/15/99	
58	982	984*	Psychological test results release regulation.	4/15/99	
59	384	836*	Food handlers licensing period and fee modifications for state operators.	4/15/99	
60	1132*	1116	Delinquent real estate taxes duplicate publication copies filing requirement.		
61	643*	676	All persons under civil commitment status provided the same legal rights.		
62	408*	170	Pharmacy practice definition modification.		
63	1714*	1693	Pharmacists to pharmacy technicians ratio requirements waiver.		
64	735*	495	Crime of adulteration scope expansion and penalty increases.		
65	841	881*	Stearns, Benton, and Sherburne counties regional parks and trails plan.		

Continued from page 16

townships of Hill Lake, Macville, Lemay, and Shovel Lake.

The chosen site was rural enough to assure that no other cities would be created nearby, and Aitkin County officials were the most amenable to being placed under a microscope by urban designers from around the world. It was also viewed as the ultimate economic development project.

In April 1973, the authority presented a

summary document to the Legislature, outlining what had been accomplished.

But the legislative verve appeared to have burned out. There is no record of any further legislative action being taken. The authority was allowed to expire and was unceremoniously removed from the statutes, leaving behind only an asterisk in Minnesota history. 🗿

Find legislative publications on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/publicat.htm>

Bill Introductions

HF2374-HF2407

Monday, April 12

HF2374—Abrams (R)

Taxes

This Old House; market value eligibility and age requirement increased for certain residential property, and exclusion eligible improvement minimum increased.

HF2375—Chaudhary (DFL)

Taxes

Small business equity investments credit allowed against corporate franchise taxes.

HF2376—Mulder (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Pipestone aquatic center litigation losses reimbursement grant provided and money appropriated.

HF2377—Carruthers (DFL)

Taxes

Governmental pension plan income tax subtraction allowed.

HF2378—Van Dellen (R)

Taxes

Telephone services equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF2379—Lenczewski (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Hennepin County authorized to convey tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF2380—Leppik (R)

Ways & Means

Omnibus higher education appropriations bill.

HF2381—Carruthers (DFL)

Taxes

Substantially rehabilitated rental housing unit property tax classification provided.

HF2382—Anderson, I. (DFL)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Sandy Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa Indians act adopted.

HF2383—McCollum (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance

Adults with disabilities program aid provided and money appropriated.

HF2384—Carruthers (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 286, Brooklyn Center, facility grant provided, bond sale authorized, and money appropriated.

HF2385—Holsten (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Department of game and fish created, and duties transferred.

HF2386—Krinkie (R)

State Government Finance

State government administrative expenses bill and money appropriated.

HF2387—Molnau (R)

Ways & Means

Omnibus transportation appropriations bill.

HF2388—Holsten (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Omnibus environment and natural resources appropriations bill.

HF2389—Ness (R)

Agriculture & Rural Development Finance

Omnibus agriculture appropriations bill.

HF2390—McElroy (R)

Ways & Means

Omnibus economic development appropriations bill.

Tuesday, April 13

HF2391—Paulsen (R)

Taxes

Metropolitan Council general levy limit reduced, livable communities demonstration account levy limit set, and tax base revitalization account levy repealed.

HF2392—Jennings (DFL)

Taxes

Chisago County aggregate removal tax approval filing deadline extended.

HF2393—Daggett (R)

Taxes

Sales and use tax capital equipment definition expanded to include telephone services equipment.

HF2394—McGuire (DFL)

Commerce

Violent video games sale to children prohibited, display in public places restricted, and remedies provided.

HF2395—McGuire (DFL)

Education Policy

Juvenile access to violent video games report and study required.

HF2396—McElroy (R)

Taxes

Renter and homeowner property tax refund schedules combined, and rent constituting property taxes percentage increased.

HF2397—McElroy (R)

Taxes

Pre-1982 tax increment financing district pooling rules established.

Wednesday, April 14

HF2398—Winter (DFL)

Taxes

Property tax rebate extended to include qualifying rented farm land and improvements.

HF2399—Hasskamp (DFL)

Taxes

Property tax class rate for qualifying land bordering public waters reduced.

HF2400—Erhardt (R)

Taxes

Property tax class rates reduced, and local government and school district aids increased.

HF2401—Kelliher (DFL)

Taxes

Property class tax rates reduced, and local government and school district aids increased.

Thursday, April 15

HF2402—Erhardt (R)

Taxes

Milk and juice product sales tax exemption provided.

HF2403—Sviggum (R)

Taxes

Medford tax increment financing district revenue use provisions modified.

HF2404—Broecker (R)

Ways & Means

Omnibus crime prevention and judiciary finance bill.

HF2405—Rest (DFL)

Taxes

Cities with concentrations of Class 4d property provided reduced threshold to qualify for state aid.

HF2406—Peterson (DFL)

Health & Human Services Finance

Prepaid Medical Assistance program rule change required providing an enrollment exemption for a qualifying child.

HF2407—Peterson (DFL)

Jobs & Economic

Development Policy

Clara City water quality capital improvement grant provided and money appropriated.

To track bills on the World Wide Web as they move through the Legislature go to: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/legis.htm>

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

For information updates, call House Calls at (651) 296-9283.

All meetings are open to the public.

Sign language interpreter services:

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MONDAY, April 19

9 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY
10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: HF1437 (Ozment)
Sustainable Forest Resources Act.

10 a.m.

TAXES
5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: Taxes omnibus bill.

12 noon

The House meets in session.

TUESDAY, April 20

10 a.m.

TAXES
5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: Taxes omnibus bill.

12 noon

The House meets in session.

WEDNESDAY, April 21

10 a.m.

TAXES
10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: Taxes omnibus bill.

12 noon

The House meets in session.

Immediately following session
or 4 p.m.

Legislative Audit Commission
316 State Capitol
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: Program evaluation topic selection.
Review of Program Evaluation Best Practices Report: *Fire Protection*.

THURSDAY, April 22

8 a.m.

TAXES
Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: Taxes omnibus bill.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY
200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman
Agenda: Informational meeting concerning Upper Harbor terminals on the Mississippi River.

12 noon

The House meets in session.

FRIDAY, April 23

No meetings have been scheduled.

Continued from page 14

one of the state's few bomb disposal units.

Currently, local law enforcement agencies must call on one of four police departments in Minnesota with bomb disposal units when dealing with bombs or other hazardous explosives.

Also within the department's appropriation, \$9.7 million would go for law enforcement grants to be awarded to individual communities.

Included in that amount, the bill would provide \$2 million to assist the courts in Minneapolis now dealing with the influx of cases as a result of that city's CODEFOR police strategy.

CODEFOR, which stands for Computer Optimized Deployment-Focus on Results, uses computer analysis to deploy police resources based on daily reports of crime. The management plan also seeks to actively involve the community in policing, holds precincts and divisions accountable for results, and focuses on crime reduction as the overall police mission.

Also in the community grant provisions, \$4 million would go to the state criminal gang oversight council and strike force and \$1.1 million would go to assist in the development of a statewide, integrated criminal justice computer system.

The bill also would provide a \$500,000 community grant to the Ramsey County Attorney's

Office to implement a domestic assault and child abuse prosecution pilot project. The project would combine city and county prosecutors into one unit to deal with these crimes.

Also, \$1 million would be provided for grants under the community-oriented policing program. Under the program, local law enforcement agencies can apply for grants to pay for police officer overtime in high crime areas within their jurisdiction.

Courts and public defense

The state court system would receive \$221.3 million over the two years, under the bill.

Of that amount, the state Supreme Court would get \$49.9 million, the state Court of Appeals would get \$13.2 million, and the trial courts would get \$156.4 million.

Included in the trial court appropriation, the bill would provide six additional district court judges. The proposal would increase the number of judges in four of the state's 10 judicial districts, and it would provide \$3 million for these new positions and related costs.

The original request called for 18 new judgeships in the state. Court officials say that their original proposal would have provided a 6.5 percent increase in judgeships since the last time new judges were approved in 1995. Meanwhile, caseloads have increased by 10 percent


over the same period.

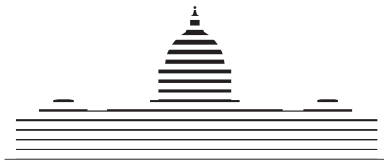
The Board of Public Defense would receive \$93.4 million over the two-year budget period. Of that amount, the state public defender would get \$6.5 million and district public defenders would receive \$84.5 million.

Funds for corrections

The bill would provide \$684.4 million to the Department of Corrections for the operations of the state's correctional system over the next two years. Minnesota's correctional system currently houses 5,500 inmates.

Also included in that amount, the Community Service Division would receive \$197 million. Of that amount, \$450,000 would go toward youth intervention programs and \$8.4 million would go for probation caseload reductions and intensive supervisions programs. Currently, more than 115,000 offenders are in probation or community services programs across the state.

The bill would close the Camp Ripley work program, providing a \$2.7 million savings. The work program was established by the Legislature in 1997 to provide a sentencing alternative for nonviolent offenders. The program was seen as a way to relieve pressure on county jails. 



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

Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Major Minnesota industries

Minnesotans employed in private-sector industries, 1996	2,038,017
Percent increase since 1988	21.7
Percent increase in U.S. in same period	13.4
Minnesotans employed in health and medical industries, 1996	216,209
Percent increase since 1988	29.3
Percent increase in U.S. in same period	32.2
Minnesotans employed in printing and publishing industry, 1996	55,416
Percent increase since 1988	16.1
Percent decrease in U.S. in same period	1
Minnesota's national rank in industry	9
Minnesotans employed in forest products industry, 1996	57,800
Percent increase since 1988	4.3
Percent decrease in U.S. in same period	1
Minnesotans employed in logging, 1996	749
Percent increase since 1988	38.2
Percent decrease in U.S. in same period	8
Minnesotans employed by newspapers, 1996	12,561
Minnesotans employed by greeting card companies, 1996	133
Value of Minnesota's total manufactured exports in 1997, in billions of dollars	9.5
As percent of total U.S. manufactured exports	1.5
Iron ore produced in Minnesota in 1996, in millions of metric tons	46
As percent of total U.S. production	75
As percent of total world production	4.6
Minnesotans employed in high-technology industries, 1996	167,732
Percent increase since 1988	5.5
Percent decrease in U.S. in same period	0.7
Minnesotans employed in guided missile or space vehicle parts industry, 1996	0
Minnesota's national rank in patents issued per million residents, 1997	6
Rank in Midwest	1
Number of patents issued in Minnesota, 1997	2,015

Source: *Compare Minnesota: An Economic and Statistical Fact Book, 1998/1999*, Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development.



For more information

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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ April 23, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 16



Session Weekly is a nonpartisan publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Office. During the 1999-2000 Legislative Session, each issue reports daily House action between Thursdays of each week, lists bill introductions and upcoming committee meeting schedules, and provides other information. The publication is a service of the Minnesota House. No fee.

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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • April 23, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 16

Reflections

Late April at the state Capitol is a time for change. The deadline for finance bills to move out of committee has passed and lawmakers are now spending more days in the House chamber debating some of the 2,417 bills they introduced this session so far. Most of those bills may not reach the General Register, a step in the House agenda through which bills must first be approved before they are debated on.

Late April is also a time when the yellow color of hundreds of visiting school buses around the complex is no longer the only hue one sees during the first months of winter. Spring brings the color green to the Capitol, and to legislative debates about spending.

In almost a week, the lawn around the Capitol complex has turned a deep green luster that dominates the fading winter drabness. And it gets used more often now for protests like the one for tax cuts, or one for returning greenback dollars to the people.

Inside the Capitol, lawmakers have begun the hours-long task of passing omnibus finance bills that will make some states "green with envy," because the state has so much money to work with. Their debates, bill amendments, and final passage could also make some citizens plan for "greener pastures" yet cause some businesses or individuals to be "green around the gills."

Obviously, the color green is not exclusive to the Capitol or its surrounding lawn. The color makes itself known to all entities. It shows up in the form of fried green tomatoes, golf course putting greens, vegetarians' "green cuisine," and as a green thumb on the hands of successful gardeners.

You can also find it as green mold, as part of the name of a Wisconsin football team, and even as Great Britain's "Big Green Gathering," the nation's largest and liveliest gathering of sideshows, art, and environmental activists.

As Coach Green builds his 1999 Vikings team, the band "Green Day" keeps building its following. And during the rest of April, legislators will continue to discuss and debate how Minnesota gets to use or not use "the green" from its built-up surplus.

Though Sesame Street's Kermit the Frog says, "It's not easy being green . . . It seems you blend in with so many things. And people tend to pass you over 'cause you're not standing out . . ." he also adds, "But green is the color of Spring. And green can be cool and friendly-like. And green can be big like an ocean...or tall like a tree."

As April brings green to all things, lawmakers continue to do what they are elected to do — make laws to keep the state running with no budget shortfalls.

—LeClair Grier Lambert

INSIDE

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On the cover: Herman Krumpholz applies a layer of paint to a cartouche stencil in the center of the ceiling in the Capitol cafeteria.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

Health & human services . . .

Hefty omnibus bill would aid nursing home workers

By Paul Wahl

Personal care and nursing home workers would get a raise, new restrictions would apply to abortion procedures, and an all-out effort to encourage organ donation would begin, under a health and human services spending bill the House passed April 22. The vote was 92-40.

The \$5.86 billion bill proposes slightly more health funding than recommended by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Almost equal chunks of the proposed spending would be split between the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health.

The bill (**HF2412**) is sponsored by Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead). Here are some of the highlights of the omnibus spending package.

Care provider pay hikes

Those who care for the state's handicapped and elderly are often paid only minimum wages, and many lawmakers said they consider providing better pay for those workers to be a priority.

The omnibus bill proposes a 3-percent cost-of-living raise for direct care workers and a two-tiered increase for nursing home attendants — 4.75 percent in rural areas and 2.75 percent in metro areas.

Improving pay is also designed to entice more people into the health care field to alleviate a statewide shortage of workers. That shortage is deemed to be more acute in rural areas, hence the larger pay increases at those facilities.

The pay raises would cost the state more than \$75 million during the next biennium.

In 1998, lawmakers passed a measure that provided \$20 million to improve the pay for workers at long-term care facilities, which mainly serve senior citizens and the developmentally disabled.

Abortion initiatives

The omnibus bill also contains several provisions designed to limit or track the number of abortions performed in Minnesota.

One proposal would ban certain late-term abortion procedures. So-called partial-birth abortions would be made illegal except in cases where the mother's life is in danger, and violating the ban would be made a felony-level crime, punishable by imprisonment and fines. Also, women and their families would be al-



Nursing homes would benefit from several provisions of an omnibus health and human services bill passed by the House, including a plan to increase the salaries of long-term care workers.

lowed to sue doctors for psychological and physical damages related to the procedures.

The bill would require that women provide voluntary, informed consent before receiving an abortion. To meet the requirements, the woman would have to receive specific information at least 24 hours before the procedure is performed. The information would have to include details of medical risks and options other than abortion.

The measure also calls for more public reporting about certain abortions performed on minors. Under current law, doctors are required to notify parents or guardians at least 48 hours before performing an abortion on a minor, but minors can bypass the parental notification with a judge's permission.

The House bill would require doctors who perform abortions under those circumstances to report information about their patients, including the age and race. The information would be made public.

Proponents of that provision said there is no good documentation showing how often, or in what circumstances, the judicial bypass process is being used.

The bill would provide data privacy protection for minors and doctors, but opponents said it would not afford enough protection for the judges who approve the procedures, especially because the public reports would list information by county and some counties have only one judge.

Organ donation program

The omnibus measure would allocate \$1 million to establish the Minnesota Donor Decision Campaign to encourage organ, eye, and tissue donation. The provision was originally in a separate bill sponsored by Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park), herself a recipient of a donated organ.

The money would be used for advertising and public education campaigns, which could include a mobile donor information center to travel to communities across the state. Although the bill doesn't direct the proposed funding to a specific group, it is expected that the Lifesource Upper Midwest Organ Procurement Organization in St. Paul would receive the grant.

Nursing home regulation

Disputes spurred by 1998 fines on nursing homes because of side rail use on patients' beds prompted several provisions in the omnibus bill.

Under the bill, the Department of Health would be required to hold orientations on any new regulatory guidelines and to release to nursing homes copies of reports and letters pertaining to the evaluation of the homes.

The bill would change the conditions under which a nursing home could be fined for placing patients in what is called "immediate jeopardy," and it would offer an informal dispute resolution process. Federal law prohibits

practices that place patients in immediate jeopardy, and that law was often cited by the state health department when it assessed fines on facilities that were using bed rails.

The bill also would require the health department to pursue options for reimbursing nursing homes that may have been fined improperly for use of bed rails.

Aid to developmentally disabled

Nearly \$12 million over the next biennium would go to increase the availability of home- and community-based services for persons with mental retardation or related conditions.

Throughout the session, lawmakers on the Health and Human Services Committee heard from parents and guardians of developmentally disabled adults who said their resources for providing care were nearly exhausted and their options were few.

The proposed spending would allow group homes in the state to serve an extra 250 people each year and would eliminate a current waiting list for services.

Another \$2 million annually would be set aside for semi-independent living services, and \$2.5 million a year would go for family support grants to further assist the developmentally disabled.

Tobacco prevention program

The omnibus bill would also provide \$15 million over the biennium for tobacco use prevention grants targeting smoking among young people.


That amount, which would come from the state's general fund, is the same as requested by the governor in his proposed budget. However, the House bill does not contain the endowment proposals that Ventura asked to be created with some of the state's tobacco settlement money.

The bulk of the \$15 million would fund grants to community health boards to develop anti-tobacco programs. Other money would be spent on competitive grants and on evaluating the new programs.

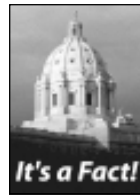
Encouraging abstinence

The bill would prohibit state family planning money from going to "any entity that is an organization or affiliate of an organization which provides abortions, promotes abortions or directly refers for abortions."

It also would require AIDS prevention programs that are targeted toward children to exclusively promote abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage.

And it would amend the goals of the state's Education Now and Babies Later program to include "promoting abstinence until marriage." 

False claims on prime St. Paul property



work ever again.

However, if you hold a deed to such property and the document has the name Carver on it, you may want to think twice before you submit your two-week notice.

Carver grant deeds were sold in a land speculation scheme in the early 1800s, long before Minnesota was a state, even before the first American settlers began coming to the area.

The scheme was based on a claim that a tract of land was given to the explorer Capt. Jonathan Carver by two Dakota chiefs on May 1, 1767.

Carver, after whom Carver County is named, was one of the first English colonists to explore Minnesota, venturing into the area in the 1760s.

Although originally from New England, Carver went to London following his journey through Minnesota and Wisconsin to seek payment he felt was owed him by the crown for his explorations. While there, he published a memoir of his travels.

And although his book became a bestseller, Carver died impoverished two years after it was published, leaving two wives and two families — one in England and one in America.

In 1781, Carver's doctor, feeling pity for the English widow, financed a new edition of the memoirs to provide much needed income for the family.

In that printing, the doctor added an obscure passage, allegedly provided by Carver, about a grant of land given to the explorer by the Dakota tribe. The grant included a strip of land from St. Anthony Falls east about 100 miles, into present-day Wisconsin.

With the details of the deed in print, Carver's descendants — both in England and America — realized that if it were true, they would have rights to the property.

In 1804, Samuel Peters was contacted in London by an American descendant of Carver and asked to find the original grant

in England and bring it back to America. Peters, a 70-year-old Episcopalian minister, was booted out of his native Connecticut because of his loyalist views during the Revolutionary War.

Peters met with the English family but couldn't find the original deed. And he soon discovered evidence that family members had already been selling shares of the land, including proof that Carver himself may have sold some rights to the claim before his death.

Peters returned to America without the original deed in 1805 and attempted to lobby Congress for official recognition of the Carver grant for the American family.

Peters also sent several missions into the Dakota territory to have the leaders of the tribe authenticate the document. And he financed these missions by selling shares of the land.

These sales angered the American family and they also began selling shares of the Carver grant. Three groups — Peters, the American Carvers, and the English Carvers —

were then selling overlapping claims to land they technically didn't possess.

Reports back from Minnesota stated that the Dakota tribe would not recognize any land grant, and, in fact, didn't even recognize the names of the chiefs who had allegedly signed the grant.

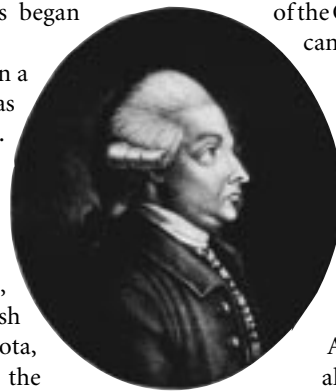
In 1817, the 83-year-old Peters attempted a trip up the Mississippi to meet with the Dakota. He made it as far as Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, but he wasn't given permission by the U.S. government to proceed.

Congress gave the final word on the Carver grant in 1825, stating that the U.S. government refused to legally recognize any claims to the land. However, that decree didn't stop Carver's descendants and they continued to sell rights to the land.

Peters died a year later, penniless and disappointed. He had spent the last 22 years of his life pursuing the grant.

In 1897, a new round of speculation

Continued on page 23



Capt. Jonathan Carver

Photo from *The Journals of Jonathon Carver and Related Documents 1766-1770*, edited by John Parker, 1976.

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Minus rebate, farm aid OK'd

The House passed a plan April 19 that would spend \$70 million to help Minnesota's farmers. The vote was 126-4.

The move came after an agreement was reached on a bill (**HF1**) that had once included provisions calling for tax rebates based on income taxes in addition to the aid package for farmers.

The bill emerged after a long deadlock over proposed rebates. The Senate had approved a bill that instead called for rebates based on sales taxes, and the two bills had been tied up in a House-Senate conference committee for weeks.

Members of that conference committee recently agreed to set aside the rebate debate and send a farm aid bill back to lawmakers for final approval.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), who is the House sponsor of the bill, said the debate on farm assistance began with the governor's recommendation of \$10 million in aid, the Senate's proposal to spend \$40 million, and the House's plan to provide \$70 million.

The bill that emerged from the conference committee would provide payments to farmers under one of two plans.

Crop farmers would receive a payment equal

to \$4 per acre with a \$5,600 maximum per farm. Livestock producers on operations less than 160 acres would receive a payment equal to the first half of their 1999 property taxes.

Payments would be made to farmers who rent farmland, as well as owner-operators. Payments would be prorated among partners — according to the percentage of risk — when multiple parties are involved in the operation of the farm.

Most farmers would receive between \$2,000 and \$3,000 in aid. The money would be in the hands of farmers by June or July.

Under the plan, the Department of Revenue would send forms and instructions to the county Farm Service Administration offices, which would be charged with contacting farmers.

On the House floor, the aid package was hailed by some as an unprecedented step to assist people affected by a troubled agricultural economy.

"If you're a livestock farmer or a production agriculture farmer in Minnesota, you need to know the state Capitol is listening and that they know you need assistance at this point in time," said Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake).

Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson) said approval of the bill is a response to the prevailing message from farmers that the agricultural property tax burden is causing hardship.

But not all lawmakers were as laudatory.

Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison) said he was disappointed the bill does not include any means testing — a method of singling out farmers most in need, rather than giving money to everyone. Gov. Jesse Ventura supports providing aid on a need-based formula.

Peterson also said the bill does not address the long-term needs of farmers and would be only a "half-a-loaf" fix.

Abrams said several different methods of writing a means test were considered, but he said none could be found that "could be administered for literally less than what the program costs."

Abrams' bill was introduced solely as a tax rebate plan in early January, but within a few days, a farm assistance proposal was amended onto the bill. The legislation was approved by the House in early February, and after the Senate refused to concur with the House language, a conference committee was appointed.

Since early February, that committee met several times but made little progress. Finally, the conferees agreed to split the aid package from the rebate and report back to their respective bodies, with an eye toward getting a bill to the governor as quickly as possible.

A tax rebate plan based on a sales tax formula was approved on the House floor last week, as part of a separate bill (**HF878**) that also calls for income tax cuts in all three of the state's tax brackets. And a similar version of that rebate and tax cut plan is contained in the omnibus tax bill (not yet assigned a House File number), which was unveiled April 19 by Abrams.

The Senate passed the agricultural relief bill April 20 and sent the measure to the governor.



Sen. Doug Johnson, left, and Rep. Ron Abrams, co-chairs of a House-Senate conference committee on a key tax bill, shook hands after agreeing to a \$70 million property tax relief program for farmers on April 16.



BANKING

ATM fees survive

A bill that would make minor changes in banking regulations was passed on the House floor April 19. The vote was 109-17.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), sponsor of the bill (**SF1330*/HF1175**), said representatives of the banking industry and credit unions support the measure.

Proposals were suggested that would have addressed fees at automatic teller machines and policies regarding checks that are written with insufficient funds, but none of those provisions made it into the bill.

Rep. Mark Gleason (DFL-Richfield) proposed prohibiting banks with more than four automatic teller machines from charging a fee on transactions, but lawmakers rejected it.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), chair of the House Commerce Committee, said the issue is complicated because sometimes the fees are charged by a convenience store or other business where the machine is located, not by the banks. And state law would not apply to banks that are federal institutions. Davids said his committee will study that issue over the interim and the 2000 session.

A proposal from Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls) would have required banks to honor the checks in sequence according to the check number. She said some banks clear the largest check first, which can cause much higher fees if there is an accidental overdraft. Honoring the largest check first can cause several smaller checks to bounce, which Clark said causes an "avalanche" of overdraft fees from the bank and from the businesses where the checks were written.

"This happens to people with very limited incomes who are working hard from paycheck to paycheck, and they occasionally make a mistake," she said.

That proposal was narrowly defeated on a 65-64 vote.

A slightly different version of the bill was approved by the Senate, and the measures now move to a House-Senate conference committee to reconcile the differences.



BONDING

Funds for urgent needs

Members of the House Capital Investment Committee approved a \$41.9 million bonding bill April 15.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), would authorize the state to borrow money to fund several capital improvement projects considered to be high-priority statewide.

The Legislature typically produces its main bonding bill in the second year of the session, which is the even-numbered year. But smaller bills for emergency needs are usually passed in the first year.

One of the projects in this year's bill comes as a result of the tragic death of 11-year-old Kara Kavanagh in Brooklyn Park.

In March, Kara and her friend were attempting to cross Minnesota Highway 252 in Brooklyn Park on their way to McDonald's when she was hit by a car. She died a few hours later.

Residents of Brooklyn Park say that a pedestrian bridge at that intersection has been planned for years and they want the city to build it as soon as possible.

In 1997, city voters approved a local park bond proposal to provide \$100,000 for the \$550,000 project.

The bill would provide a \$440,000 loan to the city to help finance the building of the pedestrian bridge and related costs. The financing is contingent on the receipt of additional funding from the federal government.

The bill (HF2205) now goes to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Other highlights of the bill include providing \$16.7 million to the Department of Natural Resources to be used for dike construction in East Grand Forks and Warren. Both cities were hard hit by the 1997 floods.

Also in the bill, \$6.4 million would go to the Minnesota State Colleges and University (MnSCU) system. The bulk of that amount would go to Winona State University for a new boiler system and emergency generators.

The Department of Administration would get \$3 million for various capital improvement projects statewide, and \$1.8 million would go to the Department of Corrections for renovations to the sewer system at a correctional facility in Faribault.

And the bill would direct the Legislative Audit Commission to investigate a mold problem at the state veterans home in Luverne. The Department of Administration is in the middle of a \$6 million project to remove the mold from the facility.



CHILDREN

Increasing child care

The House voted April 16 to pass a \$465,000 spending measure for family and early childhood programs. The vote was 78-54.

Although many amendments were offered that would have further increased child-care funding, the omnibus family and early childhood finance bill passed the House floor in the same form as it emerged from the House Family and Early Childhood Education Committee.

Some lawmakers objected to the bill because they said its funding provisions are spread too thin.

"I think we've missed a wonderful opportunity to kind of have our cake and eat it, too," said Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul), who pushed for more child-care dollars.

But others spoke in favor of the measure as a responsible spending bill that provides support to families.

"This isn't cookies. This is meat and potatoes and vegetables," said Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka). "This is a healthy bill."

The bill (HF1467) is sponsored by Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), chair of the Family and Early Childhood Education Committee.

It boosts funding for some child-care programs, early childhood education, and adult basic education. And the spending would be matched by \$70 million in federal funds. The measure spends about \$14 million more than Gov. Jesse Ventura requested.

The bill moves to a House-Senate conference committee.

Children and families

The bill would allot \$396.5 million in state and federal funds for child-care programs. The state's basic sliding fee child-care program would get an 11-percent funding increase.

The state's at-home infant care program, which pays subsidies to working parents who want to stay home to care for their babies, would be expanded. Currently, parents who apply for the program are placed on the same waiting list as applicants for basic sliding fee child care. Because of the long wait, the parents' children are often too old for the at-home program when their names come up. The bill would separate the programs on the waiting list, allowing parents to opt for the at-home program right away.

Lawmakers said those two initiatives are aimed at removing more families from an already burdensome waiting list for child-care programs. However, family co-payments for child-care subsidies would be increased to fund the expansions.

The House measure would also increase funding for early childhood education programs by \$2.8 million more than the governor's recommendation. The bill would raise per-pupil funding to \$120 per child from \$113.50 per child.

In addition, the bill includes a plan that would investigate child-care assistance fraud. The bill includes a proposal for a new universal form for applicants seeking public child-care subsidies. The proposed form is aimed at helping county and state officials keep track of families receiving child-care assistance.

Self-sufficiency programs

Nearly \$4 million would go to support adult basic education programs in rural Minnesota, on top of \$41.6 million to support statewide programs.

Transitional housing programs would see an increase of \$300,000, but no dollars were included for grants to emergency shelters.

A lead-abatement program that was not

recommended in Ventura's budget would be funded with a one-time appropriation of \$57,000.

And \$1 million from state and federal resources would go toward a program to promote saving money among low-income families. The program, called Family Assets for Independence, is a measure brought forward by House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan).

Prevention and intervention

Many small programs that focus on preventing chemical abuse, violence, and juvenile delinquency would also be funded under the bill.

Adolescent parenting grants total \$88,000, and \$100,000 would go to Native American youth programs. Another \$550,000 would fund a St. Louis Park housing program, chemical abuse prevention projects, and organizations that educate young fathers.

In addition, \$4.9 million would fund grants to communities for crime prevention initiatives.

In other provisions of the bill, \$100,000 would go to support First Call Minnesota, a statewide information and referral system for families who need to locate social services organizations.



CONSUMERS

Reviving rent-to-own deals

Businesses would be allowed to establish rent-to-own contracts with customers, under a bill the House passed April 19. The vote was 79-51.

Buying furniture, appliances, or other items through rent-to-own contracts has not been allowed in the state since 1994. State law subjects credit sales transactions to a maximum percentage of interest, and a 1994 Minnesota Supreme Court decision found that rent-to-own contracts should comply with that law. That effectively ended the rent-to-own business in the state.

Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), sponsor of the bill (HF1163), said the laws regarding credit sales should not apply to rent-to-own contracts because the customer does not actually own the merchandise. The company delivers the merchandise to the customer's home and is responsible for repair and maintenance, and the customer can return the merchandise at any time.

Workman acknowledged concerns that buying something through a rent-to-own contract costs more than buying it up front, but he

compared it to paying \$80 to rent a \$200 tuxedo for only two days.

"You cannot have an interest charge when there is no debt," he said, making his case that laws capping interest should not apply to the contracts.

He added that Minnesota is the only state that prohibits rent-to-own arrangements.

The bill would limit the customer's total cost in a rent-to-own contract. The total payments required for ownership could not be more than four times the price the company paid for the item or two times the price the item could be purchased for from another merchant, whichever is greater.

The bill also would require rent-to-own companies to inform customers that other options would enable them to purchase the merchandise for less money.

Several amendments offered on the House floor would have reduced the maximum costs in rent-to-own contracts, but none of the proposals were adopted.

Rep. Gregory Gray (DFL-Mpls) pointed out that laws limit the maximum interest rates on credit cards. Because many people with lower incomes often do not have access to credit cards, they resort to rent-to-own contracts, he said. And those people should be protected by similar limits.

"It really comes down to asking, 'Should everyone receive the same protection under the law?'" he said. "You have to realize that people are going to get hurt if this bill gets passed."

The bill now moves to the Senate.



CRIME

Judiciary spending bill

The House passed the \$1.1 billion judiciary finance bill April 20. The vote was 119-13.

The spending bill would fund the state court and correctional systems, law enforcement and public safety agencies, and agencies such as the human rights department and the crime victim services center.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights), also contains several policy provisions that have an impact on the state's criminal justice budget.

The proposal includes provisions from the so-called three strikes sentencing bill. Courts would be required to sentence a person who is convicted of a third violent felony to a life in prison. Offenders serving a life sentence could not be released into a supervised release program until they had served a minimum of 30 years.

For second-offense violent felons, the bill would lower the threshold necessary to use increased sentences already in place in current law.

The proposal would limit the scope of crimes that could be counted toward the mandatory sentence and allow some judicial discretion. The measure would exempt several felony-level crimes from consideration, including certain drug crimes, third-degree assault, second-degree arson, and burglary.

And the bill would give judges the power to waive the mandatory life sentence if the court

Tobacco kids



Rep. Wes Skoglund passes by a row of students wearing red sandwich boards displaying the rising rate of youth tobacco use as he makes his way to the House chamber April 22. Lawmakers were about to debate the omnibus health and human services finance bill.

finds substantial and compelling reasons to do so.

The bill now goes to conference committee where members of the House and Senate will work out differences between their two versions of the bill.

Here are some other highlights of the House bill (HF2404/SF2221*).

Police chases

The omnibus bill addresses several issues involving police chases. It would mandate additional training time for officers, create a statewide pursuit policy, provide new technologies for training and pursuit, and strengthen the current laws against fleeing an officer.

Under the bill, the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board would establish a pursuit training course for police officer cadets. The bill would mandate that each cadet receive at least seven hours of training and that all current officers receive at least eight hours of training every two years. And the bill would provide \$800,000 in grants to local law enforcement agencies to assist with the new training requirements.

The bill also would require the POST board to develop a statewide model pursuit policy. And the bill would provide funding for technologies that would both train officers and, supporters hope, end pursuits more quickly.

Public safety spending

The Department of Public Safety would get \$77.8 million over the next two years, under the bill. Of that amount, the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension would get \$50.3 million, the division of Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement would receive \$3.6 million, and the state Fire Marshal would get \$6.4 million.

Also included in the public safety department's appropriation, the Emergency Management Division would be given \$7.7 million. And \$9.7 million would go for law enforcement grants to be awarded to individual communities.

Court costs

The state court system would receive \$221.3 million over the two years, under the bill. Of that amount, the Supreme Court would get \$49.9 million, the Court of Appeals would get \$13.2 million, and the trial courts would get \$156.4 million.

Included in the trial court appropriation, the bill would provide six additional district court judges. The proposal would increase the number of judges in four of the state's 10 judicial districts, and it would provide \$3 million for these new positions and related costs.

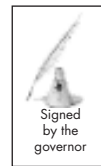
Paying for prisons

The bill would provide \$684.4 million to the Department of Corrections for the operation of the state's correctional system over the next two years.

Included in that amount, the Community Service Division would receive \$197 million. Of that amount, \$450,000 would go toward youth intervention programs and \$8.4 million would go for probation caseload reductions and intensive supervisions programs.

The bill would close the Camp Ripley adult work program, providing a \$2.7 million savings. The work program was established by the Legislature in 1997 to provide a sentencing alternative for nonviolent offenders. The program was seen as a way to relieve pressure on county jails. But the program hasn't been used by counties to its full potential, and lawmakers are proposing to discontinue the program.

Last word for prosecutors



Gov. Jesse Ventura got the last word on a new law giving prosecutors the final arguments in criminal trials. He signed the measure into law April 20.

Current Minnesota law states that the prosecutor goes first in final arguments and is followed by the defense attorney. Judges are allowed to give the prosecutor a response to the defense's final arguments only to address misstatements of fact or law, or if the defense's argument is prejudicial or inflammatory.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will guarantee the prosecutors an absolute right to respond following the defense's final arguments. The response can only address issues brought up by the defense's argument.

Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), the new law's sponsor, said it is only fair that prosecutors — who have the heavy burden of proving the case — be allowed to go last. He said that Minnesota is the only criminal system in the nation that allows the defense to go last.

Pawlenty also said that crime victims and victims' families suffer under the current system. He said sometimes the last thing that victims' families hear in the courtroom are disparaging remarks from the defense about the victim, and the prosecution doesn't get a chance to challenge the claims.

Critics argued that the measure violates the separation of powers clause in the state constitution and that the Legislature shouldn't interfere in court procedures, an area that should be overseen by the courts themselves.

The measure was sponsored by Sen. Randy Kelly (DFL-St. Paul) in the Senate.

HF197/SF198*/CH72

Protection for search dogs



The governor signed a new law April 20 that will impose criminal penalties for killing or harming search and rescue dogs.

Under current law, harming or killing a police dog is a crime that can be punished by up to two years imprisonment. The new measure, effective Aug. 1, will add search and rescue dogs to that law.

Search and rescue dogs often belong to private associations that offer volunteer services to police and fire departments. Those private associations sought the change in state law.

Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and Sen. Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington) sponsored the new law.

HF67*/SF32/CH77

Paying for DWI enforcement



The governor signed a new law April 15 that will help county sheriffs pay for DWI investigations.

Under current law, sheriffs maintain a fund made up of fines collected for violations of controlled substance and liquor control laws. Sheriffs can use the money to finance investigations into violations of these laws.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will expand the list of crimes the funds can be used to investigate to include DWI investigations.

Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound) and Sen. Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington) sponsored the measure.

HF240*/SF236/CH49

Strict line on poisoning



A new law signed by the governor April 16 aims to get tough on the crime of poisoning.

Specifically, the new measure will expand the law against adulteration, which is the crime of intentionally adding a dangerous or poisonous substance to another person's food, drink, or medication.

Under current law, the person committing the crime must know that the dangerous substance will cause harm. The new law will require only a knowledge that the substance is capable of causing harm.

The measure, effective Aug. 1, also will increase penalties for the crime of adulteration. And the measure will create a penalty for cases in which actual physical harm does not occur.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) and

Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the new measure.

HF735*/SF495/CH64

Violating rental deals



The governor signed a new law April 20 that will target people who rent items and then fail to return them on time.

The measure, effective Aug. 1, will change the criminal theft law to apply to rental situations where the value of the property is \$100 or more.

Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), House sponsor of the new measure, said that people sometimes keep expensive rental property past when it is due and the business owners have little recourse.

He said that these people are denying the owners potential income from other rentals, and he said that should constitute theft, regardless of whether or not the property is eventually returned.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, outlines conduct in rental agreements that will qualify as a violation of that law, including failure to return the property and failure to pay the agreed-upon rental charges.

The measure also will change the definition of value in the current theft law to include damages to the rental property and the potential rental value that the owner could have received had the property been in his or her possession.

Sen. Paula Hanson (DFL-Ham Lake) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF868*/SF866/CH76



DEVELOPMENT

Bloomington land deal



The governor signed a new law April 20 that will allow the Department of Human Services to sell a piece of property to the city of Bloomington. The law took effect April 21.

The 14,000 square-foot parcel currently contains a state-owned group home for the developmentally disabled. It is one of three parcels the city is amassing to accommodate construction of a 41-unit seniors housing facility at the corner of Beard Avenue and Old Shakopee Road.

The department hopes to build another group home in the Bloomington area. Legislative action was required so that the proceeds from the sale could be used for purchasing a new site, rather than being channeled into the state's general fund.

Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington) and Sen. William Belanger (R-Bloomington) sponsored the measure.

HF960/SF829*/CH80



EDUCATION

No sex offenders on boards

The House passed a bill April 19 that would prohibit registered sex offenders from becoming school board members. The vote was 130-0.

Any person who has been convicted of a sexual offense and is a registered predatory offender would be ineligible to run for election to a local school board, under the measure.

The bill comes on the heels of a New Ulm school board election that included a candidate who had served 41 months in prison for sexual abuse. The man's history was revealed shortly before the election, and he was not elected.

Sen. Dennis Frederickson (R-New Ulm), the Senate sponsor of the bill, said that incident prompted him to introduce the bill this year. He said sex offenders should not have access to positions of authority over children, especially those that would allow them entrance to school facilities.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) is sponsoring the bill in the House.

The bill (**HF1845/SF1527***) now goes to the governor.

Classroom disruptions

The House passed a bill April 21 that would give more authority to teachers when dealing with disruptive students. The vote was 127-5.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) is sponsoring the bill (**HF16**), which is supported by many education organizations including the teachers union Education Minnesota.

The bill would lower the standard for student behavior that constitutes grounds for expulsion, dismissal, or removal from the classroom.

Current law allows schools to dismiss students for conduct that "materially and substantially" interferes with other students' rights to an education or a teacher's ability to teach. Such conduct can include carrying a weapon in school, but there is no clear-cut definition.

Pawlenty's bill would clarify that conduct as behavior that "significantly" affects the classroom atmosphere. The provision would also

Look who's listening



Jack Anderson Dawkins, who is 22 months old, decides to listen to floor debate with headphones during a noisy April 19 session. Jack is the son of Rep. Andy Dawkins and Sen. Ellen Anderson.

extend beyond the classroom into any school function such as recess, a school assembly, or a meeting in a principal's office.

Supporters of the bill said it would let teachers have more control of their classrooms. By allowing teachers more authority, Pawlenty and others said the measure could prevent one disruptive student from keeping an entire class from learning.

"This doesn't solve all the problems in the world," Pawlenty said. "But this is a step in the right direction."

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) voted for the bill, but he said he is not convinced changing the conduct standard language will make teachers' choices any clearer than they are now when dealing with students.

The bill moves to the Senate.

Special education requirements

The House passed a bill April 21 that would lower the age until which schools are required to provide special education instruction. The vote was 130-0.

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) is sponsoring the measure. He said the bill is a "fair and reasonable compromise" to a tense process of reviewing laws governing special education.

In 1998, lawmakers approved a new set of laws concerning special education policies to make them consistent with federal law. Tuma said his bill essentially wraps up that process by tying up some loose ends of certain state laws that exceed federal requirements. The 1998 law left those provisions to be examined by lawmakers and special education officials to determine which ones should still exceed federal law.

Under that law, Minnesota requires special education services to be provided until a student is 22 years old. Under federal law, that requirement is 21 years old.

Tuma's bill (SF296*/HF483) would change the state law to age 21 and require school districts to provide instruction until July 1 after the student turns 21.

Other changes included in the measure deal with discipline procedures for students of special education and state reimbursement for litigation costs incurred by school districts.

The bill moves to the governor's desk.

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**Call the House Public Information
Office at (651) 296-2146**



ELECTIONS

Voting rights returned



Signed
by the
governor

Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law April 16 that repeals an election measure passed in 1998 that some say could have placed the entire civil commitment process for sex offenders in legal jeopardy.

The 1998 law took away the voting rights of a person who is civilly committed because of conduct that caused the person to be convicted of a crime. For the most part, the law applied to people committed as "sexually dangerous persons" or "persons with a sexual psychopathic personality."

The new law, effective April 17, simply repeals those 1998 election provisions, returning the election law to its pre-1998 status.

Under that law, offenders who have completed their sentence but are civilly committed are given the right to vote, unless they have been found incompetent to vote by a judge.

Proponents of the repeal argue that the 1998 law could have been legally troublesome to the current law allowing for civil commitment. They say it would have applied a different standard for sex offenders who are committed. And they suggest that courts might have ruled the 1998 law a denial of equal protection under the law for those offenders.

The civil commitment procedure for sex offenders has often been the source of legal controversy. The courts have, in some cases,

ruled that the process is unconstitutional and is used to punish — not to treat — the offenders.

In 1996, the state Supreme Court upheld the current Sexually Dangerous Persons Act, stating that the law allowing for commitment of sexually dangerous individuals did not violate the offenders' constitutional rights.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) and Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley) sponsored the 1999 measure.

HF643*/SF676/CH61



EMPLOYMENT

Legal protection for references

The House passed a bill April 21 that aims to make it easier for employers to provide job references for former employees. The vote was 85-47.

Bill sponsor Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud) said the current system encourages past employers just to give "name, rank, and serial number" because employees can easily sue if they feel they have been unfairly characterized.

Knoblach's bill would raise the bar for lawsuits in these cases. It would require that employees prove that the employer intentionally and maliciously gave false information and that the information caused harm to the employee.

The bill also outlines how past employers should provide the information to prospective employers.

Knoblach said the bill strikes an appropriate balance between employers and employees.

"It will solve the problem in Minnesota by getting employers the information they need while still providing employees the protections they deserve," he said.

But Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin) said that the standard of proof in these cases would be too high under the Knoblach bill, and he said the bill would take away important legal protections for employees in current law.

"This bill is going to virtually take away the rights of employees in these cases," he said.

Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls) offered and the House accepted an amendment that would require school districts to release employee records related to violence or inappropriate sexual contact with students to other school districts that are looking at hiring the employee.

"It's only fair that the new district have this information," he said.

The bill (HF310) now goes to the Senate.

Capitol RASSL'er



An anonymous protester wears Groucho Marx glasses to turn herself in for violating "silly and senseless laws." She appeared at an April 20 Capitol rally held by a group called RASSL — Repeal All Silly and Senseless Laws.



ENVIRONMENT

Spending for the environment

The House Ways and Means Committee approved an omnibus spending bill for agriculture, environment, and natural resources projects on April 19.

The bill (**HF2388**) combines the omnibus agriculture and omnibus environment and natural resources bills.

Disaster relief, marketing initiatives, and a proposed \$74.7 million appropriation for ethanol producer payments are among the agriculture provisions of the bill.

The ethanol funding would bring several processing plants to full capacity. It would also add funds to begin producing at an ethanol plant in St. Paul.

And marketing initiatives would be developed through the Agriculture Utilization and Research Institute and the commissioner of agriculture.

One provision from the environment and natural resources bill would increase fees for hunting and fishing licenses and add a general fund match for game and fish projects.

Many environmental programs are financed through funds specifically dedicated for those purposes and created by fees such as those on fishing licenses. The increased fees would generate an estimated \$4.5 million in the game and fish fund, and the bill would match that amount with \$2.1 million from the general fund. Additional matching funds would be carried over from a supplemental 1998 appropriation.

Only 15 percent of the general fund match would be available to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for administrative costs, and 85 percent would go to regional field offices throughout the state.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee and sponsor of the bill, said the general fund match is appropriate because game and fish projects include stabilizing stream banks and shorelines, establishing game and non-game wildlife management areas, and other projects that provide significant benefits to the general public.

"Sportsmen and women can no longer be providing the financial resources for environmental benefits that are now being conducted out of the game and fish fund," he said. "It's not just fish stocking and boat landings. There is tremendous environmental benefit in these projects."

The bill also would appropriate \$42.2 million from the lottery-financed Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to the

Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) for environmental and recreational projects.

The commission receives requests for projects and conducts a series of public hearings to determine priorities for those projects. Of the 463 requested projects, the LCMR has proposed funding 120. The House bill would fund most of those projects. Many of the projects are funded through grants that require local matching funds from the areas that benefit from the project.

John Velin, director of the LCMR, stressed that the projects are designed to enhance the quality of the state's natural resources, not to supplement the budgets of state agencies.

The bill would eliminate state funding to the Minnesota/Wisconsin Border Commission and to the Voyageur National Parks Commission.

Holsten said the bill would also scale back some of the DNR's technology initiatives, such as electronic licensing, so that more money can be directed to programs that provide the most benefit to the quality of the state's environment and recreation areas.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

Koch promises cleaner future

An April 22 Earth Day meeting of the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee brought the company that holds a state record for pollution penalties before some of its harshest critics. And the outcome couldn't have been more optimistic.

At the request of committee chairman Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), officials from Koch Petroleum Group presented lawmakers with a history of the Rosemount refinery's

environmental violations and an update on the strides they have taken toward improving their environmental performance and public image.

"Our history has not been good," said Jeff Wilkes, refinery manager and vice president of Koch's Minnesota operations.

"We paid a \$6.9 million fine last year and we are not proud of that in any way," he said. "We are trying very hard to gain back that trust that we lost through our lack of communication and or performance in the past."

Koch, the upper Midwest's leading producer of transportation energy and fuel products, provides 80 percent of the jet fuel used at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

Koch Petroleum Group is a subsidiary of Koch Industries of Wichita, Kan., the country's second largest privately-held company.

In response to criticism from neighbors, employees, the Legislature, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Koch has formed a 19-member community advisory council and pledged \$80 million or "whatever it takes" to improve the refinery's environmental performance.

Koch officials announced last week that they voluntarily intend to cut the plant's emissions by 50 percent in the next five years.

"We think it's good business," Wilkes said. "We don't have to do this."

This initiative, called "fueling a clean future," will establish an unusual partnership between Koch and the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA), an independent environmental watchdog group that has long been one of the refinery's harshest critics.

Together, Koch and MCEA intend to



Jeff Wilkes, *right*, vice president for Minnesota operations and refinery manager at Koch Petroleum Group, and Tim Sullivan, director of public affairs for the company, testified April 22 about the refinery's history of environmental violations before the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

develop a model comprehensive emissions reporting system.

MCEA will verify Koch's emissions figures, track the figures against product output, translate the results into language designed for the general public, compare them with other refineries across the country, and post the results on the Internet.

"I will tell you, I got as positive a reaction from my employees as I did from my neighbors," Wilkes said of the emissions reporting initiative. "We're here for the long haul."

Groundwater relief



A new law effective April 16 allows extended use of a permanent groundwater relief system at the Blue Lake Wastewater Treatment Plant in Scott County. The plant is located in the Minnesota River flood plain in Shakopee.

The new law allows the commissioner of natural resources to issue a permit to the Metropolitan Council to exceed the limit of 2 million gallons of water per day in a 30-day period.

A quarry located near the treatment plant currently pumps a high volume of water, which eases the demand at the treatment plant. However, that quarry is expected to close in the near future, and the treatment plant will have to make up the difference, especially in temporary flooding conditions.

Sen. Claire Robling (R-Prior Lake) and Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan) sponsored the measure.

HF1403/SF1173*/CH56

State recycling initiative



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a bill April 20 that will make the Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA) responsible for part of the state's Waste Management Act.

The Waste Management Act is a state law that requires the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the commissioner of public service to recommend policy changes to help the state reduce the amount of waste that is sent to landfills. Goals of the program include purchasing products that contain recycled material, conducting tests on agencies' experiences using those products, and keeping other data related to recycling.

The OEA administers other programs that are designed to reduce waste generated in the state. The new law transfers the Pollution Control Agency's responsibility in the Waste Management Act to the OEA. That office,

along with the commissioner of public service, will recommend waste management policy changes to the governor and the Environment and Natural Resources committees in the House and Senate.

The law is effective Aug. 1. It was sponsored by Sen. Janet B. Johnson (DFL-North Branch) and Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack).

SF1176*/HF1151/CH73



GOVERNMENT

Support for Kosovo action

The House passed a resolution April 21 to urge the U. S. government to send humanitarian aid to Kosovo. The vote was 84-2.

The resolution (**HF2415**), sponsored by Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls), states that the atrocities against the Kosovars by President Slobodan Milosevic are comparable to those of the Nazis against the Jews during World War II.

The increasing crimes against the people of Kosovo have caused hundreds of thousands of people to flee the region, which has created other problems where refugees are living in inhumane conditions, the resolution continues.

So far, the efforts of NATO forces have not deterred the crimes, and the resolution urges all Minnesotans and all levels of government to be involved in efforts to provide humanitarian aid to the Kosovars.

The resolution also pledges support for the efforts of President Bill Clinton, Congress, and the U. S. government and its armed forces to "meet United States and NATO objectives in Kosovo and the Balkans."

It also states that Clinton and his administration "should actively and vigorously pursue a policy that will bring Slobodan Milosevic and his top paramilitary lieutenants before the International Court of Justice at the Hague to be put on trial for crimes against humanity."

The resolution now moves to the Senate.



HEALTH

Research opportunities



The governor signed a bill April 15 that will exempt some researchers from medical licensing requirements.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will apply to those performing medical research for a tax-exempt, non-profit organization operated primarily to conduct scientific research on causes and cures of human disease.

To qualify, researchers must perform duties that are related to public health education and are conducted under the supervision of one or more licensed physicians.

The law will enable organizations to benefit from the expertise of researchers from other countries who are not licensed to practice medicine in the United States.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure.

HF1660*/SF1650/CH54

Health care solvency



The state's three community integrated health care service networks would have to maintain a net worth reserve of three times their minimum net worth requirement, under a new law the governor signed

April 15.

The networks, often called CISNs, are managed health care networks similar to health maintenance organizations (HMOs), but the networks have smaller enrollments and operate mostly outside the urban areas.

The net worth holdings are required to assure financial solvency.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, is designed to treat CISNs in a way similar to the way the state treats HMOs, which were required to up their net worth holdings under a bill passed last year.

The new law also accords peer review protection to the CISNs, which shields deliberations among medical professionals from the legal process should a lawsuit arise.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Doug Johnson (DFL-Tower) sponsored the measure.

HF614*/SF913/CH51

Duties for pharmacists



The governor signed a bill April 16 that will make changes to the Minnesota Pharmacy Practice Act. The new law is effective Aug. 1.

The measure will allow pharmacists to engage in monitoring of drug therapy, selection of therapeutic devices, drug research, and drug administration for first dosage and emergencies.

It also would allow pharmacists to manage and modify drug therapy on a case-by-case basis according to a written agreement between the pharmacist and a health-care practitioner.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) and

Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the bill.

HF408*/SF170/CH62

Testing chiropractors



The governor signed a measure April 15 that will change state licensing requirements for chiropractors. The new law is effective Aug. 1.

Under the law, chiropractors practicing in Minnesota no longer will have to pass the Minnesota licensure practical exam, as long as they have passed any examination that is approved by the Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

The intent of the law is to follow a nationwide effort to standardize the chiropractic field.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. Pat Piper (DFL-Austin) sponsored the measure.

HF1216*/SF1391/CH55

Bed rails by prescription



A new law to clarify the permitted uses of bed rails in Minnesota nursing homes was signed April 22 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Under provisions of the measure, nursing home residents' right to bed rails and other restraints will be affirmed. Fear of falling will be included as a legitimate medical reason for prescribing bed rails, and a study of the use of restraints will be initiated.

The measure was proposed after a number of nursing homes were fined by the Minnesota Department of Health last spring for improperly using bed rails according to the department's interpretation of federal regulations.

Concern about use of bed rails arose because of injuries and even deaths caused when patients became entangled in the rails. The federal regulations called for a moratorium on rail use in cases where a patient would be put in "immediate jeopardy." Many nursing homes subsequently removed bed rails entirely, hoping to avoid fines but leaving some residents and their families upset.

The idea was to craft a bill at the state level that would spell out patient rights under federal guidelines but wouldn't jeopardize the state's Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements.

If the law is eventually found objectionable in the eyes of the federal government, it may have to be revisited next session, said

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), who sponsored the bill in the House.

The new law took effect April 23.

Sen. Don Samuelson (DFL-Brainerd) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF40*/SF25/CH83

Help behind the counter



A new law signed by the governor April 16 allows the state's Board of Pharmacy to authorize pharmacists to supervise more than two pharmacy technicians. The law is effective Aug. 1.

Until 1997, the board had been given the power to change the ratio on a case-by-case basis; however, after the 2-1 ratio was incorporated into statute, the board believed it no longer had that authority.

To be granted the waiver, a pharmacy must prove the consumer's health and safety is not jeopardized. Pharmacies that request the waiver often are automated, which means the work of the technicians is less intensive and requires less supervision.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) and

Sen. David Ten Eyck (DFL-East Gull Lake) sponsored the measure.

HF1714*/SF1693/CH63

Podiatrists in residency



The state's Board of Podiatric Medicine will be allowed to extend temporary permits to podiatrists participating in clinical residencies, under a new law signed by the governor April 20.

The law was necessary to clarify a discrepancy between current state statute and state rules. Statute mandates the permit to run 12 months; the rule allows the board to extend the permit for additional years under certain conditions.

With the new law, effective April 21, the applicant for a permit extension must have had his training interrupted by circumstances beyond his control and be enrolled in a residency that lasts longer than one year.

Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan) and Sen. Roy Terwilliger (R-Edina) sponsored the measure.

HF1421*/SF1239/CH67

Protected peer review



Ambulance services and first responders will have the benefit of peer review, under a new law signed April 22.

The law allows ambulance services to consider controversial incidents without being subject to discovery should a lawsuit arise.

Peer review is used extensively in a number of medical professions to find solutions and to prevent further problems. In many cases, information exchanged in peer reviews is protected from legal discovery. The idea is that the protection will allow a free discourse so medical professionals can learn from each other's experiences and improve service.

The law, which takes effect Aug. 1, extends that peer review protection to ambulance services and their employees.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Becky Lourey (DFL-Kerrick) sponsored the measure.

HF463*/SF578/CH83

Blind services request



Four-year-old Catherine, who is blind, stays near her mother, Nadine Jacobson of Edina, as she describes the potential effects on her daughter if the Legislature does not pass a deficiency bill that includes supplemental funding for the State Services for the Blind. Jacobson, who is also blind, spoke at an April 21 rally in the Capitol rotunda.

Legislative history can be researched in printed materials at the Legislative Reference Library or, for the years since 1995, on the Internet. Find directions at: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/leghist/histstep.htm>



HIGHER EDUCATION

Funding bill passed

The House passed a \$2.6 billion omnibus higher education finance bill April 16. The vote was 104-26.

The measure would provide funds to increase financial aid for students, provide salary increases for faculty at Minnesota colleges, create a University of Minnesota campus in Rochester, and make changes to the way University of Minnesota regents are selected.

The bill (**HF2380**) proposes the same spending amount called for in Gov. Jesse Ventura's budget recommendations. However, funds would be distributed differently than under Ventura's plan for the major higher education organizations the state finances.

The measure is sponsored by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley).

Leppik's bill would provide \$1.13 billion to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (MnSCU) and \$1.2 billion to the University of Minnesota.

The bill does not include a Ventura proposal of \$1.3 million for four endowment funds that would come from the state's tobacco settlement. Under that proposal, a \$350 million endowment would go toward the U of M's Academic Health Center.

The bill also would allow for the establishment of a new, non-residential U of M campus in Rochester and would direct \$5.3 million in funding toward the project.

In addition to the funding provisions, the bill would tinker with the university's Board of Regents election process. It would set up a task force to look at more aggressive recruitment strategies for potential regents and direct the Regent Candidate Advisory Council to automatically forward incumbent candidates for the Legislature's selection.

The Higher Education Services Office (HESO), which serves as Minnesota's financial aid bureau, would receive \$285.4 million to fund the state grant program, operate library systems, and provide informational services to current and prospective post-secondary students.

Through several different programs, the bill would provide financial aid increases to Minnesota's higher education students.

First, the minimum state grant would be reduced from \$300 to \$200. That means some students who did not previously qualify for grants could be eligible for grants.

And the state's budget would be adjusted to allow for annual tuition increases of 3 percent at public and private institutions, respectively.

Another change, known as the "Pell pass-

through," would cap the amount of federal Pell Grant awards recognized when calculating a state grant. Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) offered the provision as an amendment to the bill.

In Minnesota, the state grant is decreased when the federal grant goes up, so students receive the same amount of money. For the 1999-2000 school year, the Pell Grant will increase to \$3,125 from \$3,000. Under Carlson's proposal, students would be able to receive future increases in the federal grant without having their state grants reduced.

The bill originally called for reducing the assigned student responsibility—the amount the state expects students to contribute to their education—but that provision was taken out on the House floor. The money that would have been used for that provision was put into the HESO, MnSCU, and U of M budgets.

The Mayo Foundation would receive its full funding request of \$3.2 million for the biennium, under the omnibus bill. That amount would fund an increase in the base budgets for the Mayo Medical School, a family medicine residency program, and a residency program at St. Cloud Hospital.

Other provisions in the bill include an updated policy on private career school regulation and how information on hazing rules is distributed to students.

Lawmakers also approved a plan for general education requirements for technical college students. Under the bill, general education courses such as math or English would only be included in a technical course of study if they

are occupational requirements or part of a two- or four-year degree program.

The bill moves to the Senate.



INDUSTRY

Port authority name change



A new law signed April 20 changes the name of a Duluth port authority.

The Seaway Port Authority of Duluth will be known after Aug. 1 as the Duluth Seaway Port Authority.

The name change was requested to make it easier for people to find the facility in directories. Because most port authorities contain the location in the first part of their names, many people look up the "Duluth Port Authority" and do not find a listing.

Rep. Mike Jaros (DFL-Duluth) and Sen. Sam Solon (DFL-Duluth) sponsored the measure.

HF1809/SF1554*/CH68



LAW

Seat belt gag rule

Car accident victim Jodi Carlson would have her day in court, under a bill the House passed April 20. The vote was 118-11.

Carlson, a Bemidji resident, has been in a wheelchair since a car crash in 1995. She alleges that her injuries came as a result of a defective seat belt.



Joel Carlson, an official from the Minnesota Trial Lawyers Association gets a hug for his help from Jeanne Duranski, the mother of Jodi Carlson, right, who was injured in a 1995 car crash in which her seatbelt allegedly failed. Jodi Carlson, no relation to Joel, was accompanied by her mother and her future sister-in-law, Tonelle Suttan, center, to support legislation that would make it possible for victims like herself to sue automobile companies for damages caused by defective seatbelts.

But Carlson cannot seek compensation from the automobile company through the courts because of a 1997 state Supreme Court ruling on Minnesota's so-called gag rule law.

The gag rule law states that the fact that a person is wearing or not wearing a seat belt cannot be considered by the courts when deciding personal injury or property damage claims resulting from a car crash.

In a 1997 case, the Supreme Court ruled that the gag rule law, as it is written, also applies to cases in which the claim is filed against the auto manufacturer for a defective seat belt.

If plaintiffs can't establish that they were actually wearing the seat belt, they can't prove that the seat belt caused the injury. And the cases cannot move forward.

The bill approved by the House would simply exempt claims of defective or malfunctioning seat belt from the gag rule law.

Bill sponsor Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) said that there is agreement that the law needs to be changed to allow cases like Carlson's to go forward.

"Everyone agrees that you should be able to file a claim for a defective seat belt," she said.

But others argued McGuire's bill does not go far enough.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) offered an amendment that would eliminate the gag rule altogether. That amendment failed on a 90-35 vote.

Seifert argued that all of the relevant information in these cases should be considered by the courts, including whether or not the plaintiff was wearing a seat belt at the time of the accident.

Critics of the Seifert amendment said that it would give insurance companies too much power in these cases.

The McGuire bill (HF462/SF303*) now goes to the governor.

Legal cover for dispatchers

The House passed a bill April 19 that would allow emergency dispatchers to give over-the-phone medical instructions to callers without fear of legal troubles. The vote was 130-0.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), would exempt dispatchers from civil liability when in the course of an emergency call, they provide medical information before emergency responders arrive on the scene.

Currently, some municipalities are advising dispatchers not to give medical information over the phone because the local unit of government could possibly be held liable in a lawsuit.

Stanek said his bill would give emergency dispatchers the ability to do their jobs "without fear of superfluous litigation."

The bill (HF541/SF436*) now goes back to the Senate.

Better pay for jurors



A new law signed by the governor April 20 will ask the state's highest court to give the final verdict on the issue of jury pay.

The measure, effective Aug. 1, will request that the Minnesota Supreme Court study the several issues involving juror compensation, including a study of daily pay rates, reimbursements for child care and travel, and special considerations for longer civil trials.

The law also will require the court to examine ways to balance these concerns with a desire to have juries represent a cross-section of society. The report is due back to the Legislature in December.

The measure came as a result of the hardships reported by jury members serving during Minnesota's tobacco trial in 1998. Three members of that jury would receive additional compensation, under the claims bill advancing in the House (HF2221), sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount).

Minnesota courts currently pay jurors a \$30 stipend per day for expenses related to jury duty.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Randy Kelly (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF1153/SF973*/CH71



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mandated minimums



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law April 20 that allows county recorders to require a minimum deposit in accounts to assure payment of charges.

County recorders are responsible for keeping track of property records. Under current law, companies may post a security deposit with county recorders to pay for fees when records are filed. This allows the county to deduct the fees from the company's account and does not require company couriers to carry money with them when they deliver documents to the county recorder.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, allows county recorders to require a minimum balance in company accounts to guarantee the payment of fees. It applies to all counties in the state.

The measure stems from a recent state auditor report that found Ramsey County requiring the minimum deposit without the legal authority to do so.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the legislation.

HF908/SF465*/CH69



TAXES

Omnibus tax bill

A \$1.3 billion sales tax rebate and more than \$3 billion in income tax cuts over the coming biennium are the pillars of an omnibus tax bill being considered by the House Taxes Committee.

Both the rebate and the income tax cuts have already been endorsed by the House, as provisions of another bill (HF838) passed on the House floor April 13.

The new omnibus measure, which has yet to be assigned a House File number, would require the state to begin processing sales tax rebates by June 1 and to offer taxpayers the opportunity to sign their rebate check over to the state for one of five specially designated funds or for the general fund.

The bill would give \$1 million to the revenue department to finance the rebate process. Checks would be in the hands of taxpayers by the end of July.

The plan would also reduce income tax rates from 6 percent to 5.5 percent on the first \$34,500 in taxable net income, from 8 percent to 7 percent for income from \$34,501 to \$113,360, and from 8.5 percent to 8 percent on all income over \$113,360.

And it would eliminate the so-called "marriage penalty," a hitch in state law that forces married couples filing jointly to pay more taxes than single filers with the same income.

A variety of additional income, sales, and miscellaneous tax changes are also included in the measure.

Under a provision sponsored by House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), more Minnesotans making contributions to charitable organizations would be rewarded with a deduction.

Current law only allows deductions for charitable giving if a taxpayer itemizes his or her return. Those who don't itemize would be allowed to deduct 50 percent of their contributions over \$500, under the bill.

Holocaust survivors who receive certain financial settlements would not have to pay state income tax, under a section of the bill backed by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), who chairs the Taxes Committee.

The state's medical services provider tax — often called the "sick tax" — would not be completely eliminated under the bill; however, a three-year phase-out is proposed. That move is expected to cost the state just over \$292 million. The gap in revenue would be filled by a portion of the state's tobacco settlement money.

Among the proposed sales tax changes are exemptions for those filming television commercials in the state, counties purchasing equipment and supplies for road maintenance, vehicles given as gifts by individuals, and prizes for games of skill or chance at carnivals and fairs.

The exemption for those filming commercials was requested by Gov. Jesse Ventura as a way to spur business activity in the state. The exemption would likely cost the state more than \$2 million during the biennium.

County and city officials had sought a complete exemption from paying sales tax on all goods and services purchased, but they received only the exemption for road maintenance purposes in the bill.

Finally, the bill would reduce taxes on lawful gambling and exempt a certain type of kerosene and racing fuel from the motor fuels excise tax.

The Taxes Committee has not yet voted on the measure.



TRANSPORTATION

Highway funds, none for rail

After a lengthy debate over spending priorities, the House passed an omnibus transportation finance bill April 15. The vote was 78-52.

The bill (**HF2387**) includes \$3.3 billion in spending provisions for road construction, transit, public safety, airports, and railroads. Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska), chair of the House Transportation Finance Committee, is sponsoring the measure.

Of the spending total, about \$202.9 million would come from the state's general fund. The remaining dollars would come from the constitutionally dedicated funds for state and local highways.

The House did not approve a \$60 million proposal for light-rail transit, a project favored by Gov. Jesse Ventura. While the Senate has included money for that project in a transportation bill, House opponents of the planned light-rail line in Minneapolis view the project as too costly for the state in the long run. But the light-rail initiative did not go down without a fight.

Lawmakers offered several amendments that would re-prioritize how the state would spend its transportation dollars. Advocates of light-

rail transit and bus service spending tried unsuccessfully to increase the bill's funding for those initiatives.

Instead, the House set its transportation target \$28 million below the Ventura budget proposal, with plans to invest the money in state and local road construction and a revolving loan fund to help cities complete transportation projects.

The measure is headed to a House-Senate conference committee. Here's a look at the bill's major spending provisions.

Highways, runways, waterways

The Minnesota Department of Transportation would receive \$38.7 million for aeronautics projects, such as airport construction and maintenance funds.

Greater Minnesota Transit, a service that aids rural areas in providing bus service, would receive \$29.9 million, and \$4.7 million would go toward railroads and waterways.

A sum of \$1.5 million would aid local port developments, and \$150,000 would help fund a railroad corridor improvement plan in southern Minnesota.

State and local road construction programs would see a boost under the House bill, with \$10 million allocated for matching funds to repair local bridges.

The bill would provide a \$60.5 million increase in state road construction funds, which is \$10.6 million more than recommended by Ventura. The bill also includes a \$3.2 million proposal to purchase equipment for the new 800 megahertz metropolitan radio system.

The transportation department would receive a total of about \$3 billion from the bill.

Bus money

The Metropolitan Council would receive an increase in funding to preserve and expand its transit service.

Council officials initially asked lawmakers for a \$14.9 million increase over two years. However, the bill allots an additional \$11.2 million, bringing the state appropriation for Metro Transit — the city bus system — to \$109.9 million for the biennium.

Patrols and plates

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety would receive \$218.5 million for its transportation-related programs.

About half of the money would go to the Minnesota State Patrol, with \$1.4 million to replace radios in patrol vehicles. The bill denies, however, the State Patrol's requests for a new helicopter and for increased funding for a trooper training academy.

Three troopers would be transferred from the state's highways to provide security for

Ventura, but further requests for increased security for the governor were not included in the House proposal.

The department's Driver and Vehicle Services Division would see more money to replace equipment, hire more driver's license testing examiners, and make more license plates, which are currently in short supply.

About \$1.9 million in the bill would beef up driver's license testing sites by hiring 19 new examiners. But a request from the Driver and Vehicle Services Division to begin Internet vehicle registration was not included in the bill.

The measure also would repeal a tax credit for disabled license plates, which will help pay for an initiative to crack down on illegal use of handicapped parking permits.

In other provisions, a \$12.50 fee for state identification cards would be lowered to 50 cents for individuals who suffer from mental illness, and the department would be allowed to solicit paid advertising for Minnesota driver's license manuals.

Title transfers

The omnibus bill would create a detachable postcard people could mail to the state transportation department after they sell a motor vehicle.

The form, which would be attached to a vehicle's title, is intended to decrease registration fraud.

The seller would send in the form to notify the state of the sale, which could put more pressure on buyers to make sure the vehicles get registered. The provision comes from a separate bill (**HF1985**) sponsored by Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan).

Other changes

The bill does not include state funding for two projects — a children's information line and an elderly safety program — within the Minnesota Safety Council, a non-profit agency that educates citizens. However, the council would receive \$134,000 over the biennium.

The legislation also would dedicate \$20 million to the transportation revolving loan fund that can be used by municipalities to construct and repair bridges or roads.

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.

[illegible]

volunteer activities will likely continue with or without state funding to that office.

"I don't understand what people can find in your area that they can't find in any one of a dozen places around the state," Krinkie said.

Also, funding for the Government Innovation and Cooperation Board would be phased out under the bill, and the board would be required to develop a plan to become an independent agency. The board administers revolving funds to give grants to local units of government. The grants are awarded for projects that make government more efficient at that level, and the money saved goes back into the revolving funds. The bill would require that money to be returned to the state's general fund as the board is phased out.

The budget for the Minnesota Humanities Commission would be cut almost in half. The governor's budget proposal calls for \$1.8 million for the biennium, but the House bill would reduce it to \$937,000. Krinkie proposed cutting state funding to one of the commission's main programs, a literacy program for parents and children in low-income areas. Krinkie said that program should be funded through the state's K-12 education or early childhood and family education budgets.

Cutting paperwork

The bill would repeal requirements that state agencies file performance reports to the Legislature in January before the budget planning process.

Krinkie said removing the mandate would save printing and paper costs as well as staff time within each agency. It also would ease the burden on the Department of Finance, which assists agencies in making the reports.

"My feeling is there has been a lot of effort by the agencies in preparing these reports that did not give us a lot of information we didn't already have or couldn't easily get," Krinkie said.

The Office of the Legislative Auditor analyzes state agency budgets and provides detailed information to the Legislature, and state law also requires agencies to include data on performance in their budget documents. Krinkie said those factors make the in-house reports redundant.

Departmental mergers

Some legislative departments with similar functions would be combined under the bill. House and Senate television and media services would be combined, as would House and Senate information offices and House and Senate administrative services offices.

Another proposal to promote efficiency would allow legislative staff to work on temporary assignments in state agencies when the Legislature is not in session.

Privatizing services

A step would be taken toward privatizing the operation of the state correctional facility in Rush City, under the bill.

The commissioner of administration would be required to develop a request for proposals to operate the facility. Private vendors and the state Department of Corrections would be allowed to submit proposals between Aug. 1 through Sept. 1 of this year. The commissioner would have to select a vendor to operate the facility by Oct. 1.

A similar provision would require the commissioner of finance to develop a request for proposals for a private vendor to manage the state's payroll system.

Public radio

The governor recommended phasing out state funding for public radio stations, but smaller stations would receive additional funding under the House bill.

Grants of \$662,500 per year would be given to stations based on recommendations of the Association of Minnesota Public Educational Radio Stations.

Scrapping the primary

About \$3.5 million is expected to be saved by replacing the proposed presidential primary election with an informal ballot to be distributed at the precinct caucuses, which are held the first Tuesday in March. On that ballot, participants would indicate their preference for presidential or gubernatorial candidates, and the results would be reported to the Office of the Secretary of State.

Under current state law, a presidential primary is set to be held the first Tuesday in April 2000. Printed ballots will have to be prepared, and all of the state's precincts will have to go through the formal election process. Paying election judges, printing the ballots, and other expenses will cost local units of government about \$3.5 million.

Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer estimated the costs of reporting the results of the informal preference ballots is estimated at about \$8,000, and she said it would accomplish the same goal as the more formal — and more expensive — voting process.

Y2K preparation

In anticipation of some computer systems failing to make the transition from the year 1999 to 2000, the bill would appropriate \$20 million from the general fund to allow school districts and other local units of government to apply for emergency grants.

The grants would be administered as loans and would be used to correct problems that are likely to affect public health and safety or

cause "catastrophic loss to property or the environment." The loans would have to be paid back by the end of the fiscal year 2001.

Other provisions

Also under the omnibus measure, the attorney general's office would have to submit reports to the Legislature on some billing policies. The office would have to work with the commissioner of finance to ensure that money for legal services is spent as it is intended by the Legislature, and other policies regarding billing for legal services would have to be clarified.

Another provision would make business licenses available over the Internet through a system being developed by the Office of Technology. Eventually, the office plans to expand the system to include all types of licenses issued by the state, including driver's licenses and game and fish licenses. The office requested \$756,000 for the system, but the bill would give the office \$500,000. The difference is largely due to the fact that some lawmakers said electronic game and fish licenses would not be feasible. Under the House bill, the system would be used only for business licenses.

Also, state agencies would be prohibited from increasing a fee or imposing a new fee without legislative approval. Budget proposals for each state agency would have to list proposed fee changes or new fees, including admission fees to state facilities and fees for goods, services, regulation, or licensure.



Who is Alice Jefferson? That's what people were asking when Rep. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm) introduced "Rep. Alice Jefferson" to lawmakers in the House chamber April 22.

House members were surprised and delighted when Rep. Alice M. Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park) announced that she married former Rep. Richard Jefferson the night before.

The newlyweds were elected to the House in 1986. Jefferson retired last year, but Johnson assured everyone that she intends to continue her political career.

"And no, I'm not going to change my name," Johnson said. "I invited Richard to change his name to mine, but he said no."

Painstaking restoration . . .

Layer by layer, the Capitol's rathskeller returns

By Sarah Hallonquist

Nearly a century after the grand opening of the Capitol eatery, diners will once again be able to enjoy their meals as intended by the original designers.

The cafeteria — first created as a full-service restaurant — was completed along with the rest of the Capitol building in 1905. The design style replicated a German rathskeller (or beer hall), featuring freehand paintings of squirrels, eagles, grape leaves, and slogans in German along the room's arched ceilings.

But by the 1990s, a series of remodeling and painting projects had erased the beer hall theme and left the cafeteria with as many as seven layers of paint covering up the original artwork.

Historical preservation artists began chipping away at the paint and plaster in the late 1980s, but funding was not available for further restorative efforts. However, the cafeteria's luck changed three years ago with a \$1.2 million legislative appropriation, and the German rathskeller is on its way back into the Capitol basement. An additional \$1.04 million was made available in 1997.

Now in its second phase, the renovation project began in May 1998 and is scheduled to be completed in January 2000. The Minnesota Department of Administration is supervising the project, with the assistance of the Minnesota Historical Society and the Capitol Area Architecture and Planning Board.

Dan Tarnoveanu, the conservator in charge of the restoration effort, spends his days atop a 20-foot scaffold as he works to make the cafeteria's arched ceilings resemble their German-influenced beginnings.

Located in the north wing of the Capitol basement, the long, narrow room is divided into seven main bays, with vaulted ceilings reaching 21 feet at the highest point. Ceramic tiles cover the floor, and a grand staircase marks the main entrance.

Stenciling on the staircase that leads from the Capitol's ground floor to the basement eating area also will be restored to its original vine pattern. The decorative set of two spiral staircases allows entry at the center of the room, but access is also provided from the lower tunnel level.

In the dining area, 32 painted scrolls will once again stretch across the walls and ceilings. The decorative scrolls will contain 29 German mottoes, most of them encouraging productivity, hospitality, and, especially, the drinking of beer and wine.

In the face of anti-German sentiment dur-



Dan Tarnoveanu, an artist and historic conservator, is supervising the restoration of the Capitol cafeteria. The project is scheduled to be finished by January 2000.

ing World War I, Gov. J.A.A. Burnquist ordered the mottoes and other artwork to be painted over in 1917.

But in 1930, Gov. Theodore Christianson ordered the restoration of the mottoes. He got his wish, but after a request from the Women's Christian Temperance Union, three of the slogans were changed to reflect the "dry" ideals of the times. One that when translated into English had originally read "Better be tipsy than feverish" was changed to "Temperance is a virtue of men." In two others, references to the benefits of wine and drinking were changed to encourage eating and good food. But all of the slogans were painted over again in 1937, during the first of many redecorating efforts.

It took Tarnoveanu and his co-workers nearly six months to uncover the original designs and draw their replications. Paint samples were sent to Boston to be matched while artists constructed full-sized samples of the designs they would be replicating. Photos, slides, and drawings continue to aid the artists through the second phase of the project, which began in late March.

The walls and ceilings are painted in olive gray tones, and the eagles, vines, squirrels, and flag motifs are slowly emerging on top of the solid colors. Replicas of the original chandeliers will hang above tables in the same style as the originals.

New bathrooms, a serving station, kitchen, and disposal area have been constructed. A side room known as the private judges' dining room also will be restored.

The work, Tarnoveanu said, is unique among projects in the United States. It combines restoration and replication in a style used commonly in Europe on projects such as the Sistine Chapel.

Layers of paint and plaster left much of the cafeteria's original artwork impossible to salvage.

About 85 percent of the designs and mottoes have been redrawn and will be repainted on the ceiling. The remaining artwork has been uncovered, and the plaster will be touched up so that the original work is restored.

Instead of finding an exact paint match for each of the original 37 colors, slightly different hues are being used to recreate the ceiling's scenes. That way, Tarnoveanu said, people can tell the difference between the restored parts and the original paintings. The difference, however, won't be too striking; mostly those with a keen eye for restorative painting will be able to detect it.

Tarnoveanu figures if he were to use the exact same colors, the effect could be too harsh.

"It's like putting makeup on a very old lady," he said.

A native of Romania, Tarnoveanu owns a studio in St. Paul. He has completed restoration projects for the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, the Minnesota Masonic Home in Bloomington, and the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. Tarnoveanu recently won an award for his work on the historic reconstruction for the House of Hospitality in San Diego. 🐼

Experts restore Capitol cafeteria's ori



Herman Krumholz applies a layer of paint to the cartouche stencil in the center of the cafeteria's ceiling.



Dan Tarnoveanu, who is supervising the restoration, applies the base layer of paint to a stencil.



A section of the cafeteria wall reveals the original artwork, *right*, and a painted reproduction will serve as a model from which new stencils will be made and transferred to the walls.

ginal old world flavor



An original stencil of an eagle will be brought back to life during the restoration of the Capitol cafeteria.



Mike Slagle, an intern from the College of Visual Arts in St. Paul, punches outline holes in a stencil as part of his duties during the restoration of the Capitol cafeteria. Slagle also mixes all of the paints used to restore the stencils on the ceilings and walls.

The cafeteria's German character

The following are examples of the phrases that were hand painted in German on the walls and ceiling of the Capitol cafeteria when it opened in 1905. The slogans were eventually painted over, but a restoration now in progress will bring them back.

One more for that dismal weather
A guest who pays for what he orders is always welcome
More people get drowned in the cup than in the creek
After hearty eating you can do some hearty drinking
Hearty welcome in this hospitable house
Enjoy a glass after a duty well performed
Cheerfulness bring in with you, worry leave outdoors
As time flies we are nearing eternity
Time is money and money rules the world
No prize without effort



An original stencil reveals the date Minnesota became a territory.

Governor's Desk

CH60-CH86

Bills await governor's action

Once a bill has passed both the House and the Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill. The governor 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 results in the bill becoming law in the first year of the biennium.

The timing of these actions is as significant as the actions themselves.

In the first year of the biennium, the

important thing to remember is that the governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill. If the governor doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law with or without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

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 objects. As with all vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

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.mainserver.state.mn.us/governor/>
(Select "It's a New Day" and then click on "Legislative Logs")

Key:CH=Chapter;HF=HouseFile;SF=SenateFile

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
60	1132*	1116	Delinquent real estate taxes duplicate publication copies filing requirement.	4/16/99	
61	643*	676	All persons under civil commitment status provided the same legal rights.	4/16/99	
62	408*	170	Pharmacy practice definition modification.	4/16/99	
63	1714*	1693	Pharmacists to pharmacy technicians ratio requirements waiver.	4/16/99	
64	735*	495	Crime of adulteration scope expansion and penalty increases.	4/20/99	
65	841	881*	Stearns, Benton, and Sherburne counties regional parks and trails plan.	4/20/99	
66	645*	651	Water and wastewater treatment system modifications.	4/20/99	
67	1421*	1239	Podiatry temporary permits extension.	4/20/99	
68	1809	1554*	Duluth Seaway Port Authority new name.	4/20/99	
69	908	465*	County recorders minimum security deposits requirement authority.	4/20/99	
70	1507	1600*	Motor vehicle registration requirements modified.	4/20/99	
71	1153	973*	Juror compensation system study.	4/20/99	
72	197	198*	Criminal trials closing arguments rebuttal limits elimination.	4/20/99	
73	1151	1176*	Waste Management Act technical modification.	4/20/99	
74	53	129*	Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act modifications.	4/20/99	
75	182	257*	Statutory cities special elections to fill office vacancies.	4/20/99	
76	868*	866	Crime of theft expansion to personal property rental.	4/20/99	
77	67*	32	Killing or injuring a search and rescue dog provided felony penalties.	4/20/99	
78	793*	1497	Rental motor vehicle lien and right of retainer.	4/20/99	
79	1171	98*	Crime victims' and witnesses' birthdates confidentiality.	4/20/99	
80	960	829*	Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority surplus state land purchase.	4/20/99	
81	1404	972*	Migratory waterfowl refuge designation.	4/20/99	
82	1097	1188*	Uniform municipal contracting law dollar limit increases.		4/22/99
83	40*	25	Nursing home residents allowed to request the use of restraints.	4/22/99	
84	463*	578	Ambulance services and first responders health care review.	4/22/99	
85	836*	833	Business corporations regulation provisions modifications.	4/22/99	
86	1037*	950	Revisor's bill.	4/22/99	

Bill Introductions

HF2408-HF2417

Friday, April 16

HF2408—Molnau (R)

Transportation Finance

Automobile registration tax modified, public transit mobility fund established, motor vehicle sales tax percentage dedicated, metropolitan transitway land use standards required, transit funding eligibility defined, and money appropriated.

HF2409—McElroy (R)

Taxes

Local units of government required to adopt resolutions to increase property tax levies.

Monday, April 19

HF2410—Seifert, J. (R)

Civil Law

Mediation and mediator testimony regulated, and nondisclosure privilege provided.

HF2411—Ozment (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

County tax increment financing decisions approval required.

HF2412—Goodno (R)

Ways & Means

Omnibus health and human services bill.

Tuesday, April 20

HF2413—Boudreau (R)

Crime Prevention

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Faribault sewer system repairs provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2414—Tuma (R)

Education Policy

University of Minnesota constitutional autonomy repealed and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF2415—Wenzel (DFL)

Rules & Legislative Administration

Kosovo; U.S. government memorialized to act with speed to provide humanitarian aid.

Thursday, April 22

HF2416—Schumacher (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

November election adoption authorized for all towns.

HF2417—Schumacher (DFL)

Education Policy

Profile of Learning; statewide accountability and district autonomy balanced.

Coming Up Next Week . . . April 26 - 30, 1999

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

For information updates, call House Calls at (651) 296-9283.

All meetings are open to the public. Sign language interpreter services: (651) 224-6548 v/tty

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WEDNESDAY, April 28

8 a.m.

Conference Committee Early childhood and family education bill HF1467/SF2222

200 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Barb Sykora,
Sen. Pat Piper.

Note: This meeting will reconvene at 6 p.m. in 200 State Office Building.

10 a.m.

The House meets in session.

6 p.m.

Conference Committee Early childhood and family education bill HF1467/SF2222

200 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Barb Sykora,
Sen. Pat Piper.
Continuation of morning meeting.

THURSDAY, April 29

10 a.m.

The House meets in session.

FRIDAY, April 30

No meetings have been scheduled.

Continued from page 4

stirred up when the original Carver grant deed was allegedly found in Chillicothe, Ohio. Again the claims proved to be false.

As late as 1921, historian Milo Quaife noted that claims to the land were still being made.

"If the present governor of Minnesota has not been addressed by some person believing himself a rightful beneficiary of the claim, his experience is exceptional," he wrote.

But you can't say copies of the deeds sold by the family aren't worth the paper their printed. History buffs would probably pay a pretty penny for an authentic copy.

Still, if you have one, you should keep your day job.

MONDAY, April 26

12 noon

The House meets in session.

TUESDAY, April 27

10 a.m.

The House meets in session.



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

Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota State Lottery

Total Minnesota State Lottery sales in fiscal year 1998, in millions	\$373
Prize money paid out that year, in millions	\$224
Unclaimed prizes that year, in millions	\$5
Cents of every lottery dollar that goes to state's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund	7
To state's general fund	16
To lottery administration	11
To lottery retailers	6
To compulsive gambling treatment programs	0.3
Minnesota adults who have gambled at some time in their life, as percent	89
Percent of men	93
Percent of women	85
Minnesota adults who have bought a Minnesota State Lottery ticket at least once, as percent	63
Minnesotans who have bought lottery tickets from other states, as percent	28
Number of new instant games launched by Minnesota State Lottery in first five months of 1998	25
Retailers selling lottery tickets in Minnesota, 1998	3,341
Commission rate, in percent	5.5
Amount those retailers earned in commissions and incentives in fiscal year 1998, in millions	\$21.5
Percent of prize money that goes to newly-instituted cashing bonus for retailers	1
Minnesota voters who approved a constitutional amendment to authorize a state lottery in November 1988, as percent	57
Percent that voted to dedicate 40 percent of lottery proceeds to the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund until 2001, 1990	70
Percent that voted to extend the dedication until 2025, 1998	77.2
Amount won by Moorhead resident on Oct. 8, 1998 (largest prize in Minnesota history), in millions	\$28.4
Amount of unclaimed Gopher 5 award from July 28, 1998	\$759,520
Numbers on that unredeemed ticket	11 14 23 34 36

Sources: *Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1998, Minnesota State Lottery*; Minnesota State Lottery Web site (<http://www.lottery.state.mn.us>); and Office of the Secretary of State Web site (<http://www.sos.state.mn.us>).

For more information

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the status of a specific bill, call:
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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ April 30, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 17



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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • April 30, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 17

Reflections

One hundred years ago in April, the Minnesota Legislature passed bills similar to ones the 201 lawmakers are working on today. In 1899, 182 House and Senate members completed their duties after heated debates, then compromising on some bills that included agriculture, transportation, public safety, education, jobs, and health. This Legislature of the 19th century ended on April 18, with funds and policies to share with farmers, railroad workers, homesteaders and urban dwellers alike.

Today's 201 legislators have three weeks to go before session ends on May 17. Eleven major omnibus bills encompassing all funding requests are completed, and appointed members from the House and Senate are now meeting in conference to compromise and form identical bills for agreement upon by both legislative bodies before they are signed into law or vetoed by the governor.

Over 100 years, a few changes in legislative and public policy issues have been made, thus it is worthwhile to highlight some similarities that made major historical impacts.

In 1899, for example, Gov. John Lind was elected as the first successful candidate to win with a fusion of state political parties.

At the end of the 19th century, women won the right to vote for school board and library board members, then 20 years later, in 1919, they were the first in the country to be able to vote for a U.S. president.

Minnesotans were not among the first reservists called to support NATO efforts in Kosovo during the week of April 26, 1999, but 99 years ago, in the same week, on April 29, 1898, Minnesota soldiers were the first Americans to be mustered into service for the Spanish American War. On the exact same day, April 29, Minnesota's 1st Regiment also was the first to volunteer for the Union Army at the start of the U.S. Civil War, in 1861.

Unlike 100 years ago, war was not as prevalent an issue as it is today. And whether or not war is violence, justified as a means to end "man's inhumanity to man," or even if nonviolence can be legislated, are unanswered questions. But violence is prevalent today and more work or compromise must transpire so that violence is no longer a major issue in society, in Minnesota, or elsewhere.

This week of April 26, the idea of arbitrarily annihilating peers, as in the tragic school incident in Littleton, Colorado, or creating false bomb threats in schools in Minnesota is violence.

These and other 1999 issues are being discussed, but maybe there is a simple solution for survival into the year 2099. One suggestion is, everyone — all people worldwide — should be diligent in exercising compassion and tolerance for issues we disagree with.

"Imagine all the people living life in peace . . . Imagine all the people, sharing all the world."

— LeClair Grier Lambert

INSIDE

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On the cover: One family spends a sunny Saturday afternoon at a rally for education issues on the Capitol steps April 24.

—Photo by Gina Dabrowski

First Reading

K-12 finance bill . . .

House moves to increase funding, cut class sizes

By Sandy Donovan

Funding for schools would be increased and spread more evenly among Minnesota's school districts, under a \$7.8 billion K-12 spending bill passed on the House floor April 20. The vote was 90-40.

The bill represents a \$911 million hike in overall spending, which is about \$100 million less than proposed in the omnibus bill advancing in the Senate but \$90 million more than recommended by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The House measure would boost the general formula — through which districts receive the bulk of their funding — by 3.6 percent for the 1999-2000 school year. Other initiatives include reducing class sizes, helping charter schools, and closing the funding gap between the state's wealthiest districts and poorest ones.

The Senate is expected to vote on its version of the bill soon and a House-Senate conference committee will likely meet next week to iron out differences between the two proposals. Here's a look at highlights from the bill (HF2333), sponsored by Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington).

Formula boost

School districts would get an extra \$127 per pupil unit next year, under the plan. That 3.6-percent increase would be followed with a 3-percent formula boost for the 2000-01 school year, bringing the annual per-pupil funding from \$3,530 this year to \$3,875 in 2001. [That increase also includes a shift of \$43 per pupil that used to be in a separate component called graduation standards funding].

General formula funding is figured on weighted per-pupil units, with secondary students receiving more revenue than elementary students. The proposed hike would cost the state \$204 million, which would be part of the \$6 billion sent to districts in general formula funding during the biennium.

A failed amendment proposed by Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls) would have raised the formula by another \$200 per pupil for the 1999-2000 school year. And Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park) offered another amendment, also unsuccessful, that would have increased the formula by \$100 per pupil for the next school year. Johnson said many districts will still have to cut staff under the



An omnibus K-12 spending bill passed by the House would target more school funding to rural and suburban districts, as well as provide extra money for reducing class sizes in all schools.

House proposal, with factors such as declining enrollment negating the effects of the proposed \$127 per pupil increase.

Class-size reduction

The measure would also spend about \$107 million over the next two years for class-size reduction initiatives. That's about \$43 million less than the governor proposed.

But the House plan closely resembles Ventura's plan in other details. The funds would be targeted to kindergarten through third grade, with the goal of reducing class sizes, primarily in reading and math, to 17 children per one teacher.

Districts would have to submit a plan to the commissioner of the Department of Children, Families and Learning, and upon approval they would receive \$125 per kindergartner and \$250 per first- through third-grader. Districts that have already met that 17-to-1 goal in those grades could use the funding for reducing class sizes in higher grades, providing all-day kindergarten, increasing staff, or improving technology and other programs.

School breakfasts

The bill would also establish a grant program aimed at ensuring that all children eat breakfast each school day. Almost \$6 million over two years would go to districts that have

high percentages of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches.

The grants would expand the current Fast Break to Learning program, which provides money for in-school breakfast to 41 districts. Ventura also recommended expanding the program with the same amount of funding, but Seagren said the House proposal allows the districts more flexibility.

Under both plans, districts would have to match every \$3 of state money with \$1 of local funding. But while Ventura's proposal would require schools to make the local match by charging non-eligible students for breakfast, the House plan would also allow districts to solicit money from non-public sources.

"Some of the pilot schools have had local business support, and if they already have a sponsor who picks up that tab, that's okay," Seagren said.

A successful amendment sponsored by Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie) would redirect a portion of the funding originally targeted to the breakfast program to a hot lunch program. Kielkucki said the number of lunches served statewide is rising, federal requirements are increasing the price per meal, and 80 percent of the state's hot lunch programs are operating at a deficit.

Safety at school

Two amendments dealing with school safety were discussed during the House floor debate on the omnibus bill.

One plan, offered by Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexander) and accepted by lawmakers on the floor, would make it easier for teachers to remove disruptive students from classrooms. It would lower the current standard for student behavior that constitutes grounds for expulsion, suspension, or removal from the classroom.

The provision is identical to a bill, sponsored by House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), that the House passed April 21. Cassell said he wanted to ensure that the measure didn't get lost in the shuffle by incorporating it into the omnibus bill.

But an amendment that would have provided money for districts to implement safety plans was rejected by lawmakers. Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins), who offered the amendment, said that the recent tragedy in a Colorado high school emphasized the need for schools to have effective safety plans in place. And although most districts have already initiated some sort of safety plan, Folliard said that lack of money is holding most districts back from fully implementing those plans.

Folliard's proposal would have taken \$100 million slated for projects in individual districts under the omnibus bill and used the money instead to provide school safety grants. Districts would have been able to use the grants to provide hallway monitors, police department liaisons, or to initiate other safety programs.

Blocking pornography

The omnibus measure would also require all computers at public school libraries to be equipped with content-screening software to prevent minors from seeing "obscene and harmful" material on the Internet. A successful amendment by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley) limits the provision to apply only to public school libraries, while an unsuccessful amendment by Rep. Joe Opatz (DFL-St. Cloud) would have extended the requirement to all libraries.

Opatz argued that the blocking software should be required especially at state college libraries because so many high school students attend those schools under the state's post-secondary enrollment options.

But Leppik disagreed.

"We cannot be guardians for our children throughout their lives," she said. "I think the cord is cut when they make that decision, along with their parents, to go to a post-secondary institution."

Continued on page 18

Foresight of early leader shaped schools



The first Superintendent of Public Instruction, in his original report to the Territorial Legislature in 1852, focused on familiar themes in education — including adequate facilities, teacher salaries, and graduation standards.

But he never once used the term "pupil unit," a loathsome bit of government-speak that is now commonplace.

The Rev. Dr. Edward Duffield Neill had been appointed superintendent by the Territorial Legislature in 1851. He later served as the chancellor of the University of Minnesota and founded Macalester College in St. Paul.

In his book, *The History of Minnesota*, Neill includes an excerpt of his speech to the Legislature because, as he wrote, "a portion of it may be interesting to future educators of the state."

Under the school code established by the Territorial Legislature in 1849, school districts could be organized in townships consisting of five or more families. And townships with ten or more families could organize more than one district.

Districts were funded mainly by an annual property tax and were governed by a board of three trustees, elected for one-year terms by the taxpayers of the district.

In the 1852 report, Neill noted that there were 12 districts organized in the Minnesota Territory at the time — four in Washington County and eight in Ramsey County. And the territory had only five school buildings. The largest building — 24 feet by 34 feet — was built in St. Anthony at a cost of \$600. The smallest building was 16 feet by 18 feet.

Like many education officials today, Neill advocated improvements in school facilities. But where the current debate focuses on issues like replacing outdated computers with new computers, Neill argued that log cabin schools should be replaced with actual school buildings.

"The buildings that have been erected for school purposes are far in advance of the log huts that were formerly erected by pioneer settlers . . . which even the cows of the

farmer might blush to own as their resting place," he said.

But he said these facilities did need improvements because well-maintained schools were "so necessary to cultivate neat and modest habits in youth."

"Unless some care is shown, it will not be long before the schoolhouses will look as dilapidated as the drunkard's dwelling," he said.

And he called for schools to be centered in the land set aside within each township

to provide enough space for students to play. This, he believed, would promote the new territory to visitors and newcomers.

"Nothing raises a population so much in the estimation of a traveler or emigrant, as to see a crowd of boys issuing from a pleasant schoolhouse, to play during the recess upon a capacious lawn," he said.

Neill also led an early fight to provide decent

pay for the "noble" profession of teachers. At that time, good pay meant wages higher than a servant's pay.

Neill reported that Minnesota was already a leader in paying teachers.

"Immediately after the organization of our school districts, the ground was taken by the friends of education, that so valuable a member of society as the faithful teacher should receive at least the wages of an ordinary day laborer," he said.

Long before the Profile of Learning debate, Neill tackled the subject of graduation standards.

He disagreed that local districts should establish these standards and suggested that the local standards would "burlesque" the state's education system. And he argued that those provisions in the territorial school code giving local trustees the power to grant degrees should be repealed.

In Neill's view, that power should belong solely to the regents of the University of Minnesota.

"To grant such high powers to the trustees of a common school district, who are elected annually, not by those who feel a lively interest in education, but [by the taxpayers of the district] is to degrade education," he said.



The Rev. Dr. Edward Duffield Neill

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Financial relief for farmers



A proposal to spend \$70 million to help Minnesota's farmers became law April 23 without Gov. Jesse Ventura's signature. The new law took effect April 24.

In a letter filed with the new law, Ventura said he knows "there is hurt" among the state's farmers.

"However, I also know that there are many farms, especially large corporate farms, that are posting profits," Ventura wrote. "My objections to this farm relief package remain threefold: There is no means-testing to ensure that relief is targeted; the money is spent in one lump sum, leaving no funds for future problems; and the farm package was split away from the original rebate when it was entirely unnecessary to do so."

The governor also suggested that something ought to be done to address the conditions that created the current farm crisis.

"The economics of the agricultural industry are such that no reasonable person believes that next year will be dramatically better," Ventura wrote. "A long-term commitment to market and innovative product development will do more than any cash relief."

The new law will provide payments to farmers under one of two plans.

Crop farmers will receive a payment equal to \$4 per acre with a \$5,600 maximum per farm. Livestock producers on operations less than 160 acres will receive a payment equal to the first half of their 1999 property taxes.

Payments will be made to farmers who rent farmland, as well as owner-operators. Payments will be prorated among partners — according to the percentage of risk — when multiple parties are involved in the operation of the farm.

Most farmers will receive between \$2,000 and \$3,000 in aid. The money should be in the hands of farmers by June or July.

Under the plan, the Department of Revenue will send forms and instructions to the county Farm Service Administrations offices, which will be charged with contacting farmers.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) and Sen. Doug Johnson (DFL-Tower) sponsored the measure.

HF1*/SF106/CH112

Feedlot exemption approved

The House passed a bill April 28 that would give farmers more leeway in handling feedlot waste. The vote was 100-29.

Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet), the bill's sponsor, said it is a common-sense measure that would assure farmers won't be punished for actions they cannot avoid. The bill would exempt operators from standards for ambient hydrogen sulfide emission levels on days manure is being removed from barns or storage facilities and handled for application on land or other disposal.

Although the manure-containing basins found at most feedlots are covered with a thick odor-reducing crust most of the time, that crust occasionally must be removed so the manure solids can be extracted. The byproduct is often spread on nearby land as a natural fertilizer.

The air can get rather pungent during those times, and hydrogen sulfide levels can rise above what is allowed by regulators.

The bill (HF1235) would exempt operators from the hydrogen sulfide restrictions for up to 14 days per year. Operators would have to notify those living within 5,000 feet of the facility about expected high levels of the pollutant within five days of the stirring process, which usually takes place twice a year.

In floor action, Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda) offered a successful amendment that would also mandate notification to the Pollution Control Agency or the appropriate county agency.

Swenson argued the amendment would simply add another burden to already overburdened farmers.

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) sided with Winter.

"One more phone call is not going to cause this farmer to go broke," Tuma said.

Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) questioned whether the bill would be constitutional since it would allow essentially a "taking" of a neighbors property, albeit only for a short time, without just compensation.

An unsuccessful amendment proposed when the bill was before the House Agriculture Policy Committee would have required feedlot operators to pay for lodging and meals for neighbors during the semi-annual stirring process.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

Crops as collateral



A new law signed by the governor April 27 changes the way the state regards security interests in agricultural crops.

Under existing law, when a crop is used as security for a loan, the legal description of the field where the crop is grown has to be included in the filing statement.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will remove that provision and make other small changes in how crops used for security interest are handled.

Historically, the security derived from an agricultural crop was linked to the field so a creditor could determine the location of the crop in which the creditor had an interest. Critics of that practice argued that the crop must be in the bin before it can be sold and that the value of the crop is what matters, not the value of the parcel of land.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy) sponsored the measure.

HF1052/SF451*/CH105



BUSINESS

New warehouse regulations



A new law signed April 27 updates Minnesota statutes dealing with warehouses, which were written originally in 1915.

Effective Aug. 1, warehouse operators will no longer be required to provide paper receipts for items in storage. Many warehouses deal with multi-national companies and conduct business electronically, making it impossible to fulfill the letter of the old law.

Warehouse operators will also be able to choose which accounting practices they wish to use in running their business, rather than having them mandated by the state.

Also, the new law separates household goods warehouse owners, who usually deal with the public, from general operators, who usually deal only with companies and corporations. That provision also changes bonding practice, making it less onerous for certain warehouse operators.

Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) and Sen. Paula Hanson (DFL-Ham Lake) sponsored the measure.

HF893/SF1041*/CH110

Stock sale changes



A new law signed April 27 makes it easier for companies to issue and sell small stocks to investors.

The law, effective April 28, makes technical changes in state law regarding stock holdings of smaller companies. Of those changes, the required value for such stocks is lowered from \$5 to \$1 per share.

Another change requires the commissioner of commerce to approve the sale of stock no more than 20 days after the securities registration form is filed. Under the old law, there was no such deadline.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) and Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley) sponsored the legislation.

HF661/SF832*/CH103



CRIME

Drug law loophole closed



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law April 27 that will close a loophole for people guilty of multiple drug crimes.

Current law allows courts to defer judgement for certain first-time drug offenders as long as the offender agrees to participate in diversion programs.

But if the same person commits another drug crime, the stay of adjudication doesn't apply as a prior conviction for the purposes of enhanced penalties for repeat offenders. As a result, the offender is only sentenced as if he or she has no prior convictions.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will make such stays of adjudication the same as a prior drug conviction when courts consider if the enhanced penalty can apply.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure.

HF142*/SF1634/CH98



EDUCATION

Offenders banned from boards



A new law signed April 26 prohibits registered sex offenders from becoming school board members.

Any person who has been convicted of a sexual offense and is a registered predatory offender will be ineligible to run for election to a local school board, under the measure.

The law, effective Aug. 1, follows a New Ulm school board election that included a candidate who had served 41 months in prison for sexual abuse. The man's history was revealed shortly before the election, and he was not elected.

Sen. Dennis Frederickson (R-New Ulm), who sponsored the legislation in the Senate, said that incident prompted him to introduce the measure this year.

He said sex offenders should not have access to positions of authority over children, especially those that would allow them entrance to school facilities.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) sponsored the bill in the House.

HF1845/SF1527*/CH101



ELECTIONS

Preventing errors at polls

The House passed a bill April 28 that would change state law imposing penalties for voting in the wrong precinct. The vote was 124-8.

Voting in the wrong precinct is a felony in Minnesota, under current law. But prosecution under that law is rare.

Under the bill (HF1168/SF1144*), a person who votes in the wrong precinct would receive a letter from the Office of the Secretary of State citing the mistake and informing the person of the correct polling place.

The person would then have to provide proof of residency before voting in the next election. If the same person votes in the wrong precinct a second time it would be considered a misdemeanor, and a third instance would be considered a felony.

Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley), sponsor of the bill, said so many instances of voting in the wrong place are reported that county attorneys do not prosecute them as felonies. Gerlach said the instances are most often misunderstandings, and the bill would make it easier to discover instances of repeated violations.

Gerlach argued that current law makes it hard to distinguish between mistakes and deliberate instances of fraud, so the crime goes unpunished. But if a smaller number of people could be identified as repeat offenders, he said it would be more feasible for offenders to be prosecuted.

Another provision in the bill would drop the requirement that a person can only be a witness to vouch for another person to register to vote if both people live in the same county.

The bill now goes to the governor.



ENVIRONMENT

Funding for environment

The House passed an \$1.1 billion omnibus spending bill for agriculture, environment, and natural resources April 27. The vote was 86-43.

On the House floor, lawmakers from districts near the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport added a provision to help some residents deal with airport noise, which they said is a serious environmental issue.

Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington) proposed requiring the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) to determine the costs of mitigating the noise in those homes and buildings and to report the information to the House and Senate environment and natural resources committees.

Lenczewski said the airport commission studied whether the airport should expand at its current location or if it should move. And the decision to remain in Bloomington came with a promise to pay for insulating those homes, churches, and other public buildings that would be affected by the expansion. Now, she said, the Legislature needs to hold the commission to that promise.

"The burden doesn't belong on state taxpayers, and it certainly doesn't belong on those communities," she said. "This provision puts that burden where it belongs, on the MAC."

Lawmakers also voted to scrap proposed fee increases for fishing and hunting licenses, which would have raised \$4.5 million in new revenue.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee and sponsor of the bill (HF2388), said the committee's priorities were to spend money to physically improve the environment, as opposed to expanding administrative services or studies. He also said the committee tried to work toward implementing solutions suggested by past studies and making the best use of programs that bring in federal grants.

The proposed increases in license fees reflected those priorities, Holsten said. Revenue from those licenses would go into the game and fish fund, which is used for a variety of projects that benefit game and non-game wildlife.

Hunting and fishing groups support the fee increase, Holsten said, because the additional money would go toward improving the sports in the state. Hunting license fees have not increased since 1991, he added.

But Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville) proposed keeping the fees at current rates.

"I was sent here to represent the people in my district, and I haven't heard any of them say they want higher fees," she said.

Most House members agreed with her and voted 99-33 to eliminate the proposed fee increase.

Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) later proposed a successful amendment that would direct the Office of Strategic and Long-Range Planning to study removing the fish and wildlife division from the Department of Natural Resources. Finseth said without the revenue from fee increases, the state will need to look at ways to reorganize the DNR in hopes of allocating more money to maintain the quality of fishing and hunting in the state.

House members also debated senior citizen discounts on hunting and fishing licenses. Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby) proposed offering senior citizens a rebate so they can get their licenses for free. Her amendment failed.

Holsten said he opposes such a rebate because seniors already receive discounts on licenses. A \$15 fishing license, for example, costs only \$5.50 for people age 65 and older. And as more baby boomers approach that age, a huge decrease in revenue would coincide with an increase in the number of retired people who could spend more time fishing and hunting.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee, agreed, saying Hasskamp's proposal "may make short-term politics sound good, but it's lousy for long-term policy."

Personal watercraft fees

The bill would increase license fees for personal watercraft, but it would also remove a \$50 surcharge on those licenses. The proposed license would cost \$25.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) proposed keeping the license at its current fee of \$12, but the House voted against his amendment.

Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) spoke against Haas' proposal, because money from those licenses is spent on enforcement of laws regulating use of personal watercraft.

Minneapolis vs. Kondirator

The bill would require the city of Minneapolis and other state and local authorities to issue permits to allow a metal shredding facility to be located along the Mississippi River.

Rep. Gregory Gray (DFL-Mpls) proposed eliminating the sections of the bill referring to the facility, called a Kondirator, because it would circumvent a court case between the city of Minneapolis and American Iron & Supply Co., the firm that has proposed building the facility.

"People are actively working in good faith toward resolution of this issue," he said.

Ozment spoke against Gray's proposal, because the company already received a permit from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

"I think it's important to raise the bar for good environmental reasons," Ozment said. "But when a company makes it over the bar we set, enough is enough."

Lawmakers voted 76-54 against Gray's amendment.

Farm initiatives

A proposal designed to benefit family farms that operate feedlots was defeated by a margin of only one vote.

The amendment, proposed by Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie), would have required the Pollution Control Agency to consider imposing less stringent rules for feedlot operators who live at the site of the feedlot.

Owners living on-site would have to live with the smell of manure and would get their drinking water from the site, Otremba said. And that, she said, would create "self-motivated regulation." She said that could lead to less demand for employees at the Pollution Control Agency.

"A lot of us want to start trusting people more and relying on government less," Otremba said.

Disaster relief, marketing initiatives, and a proposed \$74.7 million appropriation for ethanol producer payments are among the agriculture provisions of the bill. The ethanol funding would bring several processing plants to full capacity. It would also add \$3 million to a proposed ethanol plant in St. Paul. And marketing initiatives would be developed through the Agriculture Utilization and Research Institute and the commissioner of agriculture.

The bill now moves to a House-Senate conference committee.

New effort to halt milfoil



The governor signed a measure April 23 that modifies the state's policy for controlling the spread of Eurasian water milfoil and other exotic species.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed the Exotic Species Program after Eurasian water milfoil was found in Lake Minnetonka in 1987 and zebra mussels were found in Duluth harbor. The program includes inspection of boats and trailers at launching sites of lakes that are known to be infested.

The new law, effective April 25, extends those inspections to lakes that are not infested, and it allows more time for those inspections. Under previous law, the DNR inspected boats from May 1 to Oct. 15 each year, but that period will now be extended to the entire open water season.

Previous law also prohibited people from harvesting bait from infested waters. The new law allows the DNR to grant permits for that purpose to people who have had training in handling exotic species.

Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack) and Sen. Leonard Price (DFL-Woodbury) sponsored the measure.

HF1248/SF1528*/CH92.

Paul Bunyan trail route



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a law April 23 that alters the route of the Paul Bunyan State Trail.

Starting in the city of Baxter — near Paul Bunyan Land amusement park — the trail runs along an abandoned stretch of railroad right-of-way land and is used by walkers, bikers, and snowmobilers in Minnesota's popular resort areas.

The trail is nearly one-half completed, and when finished, the path will stretch 100 miles north to Bemidji.

The law changes the starting and ending points of the trail to state parks instead of cities. The Baxter starting point will be changed to Crow Wing State Park, and the Bemidji end point will be moved to Lake Bemidji State Park.

The measure also permits the use of motorized wheelchairs or carts used by those with physical disabilities on trails that otherwise restrict the use of motorized vehicles.

Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls) and Sen. Don Samuelson (DFL-Brainerd) sponsored the legislation. The new law is effective Aug. 1.

HF1944/SF1470*/CH95



GOVERNMENT

State agency funding passed

The House voted April 22 to pass an omnibus state government finance bill that would place a cap on the overall growth of state worker salaries and would cut spending on some state agencies. The vote was 70-59.

The \$639.6 million in the bill (HF2386/SF2223*) is about \$100 million less than Gov. Jesse Ventura's recommendation, and some

lawmakers questioned whether the cuts would be reasonable.

Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul) said the decision to cut funding for the Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Services is "really bad public policy."

"Minnesota has the highest rate of volunteerism in the United States, and that doesn't just happen by accident," he said.

Other House members took exception to the provision that would limit salaries for state employees in all executive branch agencies and in the Legislature.

Under the bill, the amount spent on salaries for fiscal year 2000 could not exceed 101 percent of the amount spent in fiscal year 1999. And in the year 2001, the amount could not exceed 103 percent of the amount spent for fiscal year 2000.

Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) called the proposal an across-the-board cut that doesn't take into account functions of state agencies. If enrollment increases in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, for example, new employees in those colleges could only be hired at the expense of other state agencies. And employees in some agencies bring in revenue to the state, Carlson said, so cuts in those areas would have other negative impacts.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) commended Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview), chairman of the House State Government Finance Committee and sponsor of the bill, for his work on the omnibus legislation. He said many people have talked about streamlining government, but Krinkie has backed up his talk.

"The people we have in our systems are good; it's the systems that from time to time need a little updating," Pawlenty said. "We've got to force these systems to take a look at themselves, to re-evaluate priorities, to embrace the future, to think about efficiency and innovation, and not just be guardians of the status quo."

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) disagreed with Pawlenty's rosy assessment of the bill.

"This is a bill people love to hate, but why did you have to make it so easy for us to hate?" Rukavina asked.

Krinkie said the bill should be taken in context with all of the needs of state government. The House has supported other bills that would increase state spending on health and human services and on education.

Those increases mean less money is available for state agencies, Krinkie said. He acknowledged that he has reservations about some provisions of the bill, but he said that it

reflects the priorities of the House leadership.

Krinkie also said there are many positive provisions in the bill, such as continued funding for bonuses to Persian Gulf War veterans, one-time spending to support a federal World War II veterans' memorial, funding to the State Board for the Arts at the same level as the previous biennium, and \$20 million in revolving funds for local governments in case vital computer systems fail to because of the Y2K bug.

The House voted to delete a provision that would require the commissioner of administration to develop a request for bids to operate the Rush City correctional facility, which would have allowed private vendors and the State Department of Corrections to submit proposals for how the facility would be managed and how much it would cost.

The bill now moves to a House-Senate conference committee to reconcile differences in the two versions of the bill.

Zoo funding to conference

A bill that would pay \$17 million to state agencies and departments with budget shortfalls in the current fiscal year is headed for a House-Senate conference committee.

The House voted not to accept the Senate version of the bill April 27. There was opposition to the Senate plan mainly because it does not contain a provision that would require the Minnesota Zoo to develop a plan to become a private nonprofit organization instead of a state agency.

The zoo would receive \$600,000 under the House version of the bill, compared to

\$1 million under the Senate version. Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) is sponsoring the House bill (HF878/SF2234*).

Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) said the House provisions are especially important, because a separate agriculture, environment, and natural resources omnibus bill contains additional funding to cover projected budget shortfalls at the zoo over the next biennium.

Among the other proposed payments in Bishop's bill are \$3.5 million to the Department of Children, Families and Learning to pay legal costs of two major lawsuits — one in Minneapolis and one in St. Paul. Both involve claims that school districts are providing constitutionally inadequate education.

The Department of Public Safety would receive \$629,000 to pay for license plates for new automobiles, due to higher than expected automobile sales and other factors. That money would be paid back as the license plates are sold. The department would also receive \$200,000 to pay for additional security for Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Other areas that would receive funds are the Campaign Finance and Disclosure Board, Department of Human Services, and State Services for the Blind.

Commission membership cut



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed into law April 26 a measure that will shrink the size of the Legislative Audit Commission and change some of its duties.

As of Jan. 1, 2000, the commis-

Capitol rally



Hmong women rally for support for welfare and education issues on the Capitol steps April 23.

sion will only be made up of 16 members. Twenty legislators now serve on the commission, which works with the legislative auditor to choose which organizations and programs will be subject to financial evaluations.

The commission's membership was increased to 20 members in 1997 to increase bipartisanship, but Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) said that is no longer a concern. McElroy is the current chair of the Legislative Audit Commission.

Under the law, four members from each of the House and Senate caucuses will serve on the commission.

The law also strikes a past requirement that the chairs of the House and Senate tax committees must be commission members.

In an effort to reduce paperwork, the new law eliminates some reports previously required of the auditor or various state agencies. The measure also requires the deputy legislative auditor to hold an active certified public accountant's license and clarifies data privacy guidelines for audit data.

Except for the membership provisions, the law is effective April 27.

Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan), the commission's vice chair, sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF1003*/SF840/CH99



HEALTH

Too young to serve



Nursing home administrators must be at least 21 years of age, under the terms of a new law effective April 27.

The new law also enacts other housekeeping changes requested by the Board of Examiners for Nursing Home Administrators.

The minimum age for nursing home administrators was lowered to 18 during the Vietnam War era, when the prevailing feeling was that anyone old enough for military service was old enough to serve in most public positions.

Over the years, board rules and state law on the age issue had come into conflict. The new law brings them into uniformity and sets the minimum age at 21.

The law also allows a permit process for acting administrators who in the past had to obtain a full-fledged license to serve as administrator on a temporary basis.

The law further makes board members (and others investigating violations of laws and rules administered by the board) immune from civil liability and criminal prosecution when

performing their duties, as long as they act in good faith.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) and Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the measure.

HF1309/SF1273*/CH102

Chiropractic care contracts



A new law signed April 23 clarifies the way managed care networks deal with chiropractors in the state.

Effective Aug. 1, networks will be prohibited from requiring chiropractors to provide care under categories of coverage other than those specified in their contract, unless the chiropractor consents.

Chiropractors have complained that health maintenance organizations and preferred provider organizations may have used their general health contracts as "bait" to later dump the chiropractors into a network of providers of noncertified workers' compensation or auto personal injury lines of coverage without prior notification.

If the chiropractor doesn't agree to the other lines of coverage, he or she can lose the contract entirely.

The new law will prevent the health insurers from terminating a contract for this reason, provide time for chiropractors to review their options, and add a mechanism under which chiropractors can recover damages if a health insurer violates the law.

Rep. Doug Reuter (R-Owatonna) and Sen. Edward Oliver (R-Deephaven) sponsored the measure.

HF566/SF673*/CH94

Guaranteed coverage



A new law that brings Minnesota's law into conformation with federal laws regarding Medicare supplement insurance took effect April 24.

Federal law enacted in 1997 requires state laws to mandate guaranteed issue, with no preexisting condition limitations, for Medicare supplement insurance in certain situations. (Guaranteed issue means an application for coverage cannot be turned down.)

Minnesota's previous law contained instances in which coverage wasn't assured.

The new law took effect in time to meet the April 29 deadline imposed by the federal government for enacting the changes.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Edward Oliver (R-Deephaven) sponsored the measure.

HF1968*/SF1827/CH90

Regulations on psychologists



A new law signed April 27 clarifies fee-splitting practices for psychologists and stiffens penalties for violating the Psychology Practice Act, among other provisions.

Effective Aug. 1, the new law makes it explicit that what is prohibited is "kickbacks," not legitimate divisions of revenue in a business made in proportion to the psychological services provided.

Violating the Psychology Practice Act will become a gross misdemeanor instead of a misdemeanor, making it the same penalty for violating practice acts used by other professions, including medicine, nursing, and social work.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) and Sen. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins) sponsored the measure.

HF984/SF983*/CH109



HOUSING

New regulations for deposits



The governor signed a new law April 26 that will specify how pre-lease deposit agreements can be made between landlords and tenants.

A pre-lease deposit is money put down on an apartment by a prospective tenant to help secure the apartment. The pre-lease deposit doesn't include money provided to the landlord for credit or criminal background checks.

The new measure, effective Aug. 1, will require that tenants and landlords must have the terms of the pre-lease deposit in writing, including how the deposit would be returned if the tenant isn't accepted by the landlord. The law also requires the deposit to be returned within seven days as specified in the agreement.

If a landlord accepts the tenant, the law will require the pre-lease deposit to go toward either the damage deposit or the rent. And the new law provides legal remedies if the terms for pre-lease deposits are violated.

Proponents argue that the law regulating such deposits is necessary because the state is seeing a shortage of affordable housing and the practice of requiring pre-lease deposits is becoming more common. They say the new law will provide protection for both landlords and tenants who make these agreements.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) and Sen. Steven Novak (DFL-New Brighton) sponsored the measure.

HF1178*/SF1253/CH97



INSURANCE

Seeking health coverage options

The House passed a bill April 28 that is designed to increase competition in the state's health care insurance arena. The vote was 116-14.

Bill sponsor Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) said the measure would provide options for less expensive and less comprehensive employee health policies for small businesses, many of them in rural areas.

Haas' bill (HF870/SF841*) would permit insurance companies that do not already have a major presence in the state to offer alternatives to the minimum state-mandated policies.

Under existing state law, insurers and health maintenance organizations may offer only one of two policies for small employers.

The bill would permit policies with different copayments and deductibles, as well as those that would pay on a basis other than medical expenses incurred, such as a flat dollar amount per day in the hospital or a flat dollar amount upon a diagnosis of cancer.

The policies would have to be sold only to companies that have 50 or fewer employees.

Haas' bill was amended on the House floor to include five specific areas of coverage that would have to be part of the alternative health plans the bill would allow.

Those amendments would mandate cover-

age for breast cancer screening, cleft palate treatment, minimum maternity hospital stays, outpatient mental health treatment services, and immediate coverage for newborns.

Haas warned that each mandate added would drive the cost of the minimum policy up and eventually defeat the purpose of the bill.

And Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) said the amendments were making a "Christmas tree" out of the bill and reminded his House colleagues that the mandates would impact only a small portion of Minnesotans, because the bill would not affect the many people who are covered by large employers' self-insurance programs.

The House rejected an amendment that would have required the newly developed minimum health plans to be "test-driven" on House members.

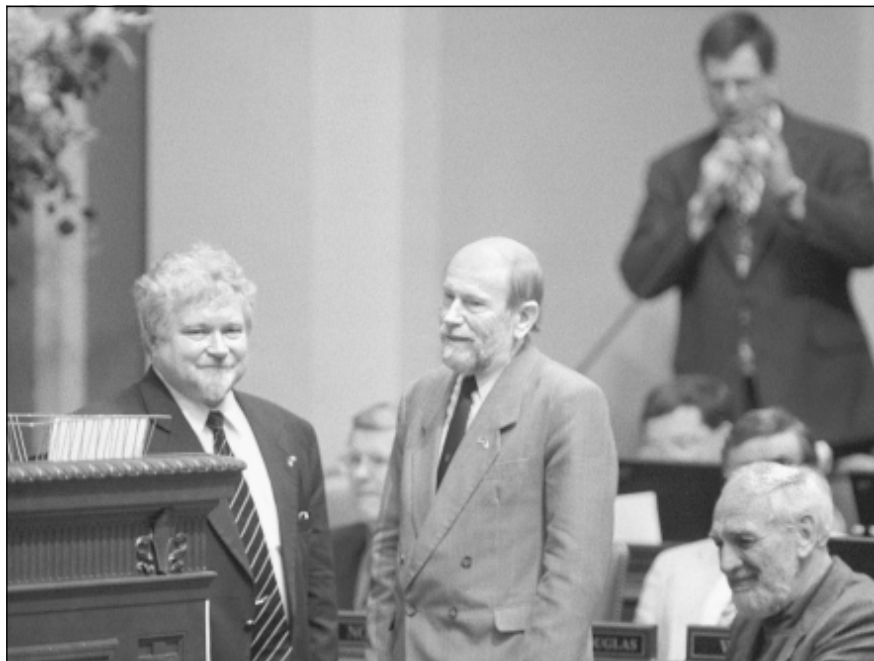
Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) said it was only fair that Legislators should be willing to take part in something they would be asking employees of small companies to accept.

Prior to the vote on the bill, Skoglund said the health insurance policies that could result from the bill would be "little better than nothing."

The bill moves to the Senate.

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

Czech senators



Rep. John Tuma introduces Czech senators Petr Pithart, left, and Frankisek Meziborak, center, to the House of Representatives on April 27. The two were in town as part of Czech President Vaclav Havel's delegation visiting the Twin Cities this week.

Covering funeral costs



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a measure April 26 that will update the law regarding insurance for funeral or burial expenses.

The law, effective Aug. 1, allows funeral home owners, directors, and employees to receive commissions from the sale of insurance contracts totaling \$20,000 or less. However, the commissions only apply to "pre-need" contracts, or those purchased before the services are needed.

In addition, the law clarifies the definition of who can make decisions regarding a person's funeral arrangements. Current law allows such decisions to be made only by family, next of kin, or another representative. The new law will simply state that such decisions can be made by one who has the legal authority to act on behalf of the deceased.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Arlene Lesewski (R-Marshall) sponsored the measure.

HF1150/SF1182*/CH100



LAW

Seat belt bill vetoed



Gov. Jesse Ventura vetoed a bill April 27 that would have changed the so-called seat belt gag rule to allow defective seat belt claims to move forward in court.

In his veto message, Ventura wrote that the Legislature overstepped its bounds by designating what evidence the courts can consider.

"It is not the place of the Legislature or the executive branch to determine what evidence is, or is not, admissible in a court of law," he wrote.

The current gag rule law states that the fact that a person is wearing or not wearing a seat belt cannot be considered by the courts when deciding personal injury or property damage claims resulting from a car crash.

In a 1997 case, the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that the gag rule law, as it is written, also applies to cases in which the claim is filed against the auto manufacturer for a defective seat belt.

If plaintiffs can't establish that they were actually wearing the seat belt, they can't prove that the seat belt caused or failed to prevent the injury. And the cases cannot move forward.

The bill would have simply exempted claims of defective or malfunctioning seat belts from the gag rule law.

Ventura argued that the bill didn't go far enough and that the entire gag rule should be repealed.

"Only a full repeal will ensure citizens the right to introduce evidence at trial that is germane to their cases and allow the other party to refute that evidence on the same terms," Ventura wrote.

The governor also expressed concern that the bill would have affected cases currently before the courts and that the bill favors one party over another in these cases.

"By partially repealing the seat belt gag rule an unfair advantage will be given to one party in the courtroom," Ventura wrote. "Juries should hear all of the arguments and facts in a case before rendering a decision."

The Senate voted to override the veto April 28. The House hasn't yet acted on the governor's message. A two-thirds vote of the House will be needed to complete the override of Ventura's veto.

Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) and Sen. Leo Foley (DFL-Coon Rapids) sponsored the measure.

HF462/SF303*/CH106

Cover for 911 dispatchers



The governor signed a new law April 27 that will allow emergency dispatchers to give over-the-phone medical instructions to callers without fear of legal troubles.

The measure, effective April 28, exempts dispatchers from civil liability when in the course of an emergency call they provide medical information before emergency responders arrive on the scene.

Some municipalities had advised dispatchers not to give medical information over the phone because the local unit of government could possibly be held liable in a lawsuit.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), House sponsor of the new measure, said the law will give emergency dispatchers the ability to do their job "without fear of superfluous litigation."

Sen. Leo Foley (R-Coon Rapids) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF541/SF436*/CH108



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Amortization prohibition



A new law prohibits cities and counties from setting a deadline for property owners to cease operations that do not conform to zoning ordinances — a maneuver sometimes used to force out undesirable businesses or halt unpopular practices. The practice is known as amortization and

the law, effective April 24, prohibits it except in cases where it is used to close strip clubs and other adult businesses.

Cities and counties can change zoning ordinances to reflect changing land uses, such as a growing business or industrial district. But if an existing section of property becomes a non-conforming use due to a change in zoning, state law allows the owner of that property to continue that use if it is not expanded.

The city or county can also condemn the nonconforming property, but the property owner must be paid fair market value.

Opponents of amortization call it a loophole in the law, because it effectively makes the property worthless since setting a deadline would force an existing property to conform to a new zoning ordinance or move. A potential buyer would have no incentive to buy the property until after the deadline.

Rep. Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland) sponsored the measure in the House and Sen. Keith Langseth (DFL-Glyndon) was the Senate sponsor.

HF896/SF854*/CH96

Public purchasing bill vetoed



A bill that sought to raise the dollar level above which cities are required to solicit sealed bids for purchases was vetoed April 22 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Current law requires cities to solicit sealed bids for purchases if the cost is more than \$25,000. The bill would have raised the threshold to \$50,000.

For purchases between \$10,000 and \$50,000, the bill would have allowed cities to seek price quotes from at least two vendors or to advertise for bids.

Proponents of the bill said it would give cities more flexibility in purchasing items in that price range.

The bill also would have allowed cities to purchase supplies, materials, or equipment through a national municipal association or a cooperative.

In a letter accompanying the veto message, Ventura wrote that the proposal could have increased unethical conduct in purchasing decisions.

"The municipal contracting statute was enacted, in part, to ensure that municipal contracts are awarded on the basis of the best value at the best price, rather than being awarded on the basis of favoritism," Ventura wrote.

"I believe that contracts should be awarded on the basis of what you know, not who you know. Competitive bidding is essential to

ensure that this type of favoritism does not negatively affect a community's interest to the benefit of a contractor who happens to be in favor with the city manager, mayor, or city council."

Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) sponsored the measure in the House, and Sen. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins) was the Senate sponsor.

HF1097/SF1188*/CH82



MILITARY

Armory board eligibility



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a law April 15 that will broaden eligibility for National Guard members to serve on armory boards. The new law takes effect Aug. 1.

Current law limits eligibility for such positions to officers. The new law will extend it to enlisted personnel and warrant officers, who already perform duties of managers of armories.

The measure also will allow retired National Guard members to serve as recruiters and to handle other temporary duties. It is designed to give the Department of Military Affairs more flexibility in hiring qualified people for those temporary duties.

Rep. Bruce Anderson (R-Buffalo Township) and Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan) sponsored the legislation.

HF1565*/SF1677/CH46



TRANSPORTATION

Penalties for trucking violations



A new law effective April 1, 2000, will increase penalties for drivers who use trucks that have been ordered out of service. Gov. Jesse Ventura signed the measure April 23.

An out-of-service order means that a truck is damaged or defective and cannot be driven until repairs are made. Under current law, penalties for driving such a vehicle involve fines for drivers and their employers.

The impetus for the new law was a potential loss of some federal highway dollars if the state did not step up its penalties.

Under the law, drivers will be disqualified from driving commercial motor vehicles for 90 days after the first offense. A second offense in five years will disqualify drivers for one to five years, and a third offense within five years

will result in three to five years' disqualification.

In addition, the Minnesota Department of Transportation will be required to impose fines of at least \$1,000 for drivers and up to \$10,000 for employers who knowingly violate out-of-service orders.

Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) and Sen. Charles Wiger (DFL-North St. Paul) sponsored the legislation.

HF1046/SF1324*/CH93

Steel storage tanks



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a law April 23 that will change fuel storage tank specifications for the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Effective Aug. 1, the measure requires the department's specifications to allow for steel storage tanks, in addition to the fiberglass tanks already used by the agency, to store fuel underground.

Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake) sponsored the bill on behalf of some steel tank manufacturers who said the department's specifications were shutting them out of the bidding process.

Under the new law, the steel tanks would have to meet standards set by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the U.S.

It's a beautiful day



House pages take a little time from their regular duties to enjoy a perfect spring day April 28. They are, left to right, Sam Haswell, Michelle Dickenson, Luke Backman, and Mike Braboy.

Environmental Protection Agency before the department could use them.

Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF528*/SF1529/CH88

Trucking regulations ditched



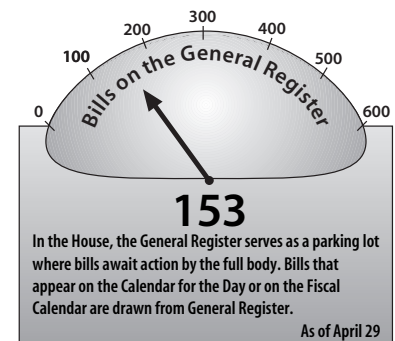
A new law signed April 20 eliminates a registration requirement for two types of vehicles.

Effective Aug. 1, drivers of trucks whose taxes are based on their weight listed on license applications and trucks traveling through the state that need one-way permits will no longer have to apply in writing to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

Alice Gonzalo, assistant director of the department's Driver and Vehicle Services Division, said the two categories are the only ones left that require written applications. She said the requirements will be lifted to make it easier for the department to implement electronic registration, such as by fax or the Internet.

Rep. Rod Skoe (DFL-Clearbrook) and Sen. Carol Flynn (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the measure.

HF1507/SF1600*/CH70



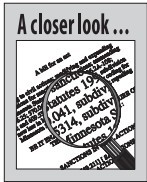
1999 House Membership Statistics

- 71 Republican members
- 63 DFL members
- 99 men
- 35 women
- 20 DFL women
- 15 Republican women
- 21 newly elected members*
- 1 newly elected member previously served in the House
- 14 newly elected Republican members
- 7 newly elected DFL members
- 15.7 percent of House members did not serve last session
- 16 newly elected members are men
- 5 newly elected members are women
- 23.8 percent of newly elected members are women
- 26.1 percent of all House members are women
- 94.9 percent of incumbents were re-elected
- 0 Republican incumbents lost
- 6 DFL incumbents lost
- 15 seats were open
- 6 uncontested House races
- 0 uncontested races in DFL-held districts

* Count includes Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) who was elected in 1994 to one term in the House.

Plan would cut income taxes, scrap 'sick tax'

By Paul Wahl



A \$1.3 billion sales tax rebate and more than \$3 billion in income tax cuts over the coming biennium are the pillars of an omnibus tax bill approved by the House on April 29. The vote was 95-35.

"Today is the day," said Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the House Taxes Committee and sponsor of the omnibus bill (HF2420). "Today is the day in which we give Minnesotans — all Minnesotans — a tax cut, which they richly deserve."

The bill contains a variety of additional income, sales, and miscellaneous tax changes.

Under the plan, more Minnesotans making contributions to charitable organizations would be rewarded with a deduction and Holocaust survivors who receive financial settlements would not have to pay state income tax.

The state's medical services provider tax — often called the "sick tax" — would not be immediately eliminated under the bill; however, a phase-out is proposed over three years or two, if sufficient state revenue is available.

Among the proposed sales tax changes are

provisions of a separate bill (HF878) passed on the House floor April 13.

Here are other highlights of the omnibus tax package.

Reverse referendum

A section of the bill would require cities and counties of more than 2,500 people to allow citizens to vote on a property tax levy that is higher than the previous year's levy.

To trigger the reverse referendum, 10 percent of the registered voters in the jurisdiction would have to sign a petition within 14 days after the public hearing and adoption of the levy.

The original measure was offered by Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul), who said he sees it as a method of protecting taxpayers.

The bill also would exempt cities and counties with populations of more than 500 from holding a truth-in-taxation hearing if their proposed property tax levy has not increased over the previous year's levy.

Also included is a provision that would extend levy limits for cities and counties for at least two more years.

Officials from both cities and counties had argued that levy limits would eliminate the

no longer be permitted to build ice rinks, community centers, or other similar facilities with TIF money.

Further, the bill would prohibit TIF funds from being spent on improvements, equipment, and other items whose primary purpose is decorative or aesthetic.

Entities that violate state law regarding TIF could lose their right to form tax-increment financing districts for up to five years.

Many communities have come to rely on TIF districts to create economic development. Using TIF, a local government can create a specific district in which property tax values are frozen.

As a developer proceeds with a project, the taxes generated by the increase in property value over the frozen amount, known as the increment, are captured to finance economic development, usually improvements directly beneficial to the project.

Limited market value

The bill would continue the state's commitment to limited market value, a method of controlling increases in taxable valuation that drive up property taxes.

A provision in the bill would limit the increase in market value to 7 percent of the preceding year's assessment or 15 percent of the difference between the current assessment and the preceding assessment. In prior years, the increase was at 10 percent of the preceding year's assessment or 25 percent of the difference.

The limit would continue to apply to the same classes as in previous years — agricultural homestead and non-homestead, residential and non-homestead, and seasonal recreational residential property.

Early consideration was given to a plan to freeze assessments at their existing level while property tax reform was ongoing.

Lights out on light rail

Political subdivisions would be prohibited from levying a property tax to finance light-rail initiatives, under the omnibus bill.

Under the ban, no property tax money could be used for planning or designing a system, acquiring property, constructing or equipping a system, relocating persons or property, or operating and maintaining the system.

Further, the entity wouldn't be able to transfer funds from other tax revenue accounts to cover light-rail expenses.

Continued on page 14



House page Paul Koll places signs on lawmakers' desks in the House chamber prior to the April 29 floor debate on the omnibus tax bill.

exemptions for companies filming television commercials in the state, counties purchasing equipment and supplies for road maintenance, vehicles given as gifts by individuals, and prizes for games of skill or chance at carnivals and fairs.

The full House has already endorsed both the rebate plan and the income tax cuts, as

need for truth-in-taxation hearings.

Tiff over TIF

Spending tax-increment finance (TIF) dollars to construct or renovate facilities for social, recreational, or conference facilities or for public parks would be prohibited under the omnibus bill. Cities and counties would

Cities and counties would still be able to receive and use federal and state dollars for light rail.

The provision follows on the heels of a decision not to include \$60 million in light-rail funding in the omnibus transportation finance bill (HF2387).

Multi-state businesses

Changes in how Minnesota's large multi-state corporations pay their taxes are included in the omnibus tax bill.

Under existing law, most corporations are required to use a three-factor formula, based on property, payroll, and sales. The tax is weighted most heavily on sales, which means companies that are based in other states but have significant sales here pay the most tax.

Companies that own and operate plants here pay less in corporate taxes.

The new law adds additional weight to the "sales" category and lowers the amounts paid based on property and payroll. The net effect is intended to attract more manufacturing businesses and high-paying jobs to the state.

The change will result in \$44.8 million less in tax revenue flowing into state coffers over the coming biennium.

This old house

Several changes to a section of the state's tax code that allows property tax breaks for refurbishing older homes would be made under the omnibus bill.

It would increase the age at which a house is eligible from 35 years to 45 years old and increase the minimum value of the improvement that must be made in order to qualify from \$1,000 to \$5,000. It would also eliminate the limitation that only three improvements can qualify for the exclusion.

The reforms were offered to assure that only truly aged homes would qualify under the program. The new language offers the tax break only to homes built prior to World War II and excludes homes built in the boom that followed the war.

Ag studies

The omnibus bill contains requirements that two property tax studies related to agricultural land be completed in the coming year.

The first would establish an 11-member task force to study how the classification system, the agricultural property tax law, the open space law, and the agricultural preserves law impact what landowners pay in taxes.

A second study would consider the "feasibility and desirability" of basing agriculture property taxes on production value. Land that would support crops that have a higher value would be taxed at a higher rate.

Both studies would be due in 2000.

Met Council limited

The Metropolitan Council would have its levy limits trimmed under several provisions in the omnibus bill.

The provisions were included because the council has not needed to tax to the maximum in many of its accounts.

Several lawmakers argued that the limits reinforce the idea that taxing entities should levy to the maximum or risk having their levying ability slashed.

Proponents of the move argued that if the council didn't need to levy, it shouldn't have the authority to do so.

Bug farm

The Gordon Vadis farm near Ham Lake will be deemed agricultural property for property tax purposes under a section of the omnibus bill.

Vadis appeared before the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee in February to complain that the Anoka County assessor said he didn't qualify for the agricultural classification. Vadis raises crickets for animal consumption, and he was denied agricultural classification because he wasn't raising food for human consumption.

The provision adds "insects primarily bred to be used as food for animals" to the definition of agricultural property.

Long-term care insurance

Folks who purchase any long-term care insurance policy will be allowed to take a credit, under provisions in the omnibus bill.

Under current law, the policy must include inflation protection in order for premiums to qualify for the credit.

The proposed change allows the credit if the policyholder has been offered the option of purchasing inflation protection.

The original measure was sponsored by Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee), who said any costs to the state now would be far outweighed by future nursing home expenses, should a significant number of uninsured people require service in coming years.

Offers-in-compromise

The omnibus bill proposes specific guidelines when farmers and others seek arrangements to settle their tax liability.

Under a measure offered originally by Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester), the commissioner of revenue would have to establish guidelines to determine whether an offer-in-compromise or an offer to make installment payments is adequate and should be accepted.

The guidelines would have to include a

stipulation that the department will not reject an offer-in-compromise from a low-income taxpayer solely on the basis of the amount of the offer.

The bill would also provide an appeal process, should the taxpayer not agree with the department's determination.

Kuisle told the taxes panel that without guidelines, offers-in-compromise are considered on a case-by-case basis, which leads to frustrations and misunderstandings.

Taconite tales

Two proposals dealing with taconite production tax rates and the taconite economic development fund, offered by House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon), were incorporated into the omnibus bill.

The measure would freeze the taconite tax at the 1998 level of \$2.141 per gross ton for the coming year. The tax had been scheduled to increase by a specific percentage each year in perpetuity.

Proceeds from the taconite tax flowing to the taconite economic development fund would rise from 15.4 cents per ton to 25.4 cents with increases planned over the next nine years.

The Northeast Minnesota Economic Protection Trust Fund and the Environmental Protection Fund would receive lower distributions.

The taconite economic development fund is administered by the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board.

Tax up in smoke

Minnesota residents who smoke are taxed when they purchase tobacco and then are taxed again when they purchase devices to help them quit.

Recognizing that incongruity, the omnibus bill would exempt federally approved smoking cessation devices from sales taxes.

The original measure was offered by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), a physician.

Taxing by ZIP

Consumers who have items delivered to their homes may find themselves paying more sales tax than is legal. Many companies use ZIP codes to determine whether a sale is subject to local sales tax, rather than city boundaries.

Under a provision in the omnibus bill, that practice would be prohibited unless the ZIP code is entirely contained in the political subdivision that imposes the local tax.

Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina) sponsored the original measure. Erhardt said he had a constituent who found himself paying extra taxes because of the ZIP code based determinations.

System sometimes makes victims out of survivors

By Grant Martin

This year's National Crime Victim Rights Week — April 26 through May 1 — opened with a somber reminder of the turmoil suffered by crime victims and their families.

The previous week, District Court officials in Dakota County had announced that the trial of the alleged killer of Two Harbors teenager Paul Antonich would be delayed for the fourth time. The delay will allow judges to rule on appeals submitted by prosecutors and defense attorneys.

The trial for John Steven Martin is now scheduled to begin May 10 — almost three years after the crime was committed.

Paul Antonich, who was 17 at the time of his death, was car-jacked in Duluth coming home from church on Aug. 28, 1996. He was taken to another site, beaten, and shot to death. Martin allegedly pulled the trigger. Antonich's body was found in the trunk of his car in a ditch on the Fond du Lac Reservation.

Of the five men charged for the Antonich murder, one pleaded guilty to second-degree murder, two were found guilty of aiding and abetting first-degree murder, and two — Martin and another — still await separate trials.

Antonich's parents had planned to attend the opening day of the trial scheduled for April 26. They spoke instead at the opening press conference for Crime Victim Rights Week.

There they expressed their frustration with the delays.

"We're very disappointed," said Mary Antonich. "We're very upset."

Larry Antonich said the delays simply add to the ongoing grief he feels over his son's murder. "Grief is a 24-hour job and it's the toughest job I've ever had to face," he said. "To deal with the court system on top of that is almost too much."

Marie Bibus, executive director with the Minnesota Center for Crime Victim Services, said emotions felt by the Antoniches are typical of crime victims.

She said the criminal justice process is moving particularly slow in the Antonich case because some of the offenders requested separate trials and all of the defendants requested that the case be moved from Duluth because of the publicity surrounding the crime.



Mary and Larry Antonich of Two Harbors have been waiting for the trial of their son's alleged killer for two and half years. Their son, Paul, was kidnapped and murdered outside of Duluth after a minor car accident in August 1996.

Photo illustration by Tom Olmscheid

"That really makes a lengthy grieving process for the family," she said.

Bibus added that while the defendants have a constitutional right to make such requests, the victims and their families don't have a mechanism to ensure that their interests are considered.

"I think we just need to balance (defendants' rights) with the rights of victims," she said, "or at least offer a little consideration for their lives."

For example, Bibus said the courts don't consider crime victims when they schedule and re-schedule trials. The Antoniches have to take time off from work and find lodging in the area. A two-week delay can be a real ordeal for the victims, she said.

"Somehow we need to get some consideration for the victims in the scheduling," she said.

Minnesota has made a good deal of progress in crime victim issues since 1974, when the first laws were enacted for victims' rights.

Current law requires prosecutors to notify the victim of the terms of any plea agreement made with the offender. Prosecutors must seek input from victims if the offender is referred to a diversion program. And the courts must provide separate waiting facilities for the victims and their families during the trial.

Also under current law, crime victims have a right to make a victim statement to be read at the offender's sentencing. And victims have a right to be notified if an offender seeks to have his or her sentence modified and to be

notified when an offender is released from prison.

The state also provides services to crime victims. In 1998, the state consolidated several victim services into the Minnesota Center for Crime Victims Services.

The center administers the crime victim reparations program. Created in 1974, the program provides financial assistance to victims of crime. The program receives funding from restitution paid by offenders and state and federal inmate wage deductions.

The center also funds 160 different crime victims advocacy agencies, and it does research, training, and advocacy for victims.

The state's Ombudsman for Crime Victims also handles crime victim issues. The ombudsman investigates complaints of unfair treatment of crime victims and witnesses by criminal justice agencies and reviews the state's victim assistance programs.

This year lawmakers are considering several funding initiatives to assist victims of crime. These provisions are included in the different versions of the omnibus judiciary finance bill (HF2404/SF2221*), currently being considered by a conference committee made up of both House and Senate members.

One such provision in the Senate version would provide \$100,000 to an existing emergency fund. People such as the Antoniches could request reimbursements from this fund to pay the additional lodging and travel expenses caused by the trial's delay. The House version of the bill would provide about \$1.3 million for new crime victim initiatives.

Crime victims have also become active in the legislative process. Last year, the Antoniches successfully lobbied the Legislature to include the Paul Antonich Amendment in the 1998 omnibus crime law.

That amendment classifies that murder committed in the course of a kidnapping is a "heinous crime." A person convicted of such a crime can be sentenced to life without parole, Minnesota's toughest sentence.

After their son's death, the Antoniches became members of an informal club of crime victims and their families, Larry Antonich said, and it is a club they didn't choose to join.

"To have your son or daughter murdered is the highest due you can possibly pay," he said.

Step-by-step study uncovers the stories behind laws

Say you wanted to know just why the Legislature banned “trafficking in skunks” in 1982. Whom should you ask?

Although there might be a few lawmakers who would still recall that debate of 17 years ago, their memories may be a bit sketchy. The best way is to spend a little time at the library and the Minnesota History Center.

Most official state archives are stored at the History Center, as are legislative floor and standing committee minutes and many older audio tape recordings. Audio recordings from the past decade are available through the Legislative Reference Library in the State Office Building.

Below is a list of resources and tips on how best to put together legislative histories and how to track the path of that enigmatic anti-skunk law.

1. Identify the section in *Minnesota Statutes* you want to research.

A trip to any local library will get your legislative research underway. The process is largely a backwards journey.

Start by finding the most recent 15-volume set of *Minnesota Statutes* — the codified laws of the state, the final product of the legislative process. *Minnesota Statutes* is issued every two years, with “pocket parts” to cover odd-numbered years.

Use the subject index to locate chapters in the statutes you want to research.

Skunk trafficking control is located in Chapter 145, which deals with topics of “Public Health.” Section 365 makes it a misdemeanor to “acquire, sell, barter, exchange, give, or purchase any live skunks” or to import or export the little critters.

Even better, if you have access to the Internet, the most recent *Minnesota Statutes* along with a handy search engine are available (www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.htm).

2. Look for the History notation after each statute section for references to *Laws of Minnesota*.

Every section in *Minnesota Statutes* cross-references chapters and sections for every year in which changes occurred. These reference numbers refer to bills in *Laws of Minnesota*.

In the italicized History note following the anti-skunk statute, “1982 c 591 s 1” appears. That means that the law was passed in 1982 and can be found in its bill form under Chapter 591, Section 1 of that year’s *Laws*. Because no other citations appear, the statute has not been amended since.



Salima Khakoo, public policy coordinator for YWCA Minneapolis, researches the history of a law in the Legislative Research Library on the sixth floor of the State Office Building. The public can research legislative history for all laws at the library, and, for newer legislation, on the Internet.

3. Read through the relevant chapters in *Laws of Minnesota* to determine which ones affected or created the statute you are interested in.

Laws of Minnesota compiles the official text of all bills passed by the Legislature chronologically. *Laws of Minnesota* will also show appropriations provisions, if any; generally, *Minnesota Statutes* will not.

The *Laws of Minnesota* from 1994 to present are also available on the Internet at the site mentioned above. But, because the skunk law was enacted in 1982, you’ll actually have to refer to the bound version of the 1982 *Laws of Minnesota*.

Reading the text of legislation can answer some tricky questions. Chapter 145 of the statutes contains a subsection that appears to have been repealed. But reading the *Laws of Minnesota* shows that the bill had a self-repealing clause — it exempted skunk trading businesses from the export and commerce bans until 1985. That clause was subsequently deleted for the sake of clarity.

4. Note the House and/or Senate File numbers, located in the chapter headings of *Laws of Minnesota*.

The scent of the anti-skunk bill remains fresh. It was passed as Senate File 1443. So the best place to look next is the official record of the state Senate for 1982: the *Journal of the Senate*.

Senate Journals from 1996 to present are available online at www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/journals/index.htm. And House Journals from 1994 to present can be found at www.house.leg.state.mn.us/cc/journals/

[journal.htm](#).

Again, in your skunk quest, you’ll have to refer to the bound editions of the journals.

5. Go to the Numerical Index in the index volume of the *Senate Journal* or *Journal of the House* for the appropriate year. Locate your bill number and the first page reference.

Senate File 1443 was introduced on the floor of the Senate on page 2840 and referred to the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

6. Go through the other *Journal* page references.

A bill might be re-referred, tabled, vetoed, etc. during its serpentine path through the Legislature, so make sure you check all page references in the journals so you understand what happened, when it happened, and who, exactly, was responsible.

The Senate Agriculture Committee recommended that the state crack down on the skunk trade and referred the bill to the Senate floor on Feb. 15, 1982.

Committee reports are printed in full in the journals. For the skunk bill, the Senate committee actually inserted the word “live” before the word “skunk” during its deliberations. Presumably, the original legislation could have applied to *dead* skunks as well.

The last page citation shows that Gov. Al Quie signed the bill into law on March 23, 1982.

7. Check for a companion bill in the Legislature's other chamber by looking in the Companion Bill index in the index volume of either the House or Senate journals.

Senate File 1443's companion was House File 1509. It turns out that the House version was amended to apply to raccoons as well (though that language was stricken by a conference committee). Raccoons? Those friendly, masked substitutes for teddy bears? Why discriminate against them, too? Audio recordings are really the only way to find out.

8. Ask a library aide to help you find committee minutes and audio recordings of committee hearings and floor sessions.

Committee work is at the heart of the legislative process. Often, legislative committees are where the real "action" takes place and where bills take their final form.

Senate "committee books" (which are collections of minutes) go back to 1911, while the House books date from 1919. The exceptions are the two Judiciary committees, which have minutes as far back as 1883.

Minutes will tell you the date of a committee hearing, and you can use that information

to find committee audio recordings. In addition, "committee books" have the texts of amendments offered during hearings.

Tapes of House committee hearings are available back to 1973; Senate committee recordings date to 1973, though there are a few from as early as the mid-1960s. Floor session recordings began in 1973 for both chambers. Any recordings made prior to 1987 for the House and prior to 1989 for the Senate may be found at the History Center. More recent recordings are held by the Legislative Reference Library in the State Office Building.

In the case of the skunk trafficking bill, a lot of the fireworks occurred on the floor of the House. Former Rep. John Brandl got an amendment passed to outlaw the raccoon trade along with skunk commerce. "They're deceptive animals," Brandl explained, "They may appear to be gentle, but they can turn vicious." An original co-author was so mad the bill was amended, he voted against the legislation, claiming (in a rising voice) that Brandl was letting his emotions "interfere with our legislative responsibilities."

The recording of March 10 floor debate also (finally) gets to the heart of the great skunk debate. Former Rep. Robert Reif, the chief author of the bill in the House, said that,

despite jocular newspaper articles to the contrary, the issue was "not a laughing matter." Reif claimed that 80 percent of all Minnesota rabies cases were attributable to skunks. The House agreed with Reif's diagnosis of rabies-infested skunks as "a potential time bomb," and passed the bill by a vote of 76-35.

The trafficking in skunks law is relatively easy to track. In some cases, official committee and floor records will not have the breadth of information you are looking for. Other avenues of inquiry available at the History Center's Weyerhaeuser Reading Room include:

- *Minnesota Rules*. This reference has the text of administrative rules that have been adopted to implement the law. Rules offer more detail on how a statute is actually being administered. The most recent compilation of administrative rules can also be found online at www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/arule/.
- Official records of state agencies, political parties, and other groups concerned with legislation.
- Newspaper articles or editorials referring to the subject.
- Personal and/or public papers of lawmakers involved in the issue.

Research tips to remember

- First, the Legislature is not always efficient. The process can be very confusing. It may make our democratic system more deliberative, but it also makes historical inquiry unavoidably circuitous.
- Be prepared for an onslaught of "legalese." Laws and statutes generally aren't written by writers. Patience and perseverance are your best resources.
- Start with the Internet if you can. If the action you are researching happened in the last few years, you may be able to do the bulk of the research on the Web. If not, at least you will have a better idea what you are in for before you leave the comfort of your home.
- The more recently the state took legislative action, the more material you are likely to find. It is rare for any committee records to exist prior to 1919, while after 1972, tape recordings of committee hearings and floor debates are nearly complete.
- Beware that the History citations in *Minnesota Statutes* may not trace the

law to its year of origin. For example, the first historical reference for juror compensation (Chapter 593, Section 48) refers to a 1977 law. However, that 1977 law merely recodified previously enacted laws relating to juries. That means laws from several different sections were reassembled under one chapter and renumbered. The first jury compensation law was actually passed in the 19th century.

- Write down dates of legislative action. Dates are your best source for finding minutes or audio recordings with information on a particular bill.
- Committee minutes are usually not very informative. Although they chronicle formal actions, names, and dates of those who testified, and a list of committee members, they do not really record the substance of the discussions that took place.
- Archival recordings are fascinating and can bring you closer than any other source to the issue you're looking at.

With the tapes you'll hear all the nuances of lawmakers' public discussions: everything from sneezes, to snickers, to screams. However, there may be times during your research when it seems like Rosemary Woods might have been the State Archivist: many of the tapes are of poor quality, and a few hearings were inadvertently not recorded.

- Use human resources. If you have any questions, ask the librarians. They are an amazing source of information and are extremely helpful.

The research facilities of the Minnesota History Center are located at 345 Kellogg Blvd. W. in St. Paul, south of the Capitol. It's open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, and from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Thursday. Call (651) 296-2143 or check out the Web site at www.mnhs.org/library/about/index.html for more information.

The Legislative Reference Library and tape room is in the State Office Building, just west of the Capitol. The library is open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. when the Legislature is in session, and the tape room — with committee books and audio tapes — is open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. You can call (651) 296-3398 or go to www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/lrl.htm for more information.

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Likewise, she said, a student is not mandated to be at a public library, and parents should be responsible for their children at such facilities.

Charter schools

Fledgling charter schools would see more state money under the House plan. Funding for building lease costs would jump to \$1,500 per pupil unit from the current level of about \$465 per student.

Grants for start-up costs would also be increased, to a minimum of \$50,000 per school to a maximum of \$250,000, depending on the number of students. And established schools that opened without the benefit of start-up aid would be eligible for some extra money for health and safety initiatives.

Other provisions are aimed at making it easier to create new charter schools. Cities, towns, and educational cooperative boards would be added to the list of entities that can sponsor charter schools, and districts would be required to convert existing schools to charter schools if the majority of full-time teachers at a school petition for the change. Under current law, 90 percent of those teachers must petition to necessitate the conversion.

Also, a nine-member charter school appeals board would be created to approve charter school applications. Currently, those applications are handled by the State Board of Education, which will be abolished at the end of this year under a 1998 law that transfers most of the board's duties to the commissioner of Children, Families and Learning.

"We felt some board or group of people needed to be there to review charter schools," said Seagren, who sponsored most of the charter school provisions.

The omnibus bill would also require school districts that are considering sponsoring a charter school to make the decision in 90 days or less. And, if the district rejects the proposal, the measure would provide for an automatic appeal to the State Board of Education or the new appeals board.

New teachers

The omnibus measure also includes initiatives aimed at improving teacher training and preparing for the expected statewide decline in teachers.

One proposal, sponsored by Cassell, would encourage collaborations between school districts and colleges, universities, or other teacher training institutions. Collaborations could include placing teaching students in K-12 classrooms, under the supervision of licensed teachers, or having licensed teachers assist in education courses at the college or graduate

level. Up to five grants of \$20,000 each for start-up costs would be made for the 1999-2000 school year.

Another plan would allow school districts to provide salary credits for prior experience to new teachers from non-traditional backgrounds. Currently, the Minneapolis School District uses such a plan, under which entry-level teachers with other work backgrounds can earn higher than starting salaries.

Also, under a provision originally sponsored by Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), education students who have completed their student teaching and are in good standing at the school would be eligible for temporary substitute teacher licenses. Buesgens said many districts have been suffering under a shortage of substitute teachers.

And districts would be required to reserve 25 percent of their staff development funding for mentoring first-year teachers, under a provision originally sponsored by Rep. Gene Pelowski (DFL-Winona).

Funding disparities

The bill also includes provisions to address statewide funding disparities between districts. Currently, about 32 percent of school districts' budgets come from local levies, and districts that, for whatever reason, have trouble getting voter approval for levy hikes face recurring funding crunches.

The House proposal would direct almost \$28 million over the upcoming biennium to a new funding component called equity revenue. Equity revenue would provide additional money, on a sliding scale, to districts that have less than the state's average per-pupil funding based on combined state and local revenue.

The plan would also increase the level at which the state "equalizes" local referendum funding. Currently, additional state funds are provided for districts' first \$315 in per-pupil funding from local levies, based on the districts' property tax base. The House plan would raise that level to \$350 for fiscal year 2000 and to \$415 the following year.

"We wanted to attempt to close the gap between the high-spending and low-spending districts and we think this is fair," Seagren said. She said districts including Big Lake, Renville, Montevideo, and Pine City would benefit from the measure.

Also, the bill would create an equity component for the current spending, called compensatory funding, that is directed to districts with high concentrations of poor and non-English speaking students. The measure would continue existing compensatory funding, and it would add about \$12 million over two years in funding for districts that don't have high

enough concentrations of poor students to qualify under the current formula. Seagren said certain suburban districts, like Osseo and Anoka, would benefit from the new funding.

Technology funding

The bill also addresses schools' continuing technology needs.

One provision would continue funding telecommunications access grants for two more years. The grant program, set to expire this year, provides money for districts to upgrade technology and to secure Internet access for students and staff. Ventura did not recommend funding the program in his budget proposal.

"This will enable schools — especially rural districts — to finish up their tasks of providing access to the Internet," Seagren said. Under her bill, the program would receive \$20 million in one time funding in fiscal year 2000.

The measure would also provide individual technology grants, ranging from \$50,000 to \$200,000, to nine school districts across the state. Seagren said the grants are intended to compensate districts that suffered losses when the prevailing wage law was passed, requiring districts to pay prevailing wage for construction contract work.

Some districts that had already bonded for certain projects had to re-bid and often cut technology plans out of their proposals. Several districts received similar technology grants last year, and Seagren said the nine grants this year would help the remaining districts with technology initiatives.

Contract deadline

A proposed deadline of Jan. 15 for settling teachers' salary contracts with school districts was not included in the omnibus measure.

The provision, which was originally added to the bill just before it was approved by the House K-12 Education Finance Committee, was removed by lawmakers in the House Ways and Means Committee. Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) offered an unsuccessful amendment to reinstate the provision on the House floor. His proposal would have imposed a \$25 per pupil unit fine on districts that haven't settled contracts by Jan. 15.

"For many years, there was a Jan. 15 deadline, and 97 percent of districts were settled by then," Entenza said. "Then, two years ago we decided to experiment with not having deadlines, and today a vast majority of contracts are not settled."

A 1989 law imposed the original Jan. 15 deadline, and a 1997 law removed it. And although no one disputes that many more contracts were settled earlier under the

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Capitol tours . . .

Spring brings stream of curious kids to Capitol

By Paul Wahl

School children visiting the Capitol these days aren't much interested in when it was built or where the marble for the floors came from.

They're mostly interested in Gov. Jesse Ventura.

"Where's Jesse?" they often ask.

"Can we meet him?"

Ask any of the 18 part-time Capitol tour guides and they'll tell you — Ventura is a hit with kids.

"I think you could have Hubert H. Humphrey back from the dead here and they'd still want to see Jesse," quipped one guide.

Spring is a popular time of year for school groups to make their pilgrimage, according to Carolyn Kompelien, manager of the Capitol Historic Site for the Minnesota Historical Society.

"May is completely booked up already and then some," said Kompelien from her office amid the pipes and wiring of the Capitol basement. "Some school groups have had their reservation in since last fall."

Kompelien's army of guides conducted 2,900 tours during fiscal year 1998. Each tour lasts 45 minutes, with between 35 and 40 being conducted each day.

For school groups, the content is tailored to the interests and age of the students. In the summer, many preschoolers visit. During the school year, a tour guide may entertain students ranging from first-graders through high school seniors.

Many guides inquire whether the group is studying politics or architecture or Minnesota history at the onset of a tour.

"Sometimes they're just here to see what



Hundreds of school children from all over Minnesota come to visit the Capitol nearly every day during the school year, but spring is the busiest time for tours.

there is to see," Kompelien said.

The challenge for guides always is to keep the interest of the children and provide them with a learning experience.

Sometimes that's easier than at other times, although most of the guides say the students are mostly well-behaved and extremely curious. Youngsters are always reminded to be respectful of the people who work in the Capitol.

Guides say the most knowledgeable visitors are sixth graders, because often those students have been studying Minnesota history and have all of the details fresh in their minds.

Most tours begin on the front steps where

the first challenge is to get the group together and get their attention. From there, the groups move into the rotunda where the significance of the star pattern in the floor is related.

Then, the tour may go in any of a number of directions, depending upon what's happening. If the Senate is in session, the group will usually be taken to see the House chamber. This late in the session, there are often times when both houses are in session.

But that's not a disadvantage, says Kompelien, who has been in her position since 1988.

"The level of activity is a learning experience in itself," she said.

The quadriga, the golden horse-drawn chariot perched above the main entrance of the Capitol, is also a popular attraction for students. When conditions permit, they are given the opportunity to see the statuary up close by venturing onto the Capitol roof.

Throughout the tour, guides are bombarded with questions about how big things are, how much they weigh, and how much they cost. They're asked how many people work in the Capitol and are often quizzed on the details of the life of Cass Gilbert, the architect of the Capitol.

Each guide is required to undergo a month-long training session. Many of them work part time year-round, although business picks up when the Legislature is in session.

"They have to enjoy being with people," Kompelien said. "It does show if they don't enjoy it."

Enjoyment doesn't appear to be a major problem. Many of the guides have been around for years and they range from graduate students to grandmothers. 🐼

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deadline, opponents of the policy say settling contracts later is not necessarily harmful for students or teachers.

"Why have a gun to the school board's head because they know the unions can just hold out until Jan. 15 and then the school district gets fined," said Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin). "So now we're taking money away from schools because (teachers) didn't want to settle."

Summer school

The bill would also provide almost \$2.3 million over the next biennium to fund basic skills summer school programs, under a provision backed by Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel).

Districts could receive the funding for students who do not pass a basic skills test in reading, writing, or mathematics. The governor's proposal did not include funding for that provision.

All-day kindergarten

The House plan would not continue to fund all-day kindergarten pilot programs around the state. The first-grade preparedness program was initiated in 1996, with \$5 million in spending, and it was given a \$1.5 million funding boost in the 1998 omnibus education law. Proponents of the program say that attending all-day kindergarten dramatically increases children's academic and social skills.

Entenza offered an unsuccessful amendment on the House floor that would have continued funding all-day kindergarten, but opponents said districts could choose to fund that program or other initiatives if they receive extra money, as proposed, from the general formula.

Help with English

And the omnibus bill would increase funding for students who speak little or no English. Money for limited English proficiency programs would be raised from the current \$190 per pupil unit to \$365 per pupil unit. Seagren said those funds would mostly benefit the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts. 🐼



How to get here

Location

The Capitol complex is north of I-94, just minutes from downtown St. Paul. It is accessible from the east and west on I-94, and from the north and south on I-35E.

I-94 eastbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn left. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

I-94 westbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn right. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

I-35E northbound: Exit at Kellogg Boulevard. Turn left. Go to John Ireland Boulevard and turn right. Metered parking spaces line both sides of the boulevard.

I-35E southbound: Exit at University Avenue. Turn right. Go to Rice Street and turn left. Go one block and turn left to enter Parking Lot D.

Visiting the Minnesota State Capitol complex can be a rewarding and educational experience for everyone. There are buildings to explore and tours to take almost any time you choose to visit. And when the Legislature is in session during the first part of every year, there are floor sessions to observe, committee meetings to attend, and legislators to meet. Remember that this is your state Capitol, and you are always welcome.

Parking

Public metered parking is available in Lot Q, north of the Capitol at Cedar Street and Sherburne Avenue; Lot D, next to the State Office Building off Rice Street on Aurora Avenue; Lot F, directly behind the Transportation Building; Lot K, across from the Armory on Cedar Street (enter from 12th Street); and on the orange level of the Centennial Office Building Ramp at Cedar Street and Constitution Avenue. All-day metered parking is available in Lot Q. Capitol Security personnel will issue tickets for expired meters.

All-day parking permits may be purchased for \$3.50 from Plant Management on the third floor of the Ford Building. Cash or checks are accepted and correct change is appreciated. For more information, call (651) 297-3993.

Outdoor handicapped parking is available in Lot O, which is on the northeast side of the Capitol, and in Lot F.

Indoor handicapped parking is available on the lower level of the State Office Building Ramp (use the call box at the ramp entrance to gain entry); on the blue level of the Centennial

Office Building Ramp; and on the entry level of the Administration Building Ramp (two stalls).

There are two handicapped entrances to the Capitol. One is on the northeast side of the building, just off Lot O; the other is a drop-off entrance under the south main steps at the front of the building.

Since parking is limited during legislative sessions, busing may be easier. Freeway express bus service is available. Bus number 94B takes you to the Capitol and the State Office Building. Call the Transit Information Center at (651) 349-7000 for schedule and route information.

What to do

Tours

Tours of the Capitol are offered through the Capitol Historic Site Program of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Tour guides lead the 45-minute tours on the hour Mondays through Fridays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (last tour leaves at 4 p.m.); Saturdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.); and Sundays between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.). The tours are free of charge and begin at the Capitol's information desk at the end of the corridor to the right of the main entrance. Brochures in about 20 foreign languages also are available there.

Tour participants may request customized tours that emphasize either the building or state government.

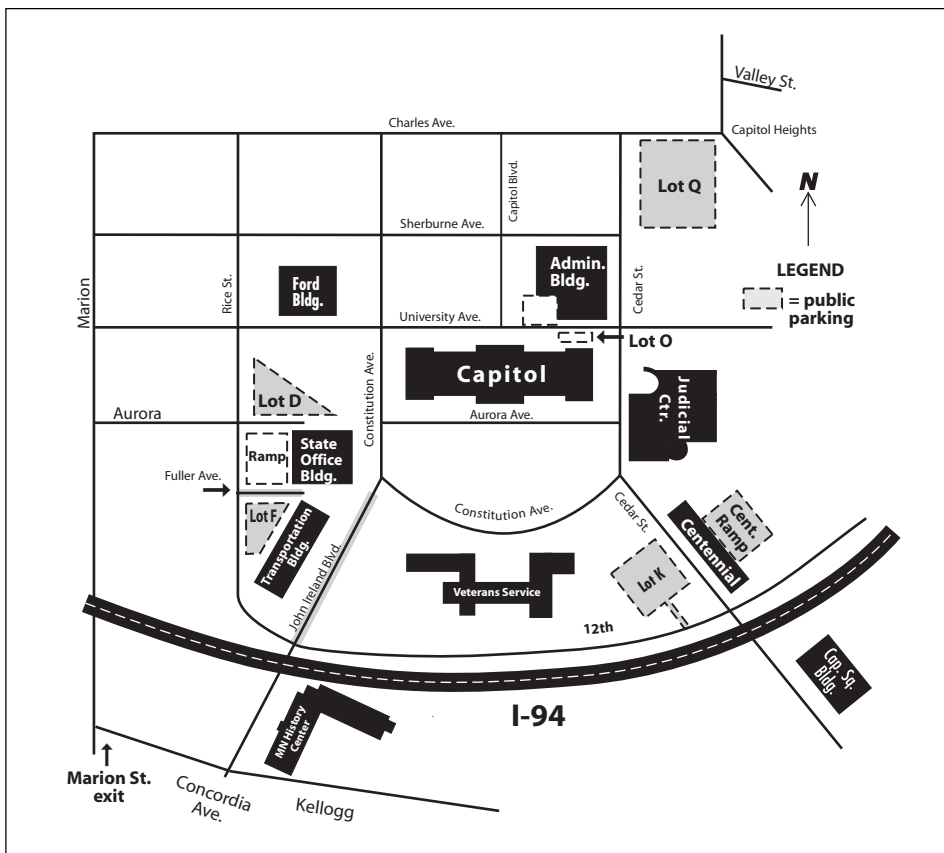
Historical society officials ask that groups of 10 or more call at least two weeks in advance to reserve a tour time.

The society offers "Voice of the People: Your Role in Minnesota Government," a half-day session for students in grades 9-12.

Also, special tour events are scheduled monthly throughout the year. Some of these events entail admission fees; others are free. A special events guide is available upon request.

For a recorded message regarding tours and events, call (651) 297-3521.

For more information about the tours or to reserve a time, call the Capitol Historic Site Program, (651) 296-2881.



Legislative sessions

Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate debate bills when the Legislature is in session.

At the beginning of a legislative session, the pace of floor sessions is generally slow as new bills are assigned to committees and non-controversial items are discussed. At about the session's midpoint, however, the legislative pace quickens.

The House usually meets at 2:30 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays, and the Senate meets at 11:30 a.m. Mondays and at 9 a.m. Thursdays during the first few weeks. House floor sessions are scheduled for the afternoon because committees meet in the morning and early afternoon. As the session nears the end, however, both bodies may meet several times a day, often into the night.

All House and Senate floor sessions are open to the public. Visitors interested in observing these sessions may call the House Chief Clerk's Office, (651) 296-2314, or Senate Information, (651) 296-0504, with questions. Spectators may sit in the galleries of either chamber.

Committee meetings

Visitors wanting to attend a committee meeting may call the committee hotlines for prerecorded messages with the meeting times and agendas for each day: House, (651) 296-9283; Senate, (651) 296-8088. Printed agendas for the week also appear in each issue of the *Session Weekly* and the *Senate Briefly*.

Committee meetings are open to the public. When a public hearing is scheduled, the committee may listen to comments from the audience (when time permits) in addition to the scheduled speakers. Committees have different policies on hearing testimony depending upon their size and workload. Informational handouts that committee members receive during meetings or hearings are considered public information and are available to the audience on a first-come, first-served basis.

Major proposals often have several public hearings so committee members may listen to all arguments for and against a bill.

Each committee has a chair, vice chair, administrator, and legislative assistant. A list of committees and members is available in the House Public Information Office in Room 175, State Office Building, or the Senate Information Office in Room 231, State Capitol.

Groups and individuals wishing to testify before a committee should call the appropriate committee's legislative assistant well in advance of the meeting and ask to be placed on the agenda. Committees prefer requests one week in advance but will accept later notification when unexpected issues appear on the committee schedule. A brochure containing tips on testifying at legislative committee hear-

ings is available from the House Public Information Office.

Dining

Most buildings in the Capitol complex have their own cafeterias. The small State Office Building cafeteria is usually open only when the Legislature is in session, but it will remain open year-round during the restoration of the Capitol cafeteria, due to be completed in 2000. A large, year-round cafeteria is available in the Transportation Building.

Also, there are many restaurants within walking distance. On Rice Street, there is Benjamin's Restaurant and Lounge located inside the Kelly Inn, Cafe Capitol, the Lagoon Vietnamese Restaurant, White Castle, and El Bravo Mexican Restaurant. On University Avenue, there is McDonald's, Burger King, Mai Village, and other restaurants. There also are dozens of restaurants only minutes away in downtown St. Paul. Bus rides downtown cost 25 cents. Bus stops are located on Constitution Avenue.

Group visits

Sometimes groups plan a "legislative day" at the Capitol in order to express a particular viewpoint to legislators.

Rooms for special conferences or speakers can be reserved by calling the State Office Building room scheduler at (651) 296-5408 or the Capitol room scheduler at (651) 296-0866.

If group members want to meet with their individual legislators or testify before a committee (see "Committee meetings"), arrangements should be made at least a week in advance.

Often such groups have members wear a distinctive name tag or badge to indicate their concern about a particular issue.

Groups planning a trip to the Capitol should remember that seating is fairly limited in some committee rooms — particularly when the topic is controversial.

E-mail schedules

Anyone with e-mail can receive both House and Senate committee schedules. To receive the House schedule, send a message to:

listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us
Leave the subject line blank, and in the body of the message, enter:

subscribe h-schedules

To receive the Senate schedule, send a message to:

listserv@senate.leg.state.mn.us
Leave the subject line blank, and in the body of the message, enter:
subscribe sen-schedules

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* newsmagazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

House Television Services

216C State Capitol (651) 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>

All televised floor sessions and committee hearings are close-captioned for people with hearing impairments.

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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 (651) 296-6646

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Senate Information Office

231 State Capitol (651) 296-0504

The Senate Information Office is responsible for all information about the Senate, including the committee schedule, bill status, legislator information, and the distribution of bill copies.

Senate Media Services

B-44 State Capitol (651) 296-0264

Senate Media Services, a bipartisan office, produces television programs, multi-media productions, scriptwriting, photography and graphics. It offers live coverage of the Senate floor sessions and some committee hearings.

Governor's Desk

CH87-CH112

Bills await governor's action

Once a bill has passed both the House and the Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill. The governor 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 results in the bill becoming law in the first year of the biennium.

The timing of these actions is as significant as the actions themselves.

In the first year of the biennium, the important thing to remember is that the

governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill. If the governor doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law with or without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

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 objects. As with all vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

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:

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(Select "It's a New Day" and then click on "Legislative Logs")

Key:

CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
87	872*	682	Construction contracts environmental liability modifications.	4/23/99	
88	528*	1259	Undreground fuel storage tanks specifications requirements.	4/23/99	
89	627*	616	Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority commissioners term modification.	4/23/99	
90	1968*	1827	Medicare supplemental insurance regulation provisions modifications.	4/23/99	
91	1975	1920*	State archaeologist position appointment process modification.	4/23/99	
92	1248	1528*	Harmful exotic species provisions modifications.	4/23/99	
93	1046	1324*	Commercial motor vehicle disqualification and violations modifications.	4/23/99	
94	566	673*	Health plans network shadow contracting restriction.	4/23/99	
95	1944	1470*	Paul Bunyan state trail route modification.	4/23/99	
96	896	854*	Counties, cities, or towns lawful land uses termination prohibition.	4/23/99	
97	1178*	1253	Landlords' prelease deposits acceptance regulation.	4/26/99	
98	142*	1634	Subsequent controlled substance conviction definition expanded.	4/26/99	
99	1003*	840	Legislative Audit Commission modifications.	4/26/99	
100	1150	1182*	Funeral or burial insurance sales restrictions eliminated.	4/26/99	
101	101	1527*	Convicted sexual offenders prohibited from school board candidacy.	4/26/99	
102	1309	1273*	Nursing home administrators licensing and examiners board modifications.	4/26/99	
103	661	832*	Small company securities offering registration modifications.	4/27/99	
104	1035	1017*	Marriage dissolution summonses alternative dispute resolution requirements.	4/27/99	
105	1052	451*	Uniform Commercial Code agricultural crops financing modifications.	4/27/99	
106	462	303*	Seat belt use evidence admissibility clarification.		4/27/99
107	877	1218*	Re-employment insurance housekeeping changes.	4/27/99	
108	451	436*	Emergency telephone service (911) dispatchers liability immunity.	4/27/99	
109	984	983*	Psychologists licensing and regulation provisions.	4/27/99	
110	893	1041*	Warehouse operators regulations modified.	4/27/99	
111	1125*	1087	Local correctional fees imposition responsibility transferred.	4/27/99	
112	1*	106	Agricultural assistance and tax relief.	filed without signature	

Monday, April 26

HF2418—Otremba (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Eagle Bend wastewater funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2419—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Consolidated conservation land titles held by the state conveyed to counties.

HF2420—Abrams (R)
Ways & Means

Omnibus tax bill and money appropriated.

HF2421—Jennings (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Cemetery law clarified and reorganized.

HF2422—Seifert, M. (R)
Education Policy

Student state grant stipend minimum reduced.

In the Hopper . . . April 23 - 29, 1999

Bill Introductions

HF2418-HF2432

HF2423—Tunheim (DFL)
Civil Law

Motor vehicle forfeiture laws studied and task force created.

Tuesday, April 27

HF2424—Rukavina (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

BWCA and Superior National Forest; state and federal landholdings consolidated through land exchange, Children's state forest established, and state officers and employees duties and powers specified.

HF2425—Smith (R)
Civil Law

Landlord and tenant law recodified.

HF2426—Seifert, M. (R)
Education Policy

Post-secondary enrollment options program eligibility modified requiring students to pass basic skills tests.

Thursday, April 29

HF2427—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Propane education and research act adopted and council created.

HF2428—Kahn (DFL)
Crime Prevention

DNA; postconviction process created for obtaining forensic evidence demonstrating innocence.

HF2429—Howes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Surface water management task force established and study required.

HF2430—Davids (R)
Commerce

Home bank protection; banking institution main office relocation requirements modified.

HF2431—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Minnesota Historical Society voyageurs' interpretive center constructed, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2432—Biernat (DFL)
Education Policy

Minneapolis School Board membership modified providing five elected and two mayor-appointed members.

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Coming Up Next Week . . . May 3 - 7, 1999

Committee Schedule

9 a.m.

Conference Committee
Family and early childhood education omnibus bill
HF1467/SF2222
112 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Barb Sykora,
Sen. Pat Piper.

9:45 a.m.

RULES & LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION
118 State Capitol
Chr. Rep. Tim Pawlenty
Agenda: Calendar for May 3rd.

10 a.m.

The House meets in session.

30 minutes
following the House or Senate session (whichever adjourns later)

Conference Committee
Judiciary Finance omnibus bill
HF2404/SF2221
5 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Sherry Broecker,
Sen. Randy Kelly.

TUESDAY, May 4

9 a.m.

The House meets in session.

15 minutes
following the House or Senate session (whichever adjourns later)

Conference Committee
Higher education omnibus bill
HF2380
118 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Peggy Leppik,
Sen. LeRoy A. Stumpf.

30 minutes
following the House or Senate session (whichever adjourns later)

Conference Committee
Judiciary Finance omnibus bill
HF2404/SF2221
5 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Sherry Broecker,
Sen. Randy Kelly.

WEDNESDAY, May 5

9 a.m.

The House meets in session.

30 minutes
following the House or Senate session (whichever adjourns later)

Conference Committee
Judiciary Finance omnibus bill
HF2404/SF2221
5 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Sherry Broecker,
Sen. Randy Kelly.

THURSDAY, May 6

30 minutes
following the Senate session

Conference Committee
Judiciary Finance omnibus bill
HF2404/SF2221
5 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Sherry Broecker,
Sen. Randy Kelly.

FRIDAY, May 7

9 a.m.

The House meets in session.

30 minutes
following the House or Senate session (whichever adjourns later)

Conference Committee
Judiciary Finance omnibus bill
HF2404/SF2221
5 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Sherry Broecker,
Sen. Randy Kelly.

MONDAY, May 3

8 a.m.

CIVIL LAW
500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: HF2425 (Smith) Recodifying the landlord and tenant law.

Conference Committee
Omnibus transportation bill
HF2387
316 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Carol Molnau,
Sen. Janet Johnson.



MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
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Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota courts

Cases in which a petition for Minnesota Supreme Court review was denied, 1998	610
Total number of cases in which the Supreme Court issued an opinion, 1998	164
Decisions reversed in opinions issued by the Supreme Court, 1998	44
Reversed and remanded to lower court	10
Decisions that were affirmed in opinions issued by the Supreme Court, 1998	60
Affirmed in part, reversed in part	10
Affirmed in part, remanded in part	2
Affirmed in part, reversed in part and remanded	4
Court of Appeals filings in 1998 that were criminal cases, as percent	25.3
Civil cases	33.9
Family cases	17.1
Increase in number of trials in Minnesota courts from 1986 to 1996, as percent	41
Increase in the number of judges in Minnesota courts from 1986 to 1996, as percent	12
New District Court judgeships requested from the 1999 Legislature	18
Portion of judicial workload in 1997 that involved criminal cases, as percent	34.8
Civil cases	30.0
Family cases	17.4
Juvenile cases	11.7
Probate cases	6.2
State judicial branch operating budget for 1997, in millions	\$171.2
State funding for judicial branch, in millions	\$94.5
County funding for judicial branch (estimated), in millions	\$76.7
1997 operating budget for Minnesota Supreme Court, in millions	\$3.9
Court of Appeals	\$5.9
Trial courts	\$68.4
Civil legal services	\$5.9
State Law Library	\$1.8
State court administration	\$8.4
Annual salary of Supreme Court associate justice	\$104,626
Court of Appeals associate judge	\$98,585
District Court judge	\$92,544
Appellate filing fee (Supreme Court and Court of Appeals)	\$200
Fee for accelerated Supreme Court review	\$100
Court fee for marriage dissolution (each party)	\$122
For marriage license	\$70

Sources: *Minnesota State Courts, Annual Report 1997*, State Court Administration Office; *Minnesota State Courts, Annual Report 1998*, State Court Administration Office; and *The Minnesota Judiciary: A Guide for Legislators*, November 1998, House Research Department.

For more information



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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ May 7, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 18



Session Weekly is a nonpartisan publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Office. During the 1999-2000 Legislative Session, each issue reports daily House action between Thursdays of each week, lists bill introductions and upcoming committee meeting schedules, and provides other information. The publication is a service of the Minnesota House. No fee.

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SESSION WEEKLY

Minnesota House of Representatives • May 7, 1999 • Volume 16, Number 18

Reflections

*Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith . . .
let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it.*



These words of Abraham Lincoln can very well be noted today as his portrait watches over lawmakers in the House chamber. The painting is seen behind the speaker's desk by 134 members, staff, and hundreds of school children and other guests on a daily basis.

Lincoln's portrait has a long history. The painting hanging in the chamber is a replica by St. Paul artist, Edward V. Brewer. The original, which hung in the same place of honor for about 30 years was painted by portrait artist, George P. A. Healy, and now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery in the nation's Capitol.

Brewer's copy of the Lincoln portrait was added in 1932 when the family who loaned the original requested its return.

Other similar paintings of Lincoln also exist. They are found at the Chicago Historical Society and Chicago's Newberry Library. Healy also used sketches of the same pose of President Lincoln to paint the classic "The Peacemakers" depicting the president consulting with his chief military advisors.

Another rendering of the painting by Healy was donated by Robert Todd Lincoln to the White House. It now hangs over the mantel in the State Dining Room as one of the works Jacqueline Kennedy utilized in building a White House permanent collection of American art in 1961.

When the Minnesota House chamber was restored in 1990 to its original look of 1905, the restoration committee decided that the Lincoln portrait should remain, for it had earned its place in the chamber. They hoped architect Cass Gilbert would not mind, for after all, Lincoln was the first U.S. president that Minnesotans helped to elect after they gained statehood in 1858.

The portrait was also threatened with banishment one other time when a member wanted it removed because he felt it was too politically partisan. But custom prevailed.

How one of the original paintings got to Minnesota is no mystery. It was originally owned by Elihu Washburne, a U.S. Minister to France, and close friend of Lincoln. He was a brother of Israel, Cadwallader, and William Drew, all politicians and members of the prominent Washburn family of Maine. (Elihu added an "e" to the family name.)

The painting was passed through the family to William Drew Washburn, who moved to Minneapolis. He and his son, William Jr., were Minnesota House members. William Jr. served six non-consecutive terms, from 1901 to 1925. When the portrait was returned to the family, it was purchased, then donated to the National Portrait Gallery.

If Lincoln were to speak to the lawmakers as time gets closer to adjournment, he would probably advise:

*With malice toward none . . . with firmness in the right . . .
let us strive on to finish the work we are in . . .*

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: The east side of the Capitol is framed in a portion of a wall on the Judicial Center grounds. The wall is inscribed with Article III of the Minnesota Constitution which reads, in part, "The powers of government shall be divided into three distinct departments, legislative, executive, and judicial."

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

Profile of Learning . . .

Conference committee holds fate of education program

By Sarah Tellijohn

After a nearly three-month reprieve, lawmakers from both bodies met May 5 to consider one of the most talked-about school subjects of this legislative session — the Profile of Learning.

While the House has passed a bill that would entirely do away with the controversial state initiative, a Senate-backed measure would severely modify the program. Five House members and five senators comprise the conference committee that will decide the fate of what amounts to one-half of the state's Graduation Standards program.

The Profile of Learning is one part of a two-pronged program. The second part calls for students to pass basic skills tests before they can receive a high school diploma.

who chose early implementation — as all districts did.

But after a few months, educators, parents, and legislators criticized the Profile of Learning as a set of mandated curricula with a burdensome system of record-keeping.

Long hours of testimony in Senate and House committee meetings drew both high praise and fierce criticism; some called for the program to be abolished.

And even teachers who said they like the Profile of Learning have suggested changes, so it's likely the product of the House-Senate committee won't keep the Graduation Standards in their current form.

With just over a week until the session adjourns, lawmakers must work out a deal on the Profile of Learning that will pass muster with

implementation and curriculum up to school districts.

It calls for a foundation of reading, writing, and math, and it would establish 15 subject areas that school districts must offer. In addition, the House plan would require abstinence-based sex education in school health classes.

But the Senate has moved in an opposite direction with its measure. Instead of getting rid of the Profile of Learning, the Senate's version would rename some of the 10 learning areas, change reporting requirements, and allow school districts to opt out of the program.

The plan would change the current implementation schedule by letting districts phase in the number of content standards offered for students entering the ninth grade in 1999-2000. The following year, the full Profile of Learning would have to be in place.

In addition, under the Senate plan, districts could apply for waivers from the Department of Children, Families and Learning to offer fewer content standards than required by the state. A majority vote of the district's teachers and school board members would be required before a waiver could be granted. In some cases waivers would be given for individual students if they are participating in alternative or more rigorous academic programs that would interfere or be duplicated by a content standard.

The Senate plan would gradually increase the level of difficulty for basic skills testing as student performance improved. It also includes provisions that describe the kinds of records school districts must keep, and it would require the state's education department to develop a uniform reporting system for student assessment. Districts would be left to determine assessment methods for measuring student performance.

And Education Minnesota, the state's teachers union, would be given grants to conduct Profile of Learning training seminars for teachers.

Gov. Jesse Ventura has stated that he disapproves of both bills. He does not favor the Senate's waiver provision. Christine Jax, commissioner of the Department of Children, Families and Learning, told lawmakers that the governor does not support state-mandated curriculum, but he wants a set number



Heidi Hanson, a fifth-grader in Mrs. Post's class at Richfield Intermediate School, watches as a marble makes its way down a ramp that she and classmate Erica Guggenberger constructed as part of a classroom project under the state's new Profile of Learning initiative. The Richfield students were invited to the Capitol May 4 by Lt. Gov. Mae Schunk to demonstrate their projects to Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The Profile of Learning was designed to ensure students can apply knowledge on real-world tasks. In order to graduate from high school, students must complete a minimum of 24 content standards in 10 learning areas.

During the 1998-99 school year, Minnesota school districts began implementing the Profile of Learning into their curricula. State law mandates that districts phase in the new requirements by the 2000-01 school year, but the state offered financial incentives to schools

teachers, parents, students, and — most importantly — the governor.

The House passed a bill (HF15) in February that would repeal the Profile of Learning. That bill is sponsored by Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie).

The bill would do away with all provisions of the Profile of Learning and create a "rigorous academic standards" plan that would incorporate basic skills testing and required subject areas. But the measure would leave the

of statewide, uniform content standards.

On May 4, Ventura invited students from the Richfield school district to show off what they've learned under the Profile of Learning. He said he wants to keep the program but change some of the record-keeping and scoring methods.

Jax said the governor has recommended having an outside expert evaluate the content standards. She said the students who have started under the Profile of Learning should not be held to "high stakes" just yet, meaning that as educators become more acclimated to teaching the Profile of Learning, students will be held more accountable to its requirements.

Jax told lawmakers that the House bill sets up local standards, instead of the statewide standards the Profile of Learning was intended to provide when it was created.

Judy Schaubach and Sandra Peterson, co-presidents of Education Minnesota, did not offer their praises for either bill. Instead, they said there are good and bad elements of both bills.

The message they said they are hearing from teachers is that the Profile of Learning needs time to be understood and implemented. However, some changes are needed to make the program a success for both teachers and students.

"I think that with the course that we're on we can get there," Schaubach said, when asked by Sen. Larry Pogemiller (DFL-Mpls) if the profile can be fixed.

Schaubach and Peterson recommended reductions in class sizes and paperwork requirements, more teacher training, a delay in implementation, and a better scoring method for evaluating student performance.

The bill awaits action in conference committee. 🐾

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Ramsey set course out of railroad mess



Gopher State.

The trouble began when four railroad companies, which had received about \$2.3 million from state bond sales, failed to complete the railroad project the money had been intended to finance. A popular cartoon compared the businessmen — who, the cartoonist implied, had eaten up the public's money and trust — with the pesky gophers that destroy farmers' crops. Before long, references to Minnesotans as gophers were becoming common.

Meanwhile, the two-year-old state was left with what Gov. Alexander Ramsey called "financial embarrassments."

In his 1860 State of the State address, Ramsey told lawmakers that the state faced a serious problem because it would have to honor the bonds without the economic growth that was expected to come from the railroad.

Farmers, for example, had already demonstrated success in producing crops. But without a thriving railroad they would have trouble getting those crops to markets where demand was high. Ramsey said wheat farmers had averaged 20 bushels of wheat per acre, which was "double that of so-called wheat-growing states."

He said the apparent solution to the high production and low demand was to develop a "cheap and speedy transit to those who have to buy."

Assuming the state would have to pay the debt from the railroad bonds, Ramsey urged the Legislature to start by reducing expenditures, so that "taxation shall not eat up the substance of the people."

Ramsey recommended cutting his own salary from \$2,500 to \$1,500, cutting the

secretary of state's salary from \$1,500 to \$1,000, and cutting the attorney general's pay from \$1,000 to \$800.

Ramsey also advocated a future cost-savings plan to limit the legislative session to 60 days and to reduce the size of the Legislature following the 1860 federal census.

The Legislature approved those and other cost-cutting measures, which dropped the annual cost of state government from \$149,000 to \$95,000.

Ramsey also proposed raising money by implementing various fees, including charging people to bring civil actions in courts.

He advocated adopting banking laws that would prevent people from selling worthless stocks, revising laws to reduce expenses to local and county governments, requiring the state treasurer to provide detailed fi-

nancial reports, and dedicating funds for specific purposes as much as possible, leaving only "very small sums, if any, for contingency funds."

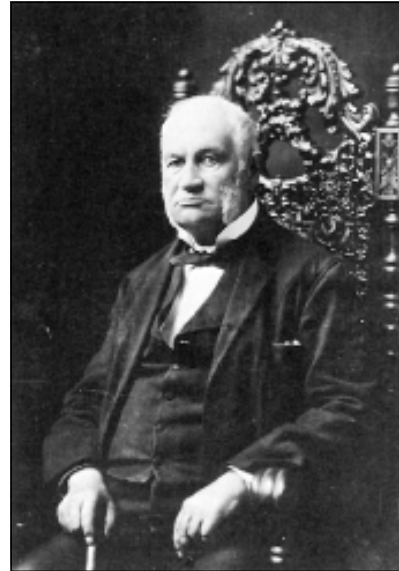
Ramsey said the population of the Minnesota Territory had grown from 5,000 to 180,000 in the 10 years before it became a state. In that time, the overall land value rose from \$800,000 to \$40 million. He also described advances in lumber and mining industries that he said were obvious sources of future revenue.

"What may we not reasonably hope to attain before 1870, having now a capital, a population, a name, and a history?" Ramsey asked.

He said immigration would be "the grand solution for our present difficulties."

"The more men, the more labor, the more production, the more prosperity, the greater development of all our resources," he said.

Ramsey suggested starting a department



Gov. Alexander Ramsey

Continued on page 21

Photo courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

Highlights



BONDING

Emergency bonding passed

The House passed a \$47.9 million emergency bonding bill May 3. The vote was 93-38.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), would authorize the state to borrow money to fund several capital improvement projects considered to be high-priority statewide.

The Legislature typically produces its main bonding bill in the second year of the session, which is the even-numbered year. But smaller bills for emergency needs are usually passed in the first year.

The bill (HF2205) now goes to a conference committee where members of both the House and Senate will work out the differences between their two versions of the measure.

And there are differences between the bills. The Senate version contains more than \$140 million in projects — about \$95 million more than the House bill.

"I guess everyone has a different definition of emergency," Knoblach said. "Ours is a little more stringent than the Senate."

The largest appropriation in the House bill — \$18.5 million — would go to the Department of Natural Resources to be used for dike construction in East Grand Forks, Warren, and Crookston. The cities were hard hit by 1997 floods.

The bill would also provide a \$440,000 loan to the city of Brooklyn Park to help finance the building of a pedestrian bridge and related costs. That financing is contingent upon the receipt of additional funding from the federal government.

The pedestrian bridge project comes as a result of the tragic death of 11-year-old Kara Kavanagh. In March, Kavanagh was hit by a car while attempting to cross Minnesota Highway 252 in Brooklyn Park.

The proposed bridge would cross the highway a few blocks from where the accident took place.

Also in the bill, \$6.4 million would go to the Minnesota State Colleges and University (MnSCU) system. The bulk of that amount would go to Winona State University for a new boiler system and emergency generators.

The Department of Administration would get \$6.1 million. Of that amount, \$2.8 million would go for planning and design of infra-

structure projects for a possible steel mill that may be constructed in Itasca County, and \$190,000 would go for improvements at the state veterans' homes in Hastings. The department also would get \$250,000 for planning and design of a monument to honor World War II veterans.

The Department of Corrections would get \$1.8 million for renovations to the sewer system at a correctional facility in Faribault.

And the Department of Trade and Economic Development would receive \$4.6 million. The majority of that amount would go toward the development of a transit hub in the Lake Phalen area of St. Paul.

The bill would also direct the Legislative Audit Commission to investigate a mold problem at the state veterans' home in Luverne. The Department of Administration is in the middle of a \$6 million project to remove the mold from the facility.



CRIME

Check fraud cases

A bill that would create a diversion program for bad check writers cleared the House on May 5. The vote was 109-22.

But an amendment that would have called for a policy of processing drafts upon an account in order of check number rather than check amount bounced.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), would allow prosecutors to establish a diversion program and to dismiss charges for offenders who complete the program.

Stanek said that his bill would separate people who intentionally write bad checks from those who just have money management problems. He said his bill would get the unintentional offender out of the criminal justice system and into programs that could provide help.

The bill also provides a list of criteria that prosecutors must consider when accepting offenders into the program, including past dishonored check complaints, evidence of intent to defraud, and the victim's wishes.

Offenders in the program would be required to successfully complete a class on check writing and money management, pay restitution to the victim, and pay all service charges required.

The bill would also create a new five-year felony penalty for a dishonored check valued at more than \$500.

An unsuccessful amendment, sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls), would have suspended some service charge fee increases in Stanek's bill. The suspension would have been lifted when the Legislature enacted a law prohibiting financial institutions from processing the largest checks from checking accounts first.

Clark said that banks and other financial institutions take the larger checks first to increase the odds that smaller checks will bounce after the larger checks have cleared. The banks can then collect more in penalties from their customers, she said.

Clark said the practice hurts both consumers and business owners who have a more difficult time collecting payments from their customers.

"We are creating a situation that makes criminals out of a lot of people, and we also hurt our retailers," she said.

Critics of the Clark amendment said that financial institutions use this practice to ensure that the more important larger checks — such as mortgage and car payments — clear the account before the smaller ones do.

They argued that only some banks have the practice and that customers can choose which banks they want to do business with.

The Stanek bill (HF624/SF441*) now goes back to the Senate.

Drug ban passed

Gamma hydroxybutyrate — a drug commonly known as GHB — would become a controlled substance in Minnesota, under a bill passed on the House floor May 5. The vote was 129-0.

GHB is a central nervous system depressant with effects similar to alcohol. Overdoses of GHB can lead to seizures, respiratory problems, or coma. It has also been reported that GHB is being used as a date-rape drug.

The drug can easily be manufactured from chemicals available from mail-order supply houses and recipes can be found on the Internet.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), would classify GHB as a schedule III controlled substance. Doctors could prescribe GHB if the federal Food and Drug

Administration (FDA) approves the drug, under the bill.

Schedule III drugs are classified under the law as serious controlled substances, although not as serious as schedule I and II drugs — such as heroine, cocaine, and marijuana. To be classified as a schedule III drug, the substance must also have an accepted medical use.

In 1987, the FDA classified GHB as an orphan drug, meaning that it may provide treatment for people with rare diseases or disorders. The FDA approved GHB for investigational research, but has yet to approve the drug for medical use in the United States.

Minnetonka-based Orphan Medical, Inc. — a company that specializes in orphan drugs — is currently researching a GHB-based drug for people who suffer from narcolepsy. The company hopes to eventually get FDA approval to market the drug nationwide. The bill would also allow the company to continue its research.

Skoglund said his bill classifies GHB as a dangerous drug while recognizing that some people — such as people who suffer from narcolepsy — may need the drug for legitimate purposes.

“It will protect people who need this drug in their daily lives,” he said.

The FDA recently went after several companies making dietary supplements containing Gamma Butyrolactone (GBL). When taken orally, the body converts GBL into GHB.

Companies that manufactured the dietary supplements claimed that the products improved physical performance, restored hair, reduced stress, enhanced sex, increased life expectancy, and helped with sleeping problems.

Most companies ceased manufacturing the dietary supplements and recalled their products.

The bill (HF1255/SF2120*) now goes to the governor.

Phony products of all kinds

The House passed a bill May 3 that would provide criminal penalties for counterfeiting products. The vote was 125-3.

Bill sponsor Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley) said that the practice of attaching registered trademarks or trade names to unauthorized products is growing. He said counterfeiters can see big profits from the sale of the fake goods and face no risk of prosecution.

And, he said, the fraudulent products can pose a danger to consumers. He showed lawmakers a counterfeit automobile brake pad that had been sold under a registered name.

The pad had been made from pressed wood.

“Counterfeiters seek to capitalize on the efforts of legitimate businesses by stealing names and product ideas and tying them to inferior goods,” Gerlach said. “This is an enormous problem and we need to do something.”

The bill would create a new crime of counterfeiting intellectual property. The crime would prohibit the manufacture, possession, or sale of counterfeited property.

Current Minnesota law has no criminal penalty for counterfeiting property. Counterfeit claims must be brought forward by the person or company owning the rights to the property, and must go through the civil court process.

The bill also outlines penalties for the counterfeiting crime based on number and value of the items counterfeited. The maximum penalty would be a five-year prison sentence and a \$100,000 fine.

And the bill would include the new crime under a list of crimes that can apply to racketeering charges. Increased penalties could be applied if the counterfeiting crime is proven to show a pattern of organized crime.

The bill (HF263/SF411*) now goes to the governor.

Frivolous inmate lawsuits

The House passed a bill May 4 that seeks to stop frivolous legal claims made by the state’s prison inmates. The vote was 121-7.

Under current law, inmates cannot bring lawsuits against the state challenging the amount of funding for rehabilitation programs in the state’s correctional facilities.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake), would prohibit inmates from challenging rehabilitation employee assignments.

Current law also provides disciplinary penalties for inmates who bring frivolous claims to court. The bill would apply the same penalties to inmates who bring frivolous claims before licensing boards.

The bill directs judges and licensing boards to use a set of criteria already outlined in current law when deciding when a claim is frivolous.

Olson said his bill would provide protections for employees of correctional facilities while allowing inmates to make reasonable claims.

The bill (HF1494) now goes to the Senate.

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

Cutting supply to underage

Penalties for providing alcohol to people under the legal drinking age would be tougher, under a bill passed by the House on May 4. The vote was 90-38.

Under current law, a person is guilty of a gross misdemeanor crime if he or she provides alcohol to someone under the age of 21 who then becomes intoxicated and causes death or great bodily harm. A person is guilty of a felony if he or she sells the alcohol to the underage person.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), would increase the crime of providing alcohol to someone underage from a gross misdemeanor to a felony. It would still only apply in cases where the minor causes death or great bodily harm, but the bill would essentially do away with the distinction between selling and simply providing alcohol.

The bill is in response to the tragic deaths of teenagers such as Janice Rabideaux of Cloquet and Kevin Brockway of St. Paul.

Rabideaux died from alcohol poisoning after a 1997 Halloween party where alcohol was provided by an adult. Kevin Brockway died in an alcohol-related car crash following a 1997 New Year’s Eve party, where vodka had been provided by an adult. Both were 16 years old when they died.

The bill (HF1289) now goes to the Senate.

Crackdown on child porn

Investigators say they are seeing a proliferation of child pornography on the Internet, and lawmakers want to give them the tools to fight it.

The House passed a bill May 4 that aims to give investigators the tools they need. The vote was 129-0.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), would clarify the definition of these crimes to make it easier to prosecute Internet offenders.

The bill would also increase penalties for distributing child pornography from five years to ten years in prison. And it would increase the crime level for possessing child pornography from a gross misdemeanor to a felony.

The bill (HF1081/SF1404*) now goes back to the Senate.

Keeping reservations safe

The House passed a bill May 3 that would allow tribal law enforcement agencies to share authority with local sheriffs on tribal land. The vote was 128-0.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith

(R-Mound), would outline the conditions under which a tribal law enforcement agency could exercise concurrent jurisdictional authority over criminal violations with the local sheriff.

The bill also would allow tribal police officers to become certified by the state's officer licensing board.

Supporters of the bill said the proposal would help ensure public safety on reservations and that the certification provisions would help the tribal governments recruit and retain qualified police officers.

Some tribes have recently established police agencies or beefed up existing police forces in response both to an increase in crime and a 1997 Minnesota Supreme Court decision.

In that decision, the court ruled that non-tribal state and local law enforcement agencies don't have jurisdiction over civil and regulatory violations — such as traffic violations — on tribal lands.

Current law authorizes the Mille Lacs Band, the Lower Sioux Indian Community, and the Fond du Lac Band to exercise concurrent jurisdictional authority. Smith's proposal would expand the law to include the other eight tribes in Minnesota.

The bill (HF1607) now goes to the Senate.

Used guns for sale

The House passed a bill May 4 that would allow sheriffs and police chiefs to sell confiscated firearms. The vote was 97-30.

Current law requires that those agencies destroy all forfeited weapons that they cannot use, including firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee), would give agencies the authority to either destroy those weapons or to sell them to federally authorized dealers.

The bill also would require local agencies to sell any antique guns they seize. But semi-automatic, military-style assault weapons would continue to be destroyed, under the bill.

A House-Senate conference committee added a provision that would allow the Hennepin and Ramsey county boards to prohibit their respective sheriffs from selling confiscated firearms.

Under current law, local law enforcement agencies keep 70 percent of the proceeds from the sale of any forfeited property, county attorneys and other prosecutors get 20 percent of the proceeds, and the state receives the remaining 10 percent.

Critics of the plan say that the bill would just put guns back on the streets to be used illegally.

The bill (HF70*/SF197) now goes to the governor.



EDUCATION

Limits on special education



Signed
by the
governor

A new law signed May 4 will lower the age until which Minnesota schools are required to provide special education instruction.

In 1998, lawmakers approved a new set of laws concerning special education policies to make them consistent with federal law. The new law finishes that process by tying up some loose ends of certain state laws that exceed federal requirements. The 1998 law left those provisions to be examined by lawmakers and special education officials to determine which ones should still exceed federal law.

Under current law, Minnesota requires special education services to be provided until a student is 22 years old. Under federal law, that requirement is 21 years old.

Effective July 1, 2002, the state law will change to age 21 and school districts will be required to provide instruction only until July 1 after the student turns 21.

Other changes included in the measure deal with discipline procedures for special education students and state reimbursement for litigation costs incurred by school districts.

Most of the bill's provisions, except the age change, are effective July 1, but some administrative rules are repealed effective May 5.

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) and Sen. Martha Robertson (R-Minnetonka) sponsored the legislation.

HF483/SF296*/CH123

Grant to district cut



Signed
by the
governor

A new law effective May 5 reduces a 1998 grant to the Isle School District. Gov. Jesse Ventura signed the measure May 4.

The grant, originally in the amount of \$1 million, was given to the school district to convert a school building into a community center.

The law decreases the grant to \$700,000 and eliminates school district kitchen facilities from the community center's description. Lower than expected bids and the change in kitchen plans brought the cost of the project down.

In addition, the law requires that the grant money will only be available as matching funds are committed on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton) and Sen. Dan Stevens (R-Mora) sponsored the measure.

HF585*/SF595/CH119



EMPLOYMENT

Time off to fight fires

Employees would be protected from being disciplined for missing work if they are serving as volunteer firefighters, under a bill the House passed May 3. The vote was 124-3.

The bill (HF553), sponsored by Rep. Phil Carruthers (R-Brooklyn Center), would allow employees to bring civil action against their employers if they are disciplined after being late or missing work because they are fighting a fire.

Under the bill, employers would not be required to pay the employee for the time that is missed in that situation.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



ENVIRONMENT

Green companies

A program designed to help companies cut down on pollution would be kept in place, under a bill the House passed May 4. The vote was 128-0.

The Environmental Audit Program began in August 1995 and is scheduled to be repealed June 30. The program is administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and has received strong support from companies that have participated.

The goal of the pilot program is to help companies voluntarily comply with environmental regulations so they can identify and fix potential problems with the MPCA's assistance without the fear of fines or penalties.

Companies that participate develop a specific set of procedures, called an environmental management system, to prevent, detect, and correct violations of federal and state environmental regulations. MPCA employees then review and comment on those procedures.

The bill (HF1477/SF1541*), sponsored by Rep. Jim Rostberg (R-Isanti), would make that program permanent.

The bill now goes to the governor.

Honoring DNR leader

A bill that would rename the visitor center at Gooseberry Falls State Park in honor of a former Department of Natural Resources (DNR) commissioner was passed by the House on May 4. The vote was 118-9.

In addition to honoring Joseph N. Alexander, the bill (HF1301/SF1449*) would

permit additions to several state parks and allow land within another to be sold.

Alexander was the state's longest-serving commissioner. He began his 33-year DNR career as a game warden in 1957 and was promoted to regional enforcement supervisor in 1966. In 1971 he became assistant commissioner for administration. He was serving as special assistant to the commissioner in July 1978 when Gov. Rudy Perpich appointed him commissioner, a position he held until January 1991.

Alexander died Oct. 22, 1998.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Ray Vandever (R-Forest Lake), also would authorize additions to Banning, Camden, Charles A. Lindbergh, Forestville/Mystery Cave, Judge C.R. Magney, St. Croix Wild River, Scenic, Temperance River, Whitewater, and William O'Brien state parks.

The measure would permit a land exchange at Lake Bronson State Park and stipulate that Cross River State Wayside would become part of Temperance River State Park. Another provision would delete a four-acre parcel from Blue Mounds State Park and allow it to be sold.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



FAMILY

Child support in court

The House passed a bill May 5 that would create a new process for child support hearings to replace an administrative law process recently struck down by the Minnesota Supreme Court. The vote was 124-0.

Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), a co-sponsor of the bill, said that providing an efficient child support system in the state is very important. He said about \$800 million is owed in back child support in Minnesota, and when these payments are not made, the burden falls to the state.

"Everyone in this room and in this state becomes the child's obligor," he said.

Under the previous system, child support cases involving public authorities were heard through an administrative law process. Because counties often enforce child support payments, such cases accounted for most child support cases.

The Legislature had moved the cases from the state district courts in an effort to provide a more expedient process and a more informal setting in which to decide child support issues.

But in a ruling released Jan. 28, the Supreme Court found that the administrative hearing process for child support cases is unconstitutional.

The court stated that the process violates the separation of powers outlined in the state constitution. And the court concluded that such decisions belong in the judicial branch and not in the executive branch.

The Supreme Court stayed the effect of the ruling until July 1 to give the Legislature time to modify the system.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls), would repeal the unconstitutional administrative process and would create a new expedited process in the judicial branch.

The bill would establish child support magistrates to oversee the hearings, and the state courts would outline rules for this process.

The Office of Administrative Hearings had about 12,000 child support hearings last year. Officials said that 93 percent of all child support orders were issued within 30 days of the hearing.

The bill (HF510/SF23*) now goes back to the Senate.



GAMBLING

No cards at Canterbury

An effort to allow a card club at Canterbury Park appears to have stalled.

The House passed a bill May 3 that would make only minor changes in gambling laws. The vote was 78-49.

Under the bill (HF1825), establishments that can sell pull-tabs would be able to use dispensing machines instead of having a staff person sell them over the counter.

The bill would also increase the maximum consolation prize for bingo games that allow carryover prizes, and set a maximum prize for tipboard games. Tipboard games are those that sell tickets for numbers on a board, and when all the numbers have been purchased, the winning numbers are revealed.

Rep. Mike Oskopp (R-Lake City), sponsor of the bill, proposed adding provisions that would allow Canterbury Park, a horse track in Shakopee, to operate a card club, but lawmakers rejected the proposal.

Oskopp said the card club would be considered pari-mutuel betting, which is already legal at Canterbury Park. Participants would play cards against each other and make wagers on each hand. Canterbury Park would receive a percentage of the total amount that is bet, and some of the proceeds would go toward increasing purses for horse races.

Oskopp said that the higher purses would help Canterbury Park attract more horses to its races and provide an overall benefit to the state's economy. The nearest horse racing track is Prairie Meadows in Des Moines, Iowa, where annual purses are about \$15 million compared to Canterbury Park's \$4 million. (Prairie Meadows also has slot machines.)

Raising the purses in Minnesota would help

National Day of Prayer



Several hundred people listen to music and words of inspiration May 6 as part of the National Day of Prayer rally at the Capitol.

prevent horse farms from moving to Iowa, proponents said.

Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center) argued that there are many negative consequences of gambling, and the main benefits of Osskopp's proposal would be to give more money to the owners of Canterbury Park.

But Rep. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm) said when horse racing was at its peak in Minnesota, horse farms used about \$250 million per year in oats and straw. He said a boost of that magnitude would be a big benefit to Minnesota farmers.

The bill, without the card-club proposal, now moves to the Senate.

Rolling the dice for drinks

Dice games in bars would be made legal in Minnesota, under a bill the House passed May 4. The vote was 88-40.

Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph), the bill's sponsor, said current gambling law allows "private, social bets." But under liquor statutes, dice are not allowed in bars.

The bill would allow people to play common dice games, such as "liar's poker," "500 rummy," or "6-5-4," for small stakes or to buy drinks.

When the bill was approved by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee in March, Dehler said many people already play those games at bars in small cities and towns and the liquor laws banning dice are seldom enforced. Dehler said he contacted many county sheriff's departments and law enforcement groups and found no opposition.

The Senate passed a different version of the bill that would limit the bets to food and beverage stakes, but the House measure does not place a restriction on the bets that would be allowed.

The bill (HF686/SF2044*) now moves to a House-Senate conference committee to work out the differences.



GOVERNMENT

Payment for tobacco jurors

Three jurors from last year's tobacco trial would receive payments totaling \$30,000 for financial losses during the four-and-one-half month trial, under a bill the House passed May 5. The vote was 116-11.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), is the work of the 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 (HF2221/SF2052*) would authorize payment of some of those claims against the state, as recommended by the subcommittee.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) said that the payment to the jurors came as a request of the chief judge in Ramsey County who testified before the subcommittee. Haas said that when the jurors were selected they were told they could submit a letter to the trial judge outlining any financial hardships caused by the trial and that the judge would relieve them of jury duty.

But when the jurors sent the letters, the trial judge ignored their request and wouldn't release them from jury duty. The case eventually ended in a settlement.

"We instructed the courts at this point to put procedures in place so this type of situation doesn't happen again," Haas said.

A separate new law (HF1153/SF973*/CH71) signed by the governor last month also requests that the Minnesota Supreme Court study the several issues involving juror compensation, including a study of daily pay rates, reimbursements for child care and travel, and special considerations for longer civil trials.

Also in the claims bill, \$10,000 would go to a couple in LeRoy for costs related to the construction of a new well unnecessarily directed by the health department. And \$5,000 would go to a man who suffered lost wages due to an erroneous criminal background check done by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

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 back to the Senate.

Covering budget shortfalls

A bill that would pay \$17 million to state agencies and departments with budget shortfalls in the current fiscal year is on its way to the governor.

Both the House and Senate agreed to a compromise version of the bill. The House passed the measure May 3 on a vote of 115-9.

Under the bill (SF2234), the Minnesota Zoo would receive \$800,000 to make up for lower than anticipated revenue over the past year. The Senate had earlier agreed to fund the zoo's total request of \$1 million, and the House had proposed funding only \$600,000 of that request.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), the bill's sponsor, said the Senate also agreed to a House

provision that would require the zoological board to submit a report to the governor and Legislature on possible alternatives to the zoo's current status as a state agency, including converting the zoo to a private nonprofit.

Among the other proposed payments in the measure are \$3.5 million to the Department of Children, Families and Learning to pay legal costs of two major lawsuits — one in Minneapolis and one in St. Paul. Both involve claims that school districts are providing constitutionally inadequate education.

The Department of Public Safety would receive \$629,000 to pay for license plates for new automobiles, due to higher than expected automobile sales and other factors. That money would be paid back as the license plates are sold. The department would also receive \$200,000 to pay for additional security for Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Other areas that would receive funds are the Campaign Finance and Disclosure Board, Department of Human Services, and State Services for the Blind.

Pension bill advances

A bill that would make minor changes in the state's policies regarding pensions for public employees was approved April 30 by the House State Government Finance Committee.

The bill (HF1180) had included provisions that would reduce early retirement penalties for state patrol and corrections department employees, but lawmakers on the state government panel voted to delete those provisions. Under current law those employees' pensions are slightly lower per year if they retire before age 55. The bill had proposed to reduce the penalty, but the measure was amended to retain current law.

Proponents of reducing the early retirement penalty said the dangerous nature of the work makes it harder for those employees to do the work as they get older. Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake), the bill's sponsor, said he has toured prisons and other facilities and that the employees constantly deal with stressful and dangerous situations.

But Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) said both of those groups are looking to increase employees, so it wouldn't be prudent to encourage current employees to retire early. He also said there are better ways to address the dangerous demands of those jobs.

"I would rather spend money on risk management than offer early retirement," he said.

Another provision of the bill addresses plans for three pension boards to share office space and administrative services. The bill would allow the boards of the Minnesota State

Retirement System, the Public Employees Retirement Association, and the Teachers Retirement Association to construct, lease, or otherwise acquire new space for the administration of their pension systems.

The bill also would increase the membership of the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement from 12 to 14 members. Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) proposed the increase, saying it would give more House and Senate members a better understanding of pensions.

The measure was later approved by the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee and by the House Ways and Means Committee. The bill awaits action on the House floor.

Considering state regulation

Proposals to regulate any legal occupation would have to be brought before the chairs of the applicable legislative committees, under a bill the House passed May 3. The vote was 122-7.

Under the bill (HF2023/SF1746*), such proposals would have to include answers to several questions, including why the regulation is necessary, who is advocating the regulation, and how the proposal would affect the practitioners of that occupation and students who are preparing to enter that field.

The information would have to be submitted to the appropriate committee at least 15 days before a bill on that subject is introduced.

The state has regulations in place that dictate if people in many fields — ranging from architecture to acupuncture — must be licensed and that set framework for how they can perform their jobs.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview), now goes to the governor.

Data practices bill

The House passed a bill May 4 that would modify state government policies for dealing with requests for information and other data practices. The vote was 132-0.

The bill (HF2058/SF653*) would clarify certain situations under which public data could be considered private, and it would make other minor data practices changes.

Building code violations, for example, would be public, except for the names of people who submitted complaints and any data on civil or criminal investigations.

Also, data that identifies locations where the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is studying deformed frogs would be classified as nonpublic until the agency completes its

investigation or determines it will not investigate a particular site.

And state and local governments would be allowed to maintain official records on computer, whereas current law requires those records to be stored as hard copies.

The bill also amends the so-called “whistle-blower law” to classify as private data the identity of a person who reports a suspected violation of a law or a situation where the quality of health care violates a law or ethical standard. The identity of the person could be disclosed if it is necessary for prosecution, under the bill.

Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center) is sponsoring the bill, which was sent to a House-Senate conference committee.



HEALTH

Midwifery bill delivered

After more than 60 years in limbo, the state’s traditional midwives may soon have their status affirmed through a system of licensing.

The House passed a bill May 5 that contains provisions for a voluntary licensing procedure for those who provide assessment and care outside a hospital for women and newborns during pregnancy, labor, birth, and the postpartum period. The vote was 130-2.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka), the measure’s sponsor, proclaimed the day “Midwifery Day” on the House floor.

Abeler said the state’s Board of Medical Practice had been uncertain about how to regulate practicing midwives and thus had virtually ended the custom of issuing licenses under the existing law more than six decades ago.

But the development of a national standardized test for midwives several years ago provides a basis for establishing credentials, Abeler said. His bill combines a list of educational and training requirements for licensure.

Under the bill, midwives would have to prepare a written plan for each client to ensure continuity of care, including what would happen should something go wrong and a physician be required.

Abeler said the practice of midwifery had been driven underground because of fears of being prosecuted for unlicensed practice of medicine.

Consequently, if a woman in labor were transferred to a medical facility, the emergency room physician often had to assess her condition and determine treatment without the benefit of the midwife’s input.

Under other provisions of the bill, the mid-

wife would have to keep extensive records on clients. It also would establish a five-member midwifery advisory council to review applications for licensure and field complaints from the public.

The bill (HF949/SF383*) goes to the governor.

Help wanted in homes

A bill that would make it easier for nursing homes to employ nursing assistants trained in other states and countries was passed on the House floor May 4. The vote was 125-3.

Under the measure (HF1119/SF1099*), sponsored by Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), the commissioner of health would be allowed to establish categories of nursing assistants who are exempt from the state-mandated 75-hour nursing assistant educational requirements.

In response to a labor shortage, nursing homes have begun to consider bringing in workers, many of whom have already undergone extensive training programs, from other countries such as the Philippines and Canada.

If the bill becomes law, such workers would simply be required to take and pass a competency test. It also would exempt nursing assistants who are in good standing in another state from Minnesota’s training requirements.

The bill moves to the Senate.

Providing emergency care

The House passed a bill May 5 that would allow physician assistants to provide assistance in an emergency, even when they are not accompanied by their supervising physician. The vote was 128-0.

Physician assistants are trained and licensed to help lessen the load for doctors, and they assume much of the responsibility for routine care services in clinics and hospitals. Each physician assistant is required to have a signed agreement to practice under the supervision of a physician.

But Rep. Betty McCollum (DFL-North St. Paul), who is sponsoring the measure, said that during the 1997 flooding in the Red River Valley, physician assistants were reluctant to render aid because of laws restricting their activities. In many cases, they were hundreds of miles from the physician to whom they were attached.

The bill (HF598/SF369*) would allow physician assistants to provide care within their scope of practice in disaster situations without having a physician-physician assistant agreement.

In those situations, physician assistants

would be supervised under the direction of an emergency medical doctor who is not medically responsible for care rendered by the assistant.

The bill moves to the Senate.



HOUSING

Stopping real estate scam

The House passed a bill May 6 that seeks to address the real estate scam known as mortgage flipping. The vote was 128-0.

Mortgage flipping is a scheme to defraud homebuyers and lending institutions based on a fraudulent appraisal of a house's value.

In one scheme, a buyer purchases a house at market value and has an appraiser file a fraudulent appraisal that sets the value of the house higher than the market value.

The owner then re-sells the house at the inflated price, making a huge profit, and the appraiser gets a kickback.

The victim is then stuck with payments on a home much higher than the actual value. And if the victim defaults on the mortgage, the bank cannot recoup the inflated mortgage by re-selling the house.

Bill sponsor Rep. Gregory Gray (DFL-Mpls) said his district in north Minneapolis has been one of the areas hardest hit by the scam and officials say it's becoming more common elsewhere.

"This is an urgent concern not only in my community but in communities across the state," he said.

The bill would address the problem by going after the appraiser. It would make the intentional violation of the laws governing appraisers a gross misdemeanor.

Under current law, real estate brokers and agents can be charged with a crime for intentionally violating the terms of their licenses. But appraisers are only subject to license revocation, not criminal prosecution.

Gray's bill also would set aside \$100,000 for an education program aimed at stopping the fraudulent practice.

Under the bill, the Department of Commerce would administer the program and would seek additional funding from private organizations also affected by flipping, such as banks, mortgage companies, and economic development groups.

The bill (HF743/SF171*) now goes back to the Senate.

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Landlords seek protection

Landlords say that housing advocates are using Minnesota's human rights law to force them into the Section 8 rental assistance program, and they want lawmakers to put a stop to it.

To that end, the House passed a bill May 3 aimed at clarifying that the state's human rights law doesn't require landlords to participate in the federal Section 8 program. The vote was 70-58.

Supporters of the bill, sponsored by Rep. Arlon Lindner (R-Corcoran), say that landlords are not discriminating against people who receive public assistance — which is illegal under the human rights law — by choosing not to participate in an optional federal program that often puts additional burdens on landlords.

Proponents say that the bill would clarify the law and would save landlords legal costs associated with fighting the claims of unfair housing practices.

Under the current human rights law, landlords cannot discriminate against tenants based on the fact that the tenant receives public assistance. But the bill would make it clear that landlords who don't accept Section 8 vouchers because of business practices are not guilty of discrimination.

For example, the Section 8 program requires a year-long lease between the landlord and tenant. Landlords who use month-to-month leases cannot accept section 8 vouchers. And they aren't discriminating against Section 8 recipients when they tell them that they don't participate in the program.

The bill (HF1026) now goes to the Senate.



HUMAN SERVICES

Fathers' registry



Several changes to the Adoption and Putative Fathers' Registry were part of a new law signed by the governor May 4.

The registry was created by a 1997 law and allows any man who believes he may be the biological father of a child to register with the state Department of Health so he will be notified if his child is put up for adoption.

Changes effective Aug. 1 include making all data in the registry private, requiring that fathers on the list be notified of the jurisdiction where an adoption petition will be filed, and providing that post-adoption reporting

requirements of another country be given full faith and credit by the courts in Minnesota.

Twenty-eight men registered under the program in 1998 and seven infants were matched with their birth fathers. Another 282 adoptions were run through the registry and turned up no matches.

Officials hope the changes enacted this year will raise participation in the registry.

The new law also broadens the scope of people who may have communication or contact with adoptive parents to include foster parents.

Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure.

HF863/SF834*/CH122



INDUSTRY

Keep the change



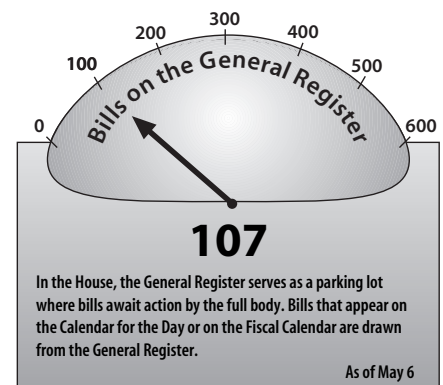
Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a bill May 3 that will let port authorities keep excess money earned on lease or management contracts paid for with state bonding funds.

Under current law, extra money not needed for operating costs or debt service payments that is earned from a bond sale financed by the state must be paid to the state.

Effective Aug. 1, the new law will allow Minnesota's five port authorities to use those profits to reinvest in improvements to their terminals. Proponents of the measure say it will let the port authorities better manage the money earned by their projects.

Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings) and Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the measure.

HF1161/SF480*/CH114





INSURANCE

AIDS study volunteers



People who participate in AIDS vaccine research cannot be unfairly denied insurance, under a new law signed by the governor May 4.

AIDS vaccine clinical tests involve injecting candidates with a synthetic substance designed to cause the immune system to develop antibodies against the HIV virus. The vaccine itself doesn't contain the virus.

However, people who participate in the trials may develop antibodies to the HIV virus. And when insurance companies test applicants for life, disability, and other types of insurance, they often test for the presence of HIV antibodies as a method of determining whether a person is HIV positive.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, requires insurers to look more carefully before denying coverage. When informed that a client has participated in a vaccine test, an insurer must obtain a confidential certificate from the sponsor of the trial verifying the person's HIV status.

If it can be proven that the person's HIV antibodies are a result of exposure to the vaccine and that the person was HIV negative prior to the injection, the insurer cannot refuse to issue a policy.

The legislation was requested by the Minnesota AIDS Project, which is coordinating four test sites in the state involving about 200 volunteers.

The National Institutes of Health has evaluated over 20 vaccine possibilities, which are undergoing nationwide trials to determine the safety of the vaccines and their impact in stopping the disease.

Rep. Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure.

HF1106*/SF1075/CH121

Cash in now, lose later

A bill that would regulate the practice of buying a person's rights to structured settlement payments from an insurance company is headed for a conference committee.

The House passed the measure May 3. The vote was 111-17.

The bill (HF478/SF148*) would require companies that pay up front for a person's rights to those future payments to disclose detailed financial information about the transaction.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), sponsor of the bill, said those transactions, known as "factoring transactions," are not regulated. They involve complicated financial information, and people selling the payments often are not used to making such decisions. In some cases, people have squandered the cash they received and are unable to pay their bills without the future payments.

Under the bill, the person who is selling rights to future payments would receive legal and financial advice before the transaction is finalized. The company buying the rights to the payments would have to disclose how the present value of the cash compares to the money the person is scheduled to receive over time.

The transaction could be done only if the court determines it is necessary for the claimant to avoid an "imminent financial hardship" and would not cause undue hardship in the future because of the lack of payments.

All's FAIR in insurance



A new law signed by the governor May 5 will make several changes in the way the state's Fair Access to Insurance Requirements (FAIR) plan operates.

FAIR is a high-risk pool for homeowner's insurance and business property insurance designed to provide coverage when it is not available through the normal private market.

Effective Aug. 1, FAIR must issue a policy if the property meets preliminary underwriting requirements; however, the coverage may be rescinded in the next 59 days if further analysis shows the policy should not have been issued.

The new law also requires a standard form to be used in all dealings with FAIR and broadens the FAIR plan's exemption from liability to include criminal liability.

The changes were requested by the board that oversees operation of the plan.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) and Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park) sponsored the measure.

HF1708*/SF1675/CH121

Rental car insurance

The House approved a bill May 5 that would increase the types of insurance that can be sold by rental car companies. The vote was 132-0.

Current law allows rental car companies to sell vehicle personal accident insurance, and the bill (HF1932), sponsored by Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris), would allow those

companies to offer liability and personal effects insurance.

The House debated whether those companies should be required to rent vehicles to adults between the ages of 21 and 25. Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) said many companies only rent vehicles to people 25 and older, which he said is discriminatory.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), spoke against Dawkins' proposal. He said people under age 25 in general have more driving accidents, which is why their insurance costs are usually higher than people 25 and older. If the companies have to pay more costs for accidents, the result would be higher rates for everyone, Haas said.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) said New York is the only state that has such a mandate and that it has been a controversial issue throughout the country. He said some other states have addressed the problem by adding surcharges for people under age 25.

The House voted in favor of a proposal from Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) that would prevent those companies from "discriminating" against people between the ages of 21 and 25 and would allow the companies to add a reasonable surcharge.

But Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), chair of the House Commerce Committee, proposed allowing the commissioner of commerce to study the issue in more detail and the House accepted that amendment.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



LAW

Limits on liability

The House approved a bill May 4 that, proponents argue, would put a stop to the unfair practice of going after "deep pockets" in multiple defendant lawsuits. The vote was 71-59.

The bill would change Minnesota's joint and several liability law. That common law principle states that in cases where there are multiple defendants, each defendant is responsible for all the damages if other defendants cannot pay.

Under current law, joint and several liability is somewhat limited. Defendants found by the court to have a small amount of fault — 15 percent or less — can only be held liable for up to four times the percentage they are found to be at fault. That can mean they end up paying up to 60 percent of the total award if another defendant cannot pay because of bankruptcy.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), would change the law so that

defendants found to be less than 40 percent at fault would only be required to pay for their percentage of the damages, even if their co-defendant is bankrupt.

If that defendant is found to be over 40 percent at fault, the defendant could be responsible for the entire amount of the damages, under the bill.

Bishop said that the current law unfairly targets defendants with a small amount of fault.

"This becomes a method of skewing financial responsibility different from legal responsibility that the juries assess," he said.

Rep. Joe Opatz (DFL-St. Cloud) said that joint and several liability punishes businesses, non-profits, units of government, and individuals with insurance, but rewards people who don't carry insurance.

"Joint and several liability shifts the responsibility from the people with a lot of fault and little insurance to people with little fault and a lot of insurance," he said.

But Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) said that the plaintiff who may have his or her total award reduced suffers under the Bishop bill. He said the current law on joint and several liability recognizes that "but for" the actions of all defendants, the person wouldn't have been injured.

"We should hold people responsible for their actions that cause injuries to people," he said.

Goodno also said that the Bishop bill could cost the state financially because the state receives third party payments as a plaintiff in lawsuits. He said defendants paid \$78 million to the state in 1997.

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) said that the law should side with the injured in these cases and not with the ones who caused the injury.

"We should think about those individuals and make sure they're protected," he said.

Also under the bill, several types of lawsuits remain joint and severally liable — liable for the entire amount if another defendant cannot pay — even under the 40 percent threshold.

Certain environmental cases, defendants who act in a common scheme, and civil actions requiring an element of intent would still be held joint and severally liable.

The bill (HF90) now goes to the Senate.

Legislative history can be researched in printed materials at the Legislative Reference Library or, for the years since 1995, on the Internet. Find directions at:
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/hist/histstep.htm>



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Funding historical projects

Most Minnesota cities would be able to make unlimited donations to historical projects under a bill the House passed May 4. The vote was 116-11.

A \$500 cap on what cities can spend on historical projects was enacted in 1957 and later raised to \$2,000 in 1977.

The proposal to eliminate that cap was supported by the Minnesota Historical Society as a way of encouraging additional historical investment by cities.

The bill (HF371) also would clarify state law regarding contributions to senior and youth centers. That provision was requested by the city of Paynesville, where officials discovered that while the city could operate a transit program, it couldn't legally give financial support to an existing service operated by someone else.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring), moves to the governor.



SAFETY

Amusement park rides

Safety requirements for amusement rides would become state law, under a bill approved May 3 by the House. The vote was 72-56.

The bill (HF180) would require amusement parks to have safety rules posted where people can see them before going on the ride. It would also require people to report any injuries they sustained on an amusement park ride to the operator of the ride. The injured person, or guardian of the person if he or she is a minor, would have to report the injury before leaving the premises, or as soon as possible if it is a severe injury.

Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville), sponsor of the bill, said the measure is designed to promote safety with common sense. The bill also states that people who sustain injuries could still pursue civil action, and Wolf said it would not diminish the responsibility of the operators of the rides or other responsible parties in case of an injury.

Rep. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm) proposed changing the bill so that reporting an injury before leaving the premises would be a recommendation instead of a requirement, but the House rejected his amendment.

Tomassoni said he supports the concept of the bill but that he opposes some provisions, such as requiring people to read the posted

signs, which he said is unnecessary and would be hard to enforce.

The bill now goes to the Senate.



SPORTS

New stud plan

The House passed a bill May 3 that would require snowmobilers to buy a \$10 sticker to use metal traction devices — or studs. The vote was 108-19.

Under the bill (HF928), proceeds from the \$10 fee would be used to repair damage to public paved trails. The sponsor of the bill is Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar).

State law prohibits snowmobiles with studs from paved trails. The \$10 fee is designed to pay for damage caused by those who illegally drive snowmobiles with studs on paved trails.

A 1998 law banning the use of studs on all public lands was repealed effective March 5.

The \$10 fee would be charged only to Minnesota residents to avoid discouraging tourism in the state.

Lawmakers rejected a proposal from Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby) that would have increased the fee to \$25.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



TRANSPORTATION

School bus seat belts

The House passed a bill May 3 that would allow school districts to install and purchase seat or shoulder belts on school buses. The vote was 99-28.

Under the bill (HF935), if a school district chooses to install seat belts on its buses, it would have to train students and parents to use them. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety would be required to develop a seat belt standard for districts to follow.

Any school bus equipped with seat belts would have to have a seat back height of at least 28 inches. However, buses manufactured before 1999 would be exempt from that requirement.

Parents also would be able to opt out of seat belt use for their children, but they would have to notify the school of their choice.

The use of seat belts in school buses has long been an issue of controversy because studies have differed on whether seat belts would improve or endanger the safety of students in the event of a crash.

In the case of accidents that result in civil lawsuits, school bus owners and operators

would not be held liable solely for passengers not using seat belts, but districts would be liable for maintaining the equipment and following district policies.

Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake) is sponsoring the bill, which now moves to the Senate.

Bus safety requirements

The House passed a bill May 3 that would, among other things, allow school buses to be longer. The vote was 125-1.

The bill would extend to 45 feet the maximum length of a school bus. Under current law, school buses cannot measure longer than 40 feet. The extension would allow buses to carry more passengers.

In addition, the definition of a type III school bus would have added safety requirements. A type III bus is a station wagon, car, van, or small bus that is used specifically as a school bus.

Under the bill, some vehicles that are modified to fit 10 people and operate as a school bus would have to comply with federal passenger safety standards.

Another provision of the bill would require

road work vehicles such as snow plows to stop for school buses. Those vehicles are now exempt from such traffic laws and do not have to stop when a school bus extends its stop arm and has its lights flashing.

Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet) is sponsoring the legislation (HF1291).

Swenson's bill also would extend the school bus driver licensing authority held by the state's public safety commissioner. It would allow the commissioner to waive restrictions in some cases where applicants have criminal convictions.

This would apply when an applicant has a past conviction, such as burglary at a young age, but has shown responsible behavior over time as an adult.

The bill moves to the Senate.

No limits on milk carriers

A bill that would ease restrictions on milk haulers passed the House on May 3. The vote was 125-0.

Until 2003, vehicles carrying milk will be exempt from seasonal road restrictions and

the state's 5-ton per axle weight limit.

The seasonal weight restrictions, in effect statewide from March 20 to May 15 each year, are designed to prevent costly wear and tear on roads that can be caused by heavy vehicles. But the springtime restrictions often put milk haulers in positions where they are breaking the law.

Under federal food regulations, milk carriers are not allowed to make two trips on one load and often end up carrying more than allowed under the seasonal limits. Penalties for such violations include fines and can put a milk carrier's license in jeopardy.

The measure exempts milk carriers from the weight restrictions from one point of production to the first processing point. Subsequent trips would not be covered under the measure, which would prevent haulers from carrying many farmers' loads at one time.

It would allow carriers to exceed restrictions by 2 tons per axle on roads with restrictions of 5 tons per axle.

Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar) is sponsoring the bill (HF1641/SF1645*).

The measure moves to the desk of Gov. Jesse Ventura.

1999 adjournment approaching

This year lawmakers will be leaving the Capitol relatively early in May.

The Minnesota Constitution stipulates that the Legislature cannot meet in regular session after the first Monday following the third Saturday of May in any year.

May 1 fell on a Saturday this year, which means the 1999 Legislature must adjourn no later than May 17. That's the earliest possible date for the constitutionally mandated deadline.

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.



Tours at Jesse's place

Free Friday tours of the governor's residence on Summit Avenue in St. Paul begin May 7 and continue through the end of October.

The 30- to 45-minute walk-throughs include lower-level public rooms of the English Tudor-style house at 1006 Summit Ave.

The tours, directed by docents of the Minnesota Historical Society, will be offered to the public between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Fridays, except for holiday weekends. For reservations, call (651) 297-8177.

NOTES

Of the 49 bicameral state legislatures in the country, 41 call their lower houses the House of Representatives.

Four of the other eight (California, Nevada, New York, and Wisconsin) call those bodies the Assembly. And three (Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia) refer to them as the House of Delegates.

But only the state of New Jersey has a General Assembly.

Although Minnesota ranks fifth in the country for the size of its Legislature, the state has fewer state lawmakers per resident than most states. With 23,510 people per legislator, Minnesota ranks 28th on that list.

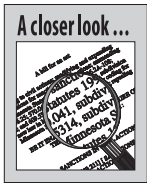
Coming in at number one in both rankings is New Hampshire, where 424 lawmakers comprise the largest state legislature in the country. Each New Hampshire lawmaker represents an average of only 2,795 residents.

And although Nebraska's 49-member unicameral state house is the country's smallest, it's the state of California that brings up the rear in terms of residents per lawmaker. The 120 California legislators represent an average of 272,221 Californians each.

Emissions testing . . .

Program could go up in smoke early next year

By Nick Healy



Almost from the start, there was no mistaking how some people felt about the state's auto emissions testing requirements.

"Why shouldn't we do away with it? We're just putting money down a rat hole," former Rep. Eileen Tompkins said during a debate of a 1995 bill that aimed to abolish the Twin Cities-area program.

It appears that relief is in sight for those who, like Tompkins, have fumed year after year about what they perceive as nothing but a costly, ineffective inconvenience.

A bill that would eliminate emissions testing emerged from a House-Senate conference committee May 4, and it is expected to win final passage in both legislative bodies.

The bill would do away with the inspections no later than March 1, 2000, and the program could end earlier if the state gets official word that the metropolitan area meets air-quality standards.

The move would mean the owners of about 1 million motor vehicles would no longer have to comply with the annual testing requirements.

The conference committee produced the bill after reaching a compromise on an end date for the program. The House had passed a bill calling for testing to cease Jan. 1, 2000, or as soon as the Twin Cities area was found to be in compliance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards for carbon



Motor vehicle emissions tests, like the one being performed here at a Roseville testing site, would become a thing of the past as of March 2000, under a bill backed by a House-Senate conference committee.

reached the end of its maturity and is no longer needed in the state," she said.

Haake said she doubts the program was ever effective, arguing that carbon monoxide levels in the Twin Cities area have continued to fall at the same rate as they did in the years immediately before the testing began.

Studders disagreed with that assessment of the program, saying the testing "clearly was very effective." However, carbon monoxide emissions are no longer the chief concern of

and Senate that year passed different versions of a plan to exempt new cars from testing, but the effort died in a conference committee.

Lawmakers in 1995 debated a plan to eliminate the testing altogether, and they ended up passing a measure that exempted newer vehicles — those no more than five years old — from testing.

Proposals to eliminate testing for all vehicles have surfaced in some form every year since then.

One factor that held up earlier attempts to scrap testing was a fear on the part of lawmakers and other officials that the state could lose federal highway funds if the Twin Cities again failed to attain EPA air-quality standards.

"If the program ends only after the EPA redesignates the area to attainment status, then it's not a problem," said Pat Bursaw, inner agency liaison for the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Officials now believe the EPA will move to officially place the Twin Cities in compliance soon, which largely alleviates concerns about the lost highway dollars.

"It's just about time," Haake said. "We were told that we were going to find out from the EPA sometime last year, and then it moved to this year. I am confident — and the Pollution Control Agency is confident — that we will get attainment (status)."

Continued on page 21

"I would say that 80 percent of the public is in favor of abandoning the testing,"

—Rep. Barb Haake

monoxide. The Senate bill called for testing to end July 1, 2000.

"I would say that 80 percent of the public is in favor of abandoning the testing," said Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View), who is the House sponsor of the bill (HF7). "We all know that there are still environmental concerns, but carbon monoxide from automobiles is not what's causing those concerns."

Karen Studders, commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), said the bill has the support of the Ventura administration.

"This is an example of a program that has

the MPCA.

The agency is now focusing on reducing a number of "air toxics" that the emissions testing program is not sophisticated enough to detect. Studders said they are beginning to search for new solutions to deal with the concerns about air quality.

The 1988 Legislature enacted the vehicle emissions testing program because the Twin Cities area was found to be in violation of federal clean air requirements. The testing began in mid-1991.

By 1994, critics of emissions testing were making headway at the Capitol. The House

Tales of Capitol quirks — real and imagined



Two murals that adorn the inner walls of the Capitol rotunda are the subject of popular myths about oddities in the Capitol. Onlookers often mistake two figures for having missing fingers or incorrectly painted hands. In fact the figure holding a rock, *left*, does have all his fingers — two are held closely together. And as for claims that the other painting shows a man with a right hand attached to his left arm, that's simply not the case.



Another mural on the third floor of the Capitol shows two men on either side of a quotation. A close look reveals that the one on the left has six toes on his left foot.



Story by Sarah Tellijohn
Photos by Tom Olmscheid

Portraits of architect Cass Gilbert and Channing Seabury, chair of the state Capitol Board of Commissioners, are found along the left edge of the “Minnesota, Granary of the World” mural in the Senate chamber. Artist Edwin Blashfield inserted the portraits in keeping with a European tradition of honoring patrons in a commissioned work.

Cass Gilbert designed the Capitol with a level of detail that many of today’s architects would be hard-pressed to match. Ornate paintings, grand granite and marble columns, and elegant staircases are some of the building’s most obvious gems.

But some details aren’t so recognizable, especially those little quirks that can occur when such a large project is coming together.

Over the years, Capitol aficionados have traded stories about some of the strange attributes of the building’s architecture and artwork. Some are fact-based, and others are merely myths. These pages show a collection of Capitol quirks and their stories.

Some tales of Capitol oddities turn out to be myths. For example, two murals that adorn the inner walls of the Capitol rotunda contain two figures that onlookers often mistake for having missing fingers or incorrectly painted hands. Looks can be deceiving, but despite conventional wisdom, a figure holding onto a rock does in fact have all his fingers — two are closely held together. And as for claims that one painting shows a man with a right hand attached to his left arm, well that’s simply not the case.

Still, there are some real quirks for the careful observer to notice. For example, the pattern in the marble columns doesn’t match up. One painting shows a six-toed figure, and another painting includes a small likeness of the Capitol’s architect, set in a scene where he clearly doesn’t belong.



In the House retiring room, careful eyes can find a few lucky shamrocks within the artwork bordering the room — the only non-native flora in the mural. The painting, by artist Elmer E. Garnsey, depicts Minnesota’s many varieties of lush forests, wildflowers, and greenery, as well as native fauna. But an anonymous Irish artist, filling in colors for Garnsey, added the shamrocks as a tribute to his homeland.



On the second floor, one column stands out among several mismatched pillars. When the marble columns were being shipped—some from as far away as Italy—they were cut into threes. However, they were not marked and workers ended up mismatching most when they put them together.

Capitol grounds . . .

Crews hustle to keep up large lawns, many monuments

By Paul Wahl

As the icy fingers of winter begin to withdraw, the grounds around the Capitol come to life.

The vast expanses of lawn turn from brown to a lush carpet of green. Tulip buds swell, then burst into jaunty red blooms. Leaves appear magically on trees.

For most, it's a good time to throw off woolen coats, take a stroll, and revel in nature. But for the Capitol complex grounds workers, it means shifting into high gear.

There are acres of lawn to mow, dandelions to spray, trees and shrubs to tend, flowers to plant, and monuments to spruce up.

"It's definitely our busiest time of year," said Rick Rauhen, the grounds supervisor for the Capitol complex since 1980. "Every spring seems worse than the last because everything has to be done at once."

Rauhen and his crew of 15 full-timers and three seasonal employees maintain between 100 and 120 acres of ground, stretching from Como Avenue in the north to frontage areas of Interstate 94, south of the Capitol. Also included in their purview is the History Center on Kellogg Boulevard, and a half-dozen state-owned buildings scattered around the Twin Cities, including the governor's residence.

This year, the initial thrust was to refurbish the irrigation system. It's been a dry spring, and Rauhen said that there are already stressed areas scattered around the grassy knolls.

"I don't think we've ever seen it this dry this early in the season," Rauhen said.

Sprinkler heads will continue to be a challenge throughout the summer. Much of the workers' time is spent flagging them so people who use the grounds won't inadvertently break them.

A crew also spent the better part of a morning recently removing rust from the Peace Officers Memorial by using an acid solution.

Then their attention was turned toward trying to assure the rust wouldn't return. Rauhen explained that iron bolts were used to fashion the memorial when it was built four years ago. The bolts have since begun to rust and will have to be removed.

Other monuments on the grounds will



Paul Storch, objects conservator for the Minnesota Historical Society, begins cleaning the Peace Officers Memorial on May 3. The project was done in conjunction with the Capitol grounds workers, who are completing a busy spring spent sprucing up the expansive complex.

shortly be the subject of public ceremonies, so they too must be cleaned and groomed.

A new monument — a garden commemorating women's suffrage — is being built immediately south of the Capitol. Completion is expected by the end of June. Two as-yet-undesignated memorials will eventually be built to the south of that garden.

Later this summer, the Taste of Minnesota will descend on the grounds, bringing thousands of people to sample foods from area restaurants and listen to live music. The Fourth of July weekend event is by far the busiest time of year on the Capitol grounds.

Rauhen said he and his crew have been accommodating the celebration for so many years, it's become almost automatic.

Most of the actual clean up is done by "Taste of Minnesota" volunteers with Rauhen and his crew supervising.

Rauhen said collateral damage is generally minor after the event, although there have been years when trees and shrubs were ruined.

Finding and planting varieties that will hold up under all challenges — including deep-fried cheese curd eaters — has been a priority for Rauhen for the past several years. He's been trying to increase the diversity of plant life, particularly by adding native materials, which require less maintenance.

"Nothing is maintenance-free," Rauhen said. "But more-native species are less prone to require additional maintenance. Ten or 15 years ago, we were limited to a half-dozen or so species of trees."

Among the newcomers are a Kentucky Coffee Tree planted three years ago between the Department of Transportation Building and the State Office Building. Sugar maples were removed at the History Center and Swamp White Oaks were planted in their place.

Each spring, the department gets an assist with its efforts from St. Paul area school children who are part of the KEEY Program — Kids, Education, Environment, and Youth.

Busloads of children come to the Capitol and work on planting designated flower beds. The kids are offered the opportunity to learn about gardening, something most of them find quite exciting, Rauhen said.

The program is also designed to teach children to get involved in making the world around them a more pleasant place to live.

Much of the remainder of the spring and summer, and into late fall, will be devoted to lawn mowing. The expansive Capitol lawns require almost constant attention.

Watering will mean even more grass to mow. And then there are the dandelions. They're not considered native; they're unwelcome intruders.

Then, all too quickly, the lawns will begin to fade, the flower peddles will wilt and fall, a chill will return to the air and snow will gather in ever-growing heaps across the grounds.

Mowers will be replaced with plows, and hoes will be discarded for shovels.

For Rauhen and his crew, it's all part of a year's work. 🍂

Minnesota State Government

State Departments*

Administration

200 Administration Building
50 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul 55155 296-6013
David Fisher - Commissioner 296-1424

Agriculture

Agriculture Building
90 W. Plato Blvd., St. Paul 55107 297-2200
Gene Hugoson - Commissioner 297-3219

Children, Families & Learning

1500 Highway 36 W., Roseville 55113 582-8200
Christine Jax - Commissioner 582-8204

Commerce

133 E. Seventh St., St. Paul 55101 296-4026
David Jennings - Commissioner 296-6694

Corrections

Suite 200
1450 Energy Park Drive, St. Paul 55108 642-0200
Sheryl Ramstad Hvass - Commissioner 642-0282

Economic Security

390 N. Robert St., St. Paul 55101 296-3644
Earl Wilson - Commissioner 296-3711

Employee Relations

Second Floor, Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar St., St. Paul 55155 297-1184
Karen L. Carpenter - Commissioner 296-3095

Finance

400 Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar St., St. Paul 55155 296-5900
Pam Wheelock - Commissioner 297-7881

Health

The Golden Rule Building, Suite 400
85 Seventh Place E., St. Paul 55101 215-5800
Jan Malcolm - Commissioner 296-8401

Housing Finance Agency

400 Sibley, Suite 300, St. Paul 55101 296-7608
Katherine G. Hadley - Commissioner 296-5738

Human Rights

Suite 700
Army Corps of Engineers Center
190 E. Fifth St., St. Paul 55101 296-5663
Janeen Rosas - Commissioner 296-5665

Human Services

Human Services Building
444 Lafayette Road, St. Paul 55155-3815 296-6117
Michael O'Keefe - Commissioner 296-2701

Labor & Industry

443 Lafayette Road, St. Paul 55155 296-6107
Gretchen Maglich - Commissioner 296-2342

Military Affairs

Fourth Floor, Veterans Service Building
20 W. 12th St., St. Paul 55155-2098 282-4662
Maj. Gen. Eugene R. Andreotti - Adjutant General 282-4666

Minnesota Planning

Third Floor, Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar St., St. Paul 55155 296-3985
Dean Barkley - Director 297-2325

Natural Resources

500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul 55155-4001 296-6157
Allen Garber - Commissioner 296-2549

Pollution Control Agency

520 Lafayette Road N., St. Paul 55155 296-6300
Karen Studders - Commissioner, Board Chair 296-7301

Public Safety

North Central Life Tower
445 Minnesota St., Suite 1000, St. Paul 55101 296-6642
Charlie Weaver - Commissioner 296-6642

Public Service

200 Metro Square Building
121 Seventh Place E., St. Paul 55101 296-5120
Steve Minn - Commissioner 296-6025

Revenue

600 N. Robert St., St. Paul 55146 296-3781
Matt Smith - Commissioner 296-3403

Trade & Economic Development

500 Metro Square
121 Seventh Place E., St. Paul 55101-2146 297-1291
Gerald Carlson - Commissioner 296-6424
1-800-657-3858

Transportation

395 John Ireland Blvd., St. Paul 55155 296-3000
Elwyn Tinklenberg - Commissioner 296-3000

Veterans Affairs

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Continued from page 4

of emigration to promote the area on the East Coast and in Europe. He also urged the Legislature to develop a homestead policy that would make cheap land available for settlers.

Those efforts led to a significant growth in the state's population. And while the railroad helped bring immigrants into the state, it also provided many jobs as it expanded.


The first train ran from St. Paul to St. Anthony (present-day Minneapolis) in 1862, and by 1870 the railroad was operating throughout the state.

Railroads connected Minnesota to the east and west coasts and provided many benefits to the state's economy. While they helped farmers send their crops to markets, they also provided the means to import new equipment to help farmers continue to improve production. The state's population grew from 172,000 in 1860 to 250,000 in 1865, the production of wheat grew from about 4.5 million bushels to nearly 9.5 million, and the price of wheat nearly tripled.

But the question of how to pay off the outstanding bonds persisted for decades. In 1866, the Legislature established a commission to figure out who the bondholders actually were and what amount each had paid.

Several plans were proposed and rejected until the matter was resolved under Gov. John S. Pillsbury in the 1880s. The 25-year bonds would mature in 1883, and no interest had been paid on them, which gave the matter a sense of urgency. New refunding bonds were

issued in 1881 to take up the old ones on a compromise basis, and in 1882 a constitutional amendment was approved to allow those bonds to be purchased through a state trust fund, the Internal Improvement Land Fund.

All of those bonds were redeemed by 1910, which finally resolved the matter. 

Continued from page 15

Studders said the March 1, 2000, end date for emissions testing makes sense because it would fall during the next legislative session, which would allow lawmakers to act if things go awry and federal highway dollars appear to be at risk.

Currently, owners of vehicles subject to inspection must pay \$8 for the testing each year, and they must pass before they can get license plate tabs. The state receives 55 cents of the inspection fee. The rest goes to Envirotest Technologies, a private firm under contract with the state to handle the testing.

The company initially operated 11 inspection stations in the metropolitan area and saw a volume of about 1.5 million vehicles per year. But after the 1995 law exempted newer cars, the number of vehicles dropped to about 1 million per year, and two inspection facilities were closed. The initial failure rate for vehicles subject to inspection is estimated to be between 6 percent and 7 percent.

Joel Unverzagt, general manager for Envirotest Technologies in Minnesota, refuted

critics' claims that the improvement in Twin Cities air quality owes more to better cars and cleaner-burning fuels than it does to the testing program.


He cited an MPCA report that credited the testing program with preventing 78,000 tons of carbon monoxide from being released into the environment during 1997. And he estimated that over the life of the program, about 400,000 tons of the pollutant have been kept out of the air.

"They're significant numbers," Unverzagt said.

Those numbers, he added, are based only on the number of vehicles found in violation at the testing stations and then repaired to get into compliance. They do not reflect the number of people who do necessary repairs in anticipation of having to pass an emissions test.

"It's the maintenance side where you see the true benefits of the program," Unverzagt said. "I've seen estimates that 16 percent to 20 percent do repairs prior to testing."

Envirotest Technologies is under contract to perform the testing through July. There is some question now about whether the company would continue to operate in the state — possibly on a month-to-month deal — with the end looming in early 2000.

"That's all on the table right now," Unverzagt said. "Our folks are reviewing that. We're obviously not real comfortable with the 30- to 60-day notice. That's a short time, especially when you're dealing with the public." 

Sleepy Eye was redheaded stepchild among parks

Sleepy Eye State Park never measured up.

There are now 65 state parks in Minnesota, and they include impressive and important pieces of property.

For example, the oldest state park — Itasca — holds 32,000 acres of land and centers on the headwaters of the Mississippi River. Bison still graze the prairie of Blue Mounds State Park in the southwestern part of the state. And then there's Gooseberry Falls State Park, where water flows over spectacular falls and into Lake Superior.

But Sleepy Eye State Park, in Southern Minnesota, was an unremarkable plot that somehow managed to be a part of the state

park system for more than 50 years.

The 1921 Legislature passed a bill that created the park in Sleepy Eye. The bill included no money for the park, but it authorized the attorney general to acquire certain lands and, if necessary, to use condemnation to get the property.

In each of the next three legislative sessions, lawmakers approved \$2,000 for land acquisition at the park and for other purposes, according to *Everyone's Country Estate: A History of Minnesota's State Parks* by Roy M. Meyer. That was a fair amount of money for a park that never grew to include more than 40 acres of land.

Sleepy Eye State Park held no signifi-

cant statewide appeal. There was nothing to bring in travelers from other parts of the state, and the park was used almost exclusively by the residents of Sleepy Eye.

Calls to drop Sleepy Eye State Park from the state system and to turn it over to the city began in 1930. Still, the park benefited from the addition of a campground built in 1936 by the Works Progress Administration.

Sleepy Eye was downgraded from a state park to a wayside later in that decade, but it remained under state control until the 1965 Legislature transferred the land to the city.

Governor's Desk

CH113-CH129

Bills await governor's action

Once a bill has passed both the House and the Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill. The governor 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 results in the bill becoming law in the first year of the biennium.

The timing of these actions is as significant as the actions themselves.

In the first year of the biennium, the

important thing to remember is that the governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill. If the governor doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law with or without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

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 objects. As with all vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

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.mainserver.state.mn.us/governor/>

(Select "It's a New Day" and then click on "Legislative Logs")

Key:

CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
113	1538	1463*	Towns capital reserve funds.	5/3/99	
114	1161	480*	Port authorities revenue retention.	5/3/99	
115	673	1012*	Itasca County road and bridge money authority.	5/3/99	
116	1622	1368*	Certain professions payment requirements exemption.	5/3/99	
117	1169	496*	Financial institution search warrants extension.	5/3/99	
118	489	283*	Civil commitment procedures modified.	5/4/99	
119	585*	595	Isle School District grant modification.	5/4/99	
120	1708*	1675	FAIR plan modifications.	5/4/99	
121	1106*	1075	Insurers restricted from using HIV vaccine information.	5/4/99	
122	863	834*	Putative fathers adoption registry modified.	5/4/99	
123	483	296*	Special education provisions modified.	5/4/99	
124	92*	397	DWI implied consent law modified.	5/6/99	
125	359*	684	Public Utilities Commission powers expansion.	filed without signature	
126	1553*	2078	Department of Corrections conditional release and other provisions modified.	5/6/99	
127	1707*	1602	Sex offender registration plea negotiation modified.	5/6/99	
128	132*	1138	Nursing home bingo game regulation modified.	5/6/99	
129	1905*	1993	Governor veto authority over state agency rules.	5/6/99	

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Bill Introductions

HF2433-HF2438

Tuesday, May 4

HF2433—Mares (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission restructured as the Minnesota sports facilities commission.

Wednesday, May 5

HF2434—Wagenius (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Political subdivisions authorized to regulate firearms and restrictions provided.

HF2435—Davids (R)
Commerce
Workers' compensation reinsurance association made a division of the Department of Commerce, and powers and duties transferred.

HF2436—Dawkins (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Dangerous dog regulations modified, animal disposition provisions expanded, and evidence preservation provided.

Thursday, May 6

HF2437—Dawkins (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Fighting animal possession provided criminal penalties, animal disposition and care procedures created, hearings provided, and evidence admissibility clarified.

HF2438—Otremba (DFL)
Jobs and Economic Development Policy
Clarissa wastewater funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

Coming Up Next Week . . . May 10 - 14, 1999

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.
For information updates, call
House Calls at (651) 296-9283.
All meetings are open to the public.
Sign language interpreter services:
(651) 224-6548 v/tty
To have the daily and weekly schedules
delivered to your e-mail address, send a
message to:
listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us
In the body of the message type:
subscribe h-schedules

TUESDAY, May 11

10:30 a.m.

Conference Committee
Fire sprinkler and fire suppression system bill
SF1204/HF853
229 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Jim Rostberg,
Sen. Dave Johnson.

12 noon or 30 minutes
following the House or Senate session
(whichever adjourns later)

Conference Committee
Data privacy bill
SF653
125 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Phil Carruthers,
Sen. Don Betzold.

WEDNESDAY, May 12

No meetings have been scheduled.

THURSDAY, May 13

No meetings have been scheduled.

FRIDAY, May 14

No meetings have been scheduled.

As *Session Weekly* went to press, the times for House floor sessions had not been set. Please check the House Web site at: www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/schedule.htm or call the House Public Information Office at 651-296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550 for schedule updates.

MONDAY, May 10

No meetings have been scheduled.

Frequently called numbers

(Area code 651)

Secretary of the Senate
231 Capitol 296-0271
Voice mail/order bills 296-2343
Chief Clerk of the House
211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate
110 Capitol 296-2887
Index, House
211 Capitol 296-6646
Information, Senate
231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House
175 State Office Building 296-2146
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Toll free 1-888-234-1112
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MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
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ST. PAUL, MN 55155-1298

Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

School safety

Minnesota secondary students who said the level of violence in their schools increased over the 1997-98 school year, as percent of students responding to survey	20
Percent that said level decreased	19
Percent that said level stayed the same	57
Students who said they personally witnessed violence in or around their school between one and five times during the 1997-98 school year, as percent	60
During the 1996-97 school year	60
During the 1995-96 school year	55
During the 1993-94 school year	61
Students who said they felt safe at school during 1997-98 school year, as percent ...	46
During 1996-97 school year	53
Students who said they were verbally insulted at school during 1997-98 school year, as percent	66
Percent that said they had had something stolen from them	39
Percent that said they were pushed, shoved, or grabbed	38
Percent that said they were threatened with a knife or gun	4
Of students who experienced violence in 1997-98, percent that reported it	10
Students who said racial conflicts were a "major problem" at their school in 1997-98, as percent	18
In 1996-97	19
In 1994-95	23
Students who reported that most of their peers watched without doing anything when violence occurred at their school, as percent	42
Students who reported that most of their peers cheered, as percent	24
Students who reported that most of their peers went to find an adult, as percent	1

Source: 1998 Safe School Survey, Office of the Attorney General.

For more information

For general information, call:
House Information Office
(651) 296-2146 or
1-800-657-3550

To obtain a copy of a bill, call:
Chief Clerk's Office
(651) 296-2314

To find out about bill introductions or the status of a specific bill, call:
House Index Office
(651) 296-6646

For up-to-date recorded message giving committee meeting times and agendas, call:
Committee Hotline
(651) 296-9283

The House of Representatives can be reached on the World Wide Web at:
<http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us>

Teletypewriter for the hearing impaired.
To ask questions or leave messages, call:
TTY Line (651) 296-9896 or
1-800-657-3550

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

This document can be made available in alternative formats.

SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ May 14, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 19



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SESSION WEEKLY

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Reflections

On May 11, Minnesota celebrated the 141st birthday of its statehood. In 1858, the population was close to 140,000. By 1860, the population had rapidly grown to 172,063.

When part of the land acquired by the Louisiana Purchase and Northwest Ordinance became Minnesota Territory in 1849, the population only comprised about 5,000 French, British, and Canadians. Those that had already emigrated here were trappers, voyageurs, and explorers with now familiar names like LaSalle, Du Luth, Hennepin, Faribault, and Pike.

The area's earliest population included members of the Sioux and Chippewa nations such as Thunder Face, and Bemidji and their ancestors who migrated to the area over 20,000 years ago. Others were Major Lawrence Taliaferro, Commander Seth Eastman, and the Union soldiers at Fort Snelling. Most of them were European Americans from the East.

A few members of African descent were also present. These included George Bonga and family, who, in 1803, was the first black to be born in the territory. A few black emigrants were free men, including those who came by boat up the Mississippi and stayed. Others, like the famous Dred Scott, were slaves at Fort Snelling, and so were those who came from the South with their owners to spend the summer in the territory.

Most of the first legislators of the territory like Gideon H. Pond and Joseph W. Furber were from the East Coast or lower Canada. A few emigrated from inland states like Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Michigan.

Very little evidence shows that the borrowed expression by New York Tribune editor Horace Greeley, "Go west, young man," prompted Minnesota's major population increase around 1853. The Territory's commissioner of emigration urged new arrivals to the New York Harbor to go west. He also advertised in European newspapers about the territory's virtues and its available land. Emigrations of northern Europeans tripled.

The new Minnesotans included more groups of Swedes, Danes, Norwegians, Germans, and Irish like Hans Mattson, Charles Borup, Paul H. Hansen, William Pfaender, and Dillon O'Brien. They took to farming, transportation, and small businesses. Others later became involved in the lumber and the mining industry.

Italians, Slovaks, Greeks, Scots, Dutch, Russians, Arab-speaking peoples, Finns, Latinos, Chinese, Jews, Welsh, and Armenians are just part of the rest of a virtual "melting pot" of people who increased the population to more than 1,675,000 by the end of the century — one-third of them being foreign born. Most of the newcomers to Minnesota during its first 50 years are a worldwide ancestry of the present members and staff of the 1999 Legislature.

Minnesotans inherited the guarantees for freedom of civil and religious liberties on which the United States was founded. And newly arrived refugees from Kosovo may also heed a quote from the inscription by Emma Lazarus on the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor:

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free . . .

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Sister Adelyn follows the sixth-grade class from St. Peter's School in Canby up the Capitol steps on a rainy day. The class visited St. Paul for a Capitol tour on Statehood Day, May 11.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

Stalemate averted . . .

Three parties reach agreement to cut taxes, boost K-12

By Paul Wahl

An agreement that includes what proponents call the largest permanent income tax cut in the state's history — and a promise the legislative session will end as scheduled — was announced by leaders of all three legs of Minnesota's tripartisan government May 11.

"This is a great and historic day for Minnesota's taxpayers," said House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon). "The tax cut was our number-one priority all year, and we are extremely gratified it will finally be a reality."

For the Senate, the agreement includes a plan to sock \$968 million in one-time money from the tobacco settlement into endowments for medical education and research, smoking prevention, and possibly other health-related endeavors.

The Senate also won a concession for an additional \$50 million for K-12 education, with another \$50 million dedicated for that purpose if budget surpluses continue.

And Gov. Jesse Ventura will get \$60 million in state funds, raised through bonding, to leverage \$250 million in federal funds to build the first link of a light-rail system in the Twin Cities.

"This is a good day for the people of Minnesota. Tripartisan government works," Ventura said.

Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine) also expressed his pleasure with the agreement during a press conference following the announcement May 11.

It was Moe who walked away from nearly the same agreement on May 10 when neither Sviggum nor the governor was willing to augment education spending further.

It was Ventura who began the compromise efforts when he announced on May 9 that he would support an across-the-board tax cut demanded by the House Republicans and approved overwhelmingly by the entire House.

"I am prepared to meet their request and agree to a tax cut at the third-tier income level of one-half percent, as long as the permanent income tax relief is weighted predominantly toward middle-income taxpayers," Ventura said.

Since the session began, Ventura and Moe had opposed the idea of cutting taxes on the highest bracket of income, which would affect only the 6 percent of Minnesotans who have the highest earnings. As recently as May 10,



Gov. Jesse Ventura announces a tripartisan budget agreement during a May 11 press conference. Legislative leaders attending the announcement are House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty, right, Senate Assistant Majority Leader Ember Reichgott Junge, left, and Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe.

Moe had called the idea "wrong" if it came at the expense of the rest of taxpayers.

Ventura's original budget included only a small cut in income tax rates for the lowest earners.

The state has a three-tiered income tax, with rates currently at 6 percent, 8 percent, and 8.5 percent. The top bracket begins at \$100,201 in annual earnings for a married couple and \$56,680 for a single filer. The deal likely will bring a 0.5-percent cut in all brackets.

The tax cuts are expected to amount to about \$800 million a year. Who will get how much is being considered by lawmakers on a House-Senate conference committee working on the omnibus tax bill (HF2420).

The House, the Senate, and Ventura had agreed earlier to a \$1.3 billion budget surplus rebate plan based on a sales tax formula. Under that plan, nearly every Minnesotan would receive a check from the state ranging from just above \$100 to as high as \$5,000 for married joint filers and \$2,500 for single filers. Checks are expected to be mailed in August.

School funding

Education funding had remained a point of contention between both legislative bodies and Ventura. Although the House's \$7.8 billion K-12 spending proposal represented a

\$911 million increase in overall spending, the Senate version called for an additional \$100 million. Ventura's proposed budget called for \$90 million less than the House plan.

The compromise proposal essentially splits the difference between the House and Senate plans, adding \$50 million in general K-12 spending for the biennium to the House plan, and earmarking another \$50 million of a potential future surplus.

Tobacco settlement funds

Another sticking point between the House and the Senate had been how to spend the state's proceeds from the 1998 tobacco settlement. Establishing endowments with the settlement money had little support among House Republicans throughout most of the session.

Those lawmakers instead proposed using the money to begin eliminating the state's medical provider tax, or "sick tax," which eventually drew bipartisan support. The state's physicians and clinics pay the tax, and proceeds are used primarily to fund MinnesotaCare, a health care program for the state's uninsured.

Earlier this session a bill (HF223) sponsored by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley) that called for creating a tobacco use prevention endowment was amended into a

\$7.5 million annual appropriation from the state's general fund to groups already engaged in the war against tobacco use.

House DFLers had tried unsuccessfully to amend legislation throughout the session to include the endowments, but Republicans argued the plans created another level of government and that the funds should be used to provide deeper tax relief for all Minnesotans.

Earlier in the session, Sviggum said the endowment idea had not been thought through carefully and represented a "big government" approach to solving problems.

Money for light rail

Ventura began his quest for light-rail funding by including an appropriation in his budget proposal. However, the money didn't make the cut in the House omnibus transportation funding bill (**HF2387**). House Republicans argued that light rail would not be an effective way to reduce congestion on the roadways of the Twin Cities and is too expensive to build.

Ventura's newly appointed chairman of the Metropolitan Council, Ted Mondale, lobbied hard for the plan, but swayed few votes in the House. The money was included in the Senate's transportation spending plan.

The funds would be dedicated to building the first leg of a light-rail transit line from downtown Minneapolis to the Mall of America in Bloomington.

Funding details

The tripartisan deal also includes reversing the Legislature's decision last year to pay cash for \$400 million in construction projects, rather than issuing bonds. Moe originally sponsored the plan at the close of last year's session.

Another item agreed to is a "settling up" process each biennium. After all the state's bills are paid, if sufficient surplus remains, a tax rebate would be automatically issued.

Policy issues unsolved

While the deal agreed to by all three parties solves many of the finance questions hanging over the session, at least two contentious issues remain.

The House-approved health and human services omnibus bill (**HF2412**) includes language that would ban certain late-term abortions and require a 24-hour waiting period. Another provision would require significantly more information to be reported about cases where minors seek permission from judges to have an abortion.

None of the abortion provisions were

Continued on page 26

Small-town doctor in big-time politics



ing a personal interest in each patient.

Several doctors have had distinguished careers in the Minnesota House of Representatives.

Today, Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), a family physician, represents District 21B in southwestern Minnesota.

At the beginning of this century, Rep. Leverett Wright Babcock took a hiatus from his rural practice in the Wadena area and turned his attention to lawmaking.

In many ways, political service was a natural extension for Babcock, whose practice took him to every corner of his district and whose considerable medical skills held him in good stead with most of those he served.

Babcock was born in 1849 in New York. He graduated from the University of Vermont in 1869 and moved to Wadena in 1879 with little more than his black bag and a few crude utensils of his trade. Wadena is located about 150 miles northwest of St. Paul.

By all accounts, Babcock was a hard worker who spent up to 20 hours a day caring for the ill, often being seen at all hours heading out in his buggy pulled by one of his horses.

In 1888, after serving seven years on the Wadena Village Council, Babcock was elected to a House seat as a Republican. He was on an upwardly mobile political track.

By 1902, Babcock was embroiled in a struggle within the party to determine who would serve as speaker of the House in the 1903 session. The Republicans dominated the House, and the battle for speaker was between Babcock and Rep. Lawrence Henry Johnson, of Minneapolis.

As the debate grew more heated, Babcock took the unprecedented step of preparing a

campaign brochure for the job, published Nov. 28, 1902.

"The Speakership Question" responded to charges from Johnson, who had accused the doctor of being opposed to the initiatives of Gov. Samuel R. VanSant's administration.

VanSant had swept into the governor's seat on the coattails of President William McKinley, and VanSant was buoyed by his service in defense of the Union during the Civil War.

It was naturally important to House Republicans that the speaker be supportive of VanSant and his administration.

The struggle to determine which Republican would be nominated for speaker continued throughout December, and on Jan. 6, 1903, Babcock's name was placed before the body. He roundly defeated Democrat challenger J.R. Hickey.

The speakership appears to have been a capstone for Babcock's political service, and when the House assembled again in 1905, Babcock was back home in Wadena,

having returned to his practice and taken on the challenge of running the Wadena Cracker Company.

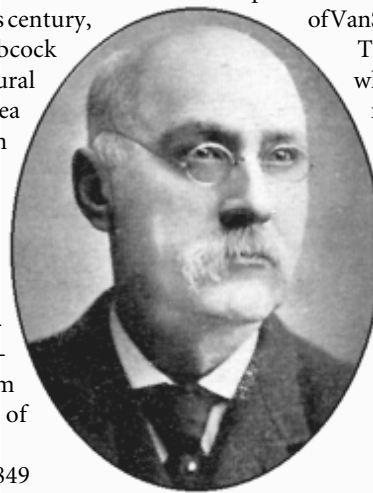
His business contacts and his continued interest in state politics meant frequent trips to St. Paul, a lengthy train ride from his home.

On Christmas Eve 1907, Babcock was concluding yet another of his visits at the Capitol when he fell from a streetcar which had been struck by another car.

The doctor stumbled into a Turkish bath house and a physician was summoned. Babcock was taken to St. Luke's Hospital, where he died early on Christmas morning.

Babcock's funeral was recorded by one of the Wadena newspapers as the largest ever to be held in the city.

Heading the delegation of dignitaries from St. Paul who arrived in a special railroad car was Rep. L. H. Johnson, Babcock's former foe and, by then, the House speaker.



Leverett Wright Babcock

Photo from the 1903 Legislative Manual

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Feedlot restrictions

Feedlot operators would be allowed to violate certain air quality standards under an agreement reached in a House-Senate conference committee May 12.

The House passed a version of the bill (**HF1235/SF692***) April 28 that called for a specific exemption from mandated ambient hydrogen sulfide emission levels and a process for notifying neighbors.

Although the manure-containing basins found at most feedlots are covered with a thick odor-reducing crust most of the time, that crust occasionally must be removed so the manure solids can be extracted. The byproduct is often spread on nearby land as a natural fertilizer.

Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet), the bill's sponsor, said it is a common-sense measure that would assure farmers won't be punished for actions they cannot avoid.

Senate provisions aimed at helping feedlot operators work through other mandates and save money were added in conference committee.

And the House provision calling for notification of neighbors was removed. The new bill would only require notice to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) or the county feedlot officer.

The bill also spells out a process under which feedlot operators could obtain air-quality easements from neighbors. Under that plan, the monitoring would shift away from the feedlot boundaries to the boundaries of the land contained in the easement.

Conditions under which the MPCA could assess a penalty against a feedlot operator and require a face-to-face meeting between owners and regulators to address issues are also contained in the final version of the bill.

And the bill would weaken the MPCA's ability to require environmental assessments for feedlots and redefine how regulations apply to "connected" operations, which are not owned by the same owner or located on the same property but are bound by a production contract.

Supporters of the compromise say financially strapped farmers deserve to be released from some environmental controls. Opponents claim the legislation goes too far and

some provisions were not given a proper hearing before being inserted into the bill.

The debate over animal feedlot regulation has wafted into the Legislature in each of the past three sessions, fueled by concerns over potential health hazards of air and water quality affected by the facilities and their manure lagoons.

Last year a House-approved moratorium on new or expanding feedlots was rejected by the Senate, but a two-year moratorium on construction of certain swine waste lagoons did make it into law.

And lawmakers directed the Office of the Legislative Auditor to study the issue, resulting in a report released in January that criticized the MPCA for not acting quickly enough to produce rules for feedlot operation.

The bill moves to the House floor.



BONDING

Scrutiny for local projects

A bill that would provide lawmakers better information about local bonding requests is on its way to the governor's desk, following approval by the House May 13. The vote was 97-34.

Under the proposal (**HF726**), the Minnesota Department of Finance would review each local bonding request and submit its recommendations to the Legislature for consideration in the bonding bill.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), outlines a set of nine criteria that the finance department would use in evaluating each proposal.

Those include considering whether each project: has additional local, private, and user financing; helps fulfill a mission of regional or statewide importance; will not require additional state funding for operation; does not expand the state's role into a new policy area; does not create serious inequities among local jurisdictions; does not compete with other local facilities; and has resolutions of support from all governing bodies immediately affected by the project.

The bill also would limit state funding to one-half of a project's total costs, unless the project comes as a result of a natural disaster, is proposed by a school district or school organization, or would be located in an economically depressed area.

While the bill would encourage local governments to submit their requests directly to the department, it also states that neither the Legislature nor the governor would be bound by the recommendations of the department. And legislators and the governor could introduce projects for consideration that have not been reviewed by the finance department.

Knoblach's bill, which would apply to requests for the 2000 bonding bill, would encourage local governments to submit their preliminary proposals to the finance department by June 15, 1999. Final requests would need to be in by November 1, 1999.



BUSINESS

Telephone company competition

A bill that aims to ensure competition among telephone companies is advancing in the Legislature.

The House passed a bill May 7 that would modify state regulations of public pay telephones and allow the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to impose administrative penalties, including significant fines for large phone companies that engage in anti-competitive practice. The vote was 74-51.

Under the bill (**HF358/SF685***), the PUC could issue administrative penalties if telephone companies violate state and federal laws that are designed to encourage competition. The PUC would also be allowed to issue penalties against a telephone company that files a frivolous complaint against another company.

Under current state law, the PUC must request that the attorney general pursue action in those complaints, and the maximum penalty for all telephone companies is \$5,000 a day for each violation.

The bill would increase that to \$100,000 a day for companies that have 500,000 or more subscribers. The maximum penalty would be lower for smaller telephone companies.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville), would also remove some current regulations related to rates, location, or services offered by those companies. The bill would not affect the existing authority of local units of governments to regulate the location of public pay telephones.

Public pay telephones would be required to offer enhanced 911 service, including free access, and to provide telecommunication relay

services for people with hearing impairments. Those telephones would also have to list the name, address, and phone number of the owner of the telephone, toll-free numbers for local and long distance carriers, and toll-free numbers for the PUC so people could file complaints.

A slightly different version of the measure passed the Senate, and the bill now goes to a House-Senate conference committee to work out the differences.



CHILDREN

Early childhood education

Lawmakers reached a compromise May 13 on the omnibus family and early childhood education finance bill.

The bill's proposed spending totals \$542.5 million, with \$460.1 million coming from the state's general fund. Matching federal funds make up \$80.4 million, and the rest is drawn from miscellaneous state accounts.

In the end, the measure would spend \$74 million more in state funds than Gov. Jesse Ventura's had proposed in his budget recommendations.

Although the bill calls for spending \$4.9 million less than what the House had originally proposed, that difference is solely because funding for community crime prevention grants in that amount, which formerly have been appropriated through the family and early childhood committee, will now be funded in the omnibus judiciary finance bill.

Going into the conference committee, the House's bill spent about \$5 million more in state money than the Senate's bill. However, the Senate had allocated \$20.8 million more than the House in federal grants for the state's basic sliding fee child care program.

The bill would also tap more heavily into federal funds than the governor proposed, using the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grant monies that the state receives. The largest portion of that \$80.4 million would go toward alleviating long county waiting lists for the state's basic sliding fee child care program. Lawmakers met in the middle of the House and Senate proposals for the TANF funds in the final bill.

Other funding boosts in the bill include \$4.9 million for transitional housing and emergency shelters and \$500,000 for lead abatement. Early childhood education and adult basic education programs around the state would also see increased state support.

Several miscellaneous grant programs would be funded under the bill for initiatives such as

after-school activities, chemical abuse prevention, community education projects, and adolescent parenting classes.

Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior) and Sen. Pat Piper (DFL-Austin) are sponsoring the bill (HF1467*/SF2222).

Juvenile law re-organization



The governor signed a new law May 11 that will make structural changes to state law dealing with juveniles.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), the measure's House sponsor, said the law will separate the two very different issues of juvenile delinquency and child protection services.

"By separating them out, it will make the law more user-friendly," he said.

The measure rewrites the state's juvenile law — currently a mishmash of policy relating to children — without changing any of the substantive policy.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, divides it into four sections — general organization, truancy, delinquency, and children in need of protective services.

In 1997, lawmakers directed the Office of the Revisor of Statutes to review the state's juvenile law and offer a plan for its reorganization. The

new law comes as a result of the office's work.

Sen. Jane Ranum (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF1310/SF184*/CH139



CRIME

Countering counterfeiters



The governor signed a new law May 11 that would provide criminal penalties for counterfeiting products.

The measure, effective Aug. 1, will create a new crime of counterfeiting intellectual property. The law will prohibit the manufacture, possession, or sale of counterfeited property.

Current Minnesota law has no criminal penalty for counterfeiting property. Counterfeit claims must be brought forward by the person or company owning the rights to the property, and must go through the civil court process.

Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley), the measure's House sponsor, said that the practice of attaching registered trademarks or trade names to unauthorized products is growing. He said counterfeiters can see big profits from the sale of the fake goods and face no risk of prosecution.

Gerlach said tougher penalties are needed because counterfeiters take business away from legitimate companies, and defective and inferior goods produced and distributed by counterfeiters can pose a danger to consumers.

The new law also outlines penalties for the counterfeiting crime based on number and value of the items counterfeited. The maximum penalty will be a five-year prison sentence and a \$100,000 fine.

And the law will include the new crime under a list of crimes that can apply to racketeering charges. Increased penalties can be applied if the counterfeiting crime is proven to show a pattern of organized crime.

Sen. Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF263/SF411*/CH142

Guns for sale



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law May 11 that will allow sheriffs and police chiefs to sell confiscated firearms.

Current law requires those agencies to destroy all forfeited weapons that they cannot use, including firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories.

Like father, like son



Five-year-old Cameron Finseth recites the Pledge of Allegiance with his father, Rep. Tim Finseth, in the House chamber May 10th.

The new measure, effective Aug. 1, will give agencies the authority to either destroy those weapons or to sell them to federally authorized dealers.

The new law also will require local agencies to sell any antique guns they seize. But semi-automatic, military-style assault weapons will continue to be destroyed, under the law.

And the measure will allow the Hennepin and Ramsey county boards to prohibit their respective sheriffs from selling confiscated firearms.

Under current law, local law enforcement agencies keep 70 percent of the proceeds from the sale of any forfeited property, county attorneys and other prosecutors get 20 percent of the proceeds, and the state receives the remaining 10 percent.

Critics of the plan say that the measure will just put guns back on the streets to be used illegally.

Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee) and Sen. Pat Pariseau (R-Farmington) sponsored the measure.

HF70*/SF197/CH148

Payback for crime victims



The governor signed a measure May 10 that will make several changes to the ways crime victims can seek financial relief.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will allow courts to deposit any unclaimed restitution payments collected from offenders into the state's reparations account for crime victims. The court will be required to forward the victim's name and last known address along with the amount being deposited to the Crime Victims Reparation Board.

The measure will also expand the time limit to file a claim from the reparations account from two years to three years, and will make changes to requirements involving child abuse claims.

And the new law will allow crime victims to make claims for moving expenses and other related costs due to the crime. It will cap those payments at \$1,000.

The reparations account was established in 1974 to provide financial assistance to victims of crime. In addition to receiving a state appropriation, the program receives funding from restitution paid by offenders and state and federal inmate wage deductions.

Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF1359*/SF1023/CH136

Capitol bomb threat



Lawmakers, lobbyists, and staff gather on the front lawn of the Capitol during a May 13 bomb threat. The building was emptied for about an hour, but a police search turned up nothing.



DEVELOPMENT

Building code enforcement



Authority over the energy-related portions of the state building code will be transferred from the Department of Public Service to the Department of Administration under a new law signed May 10.

The administration department currently oversees many provisions of the state building code. However, other parts of the code are developed and enforced under the departments of health, public safety, or public service. Several state agencies and boards also have input in inspecting and reviewing building plans for public buildings.

The new law, effective July 1, is a step toward consolidating that authority.

Disagreements and poor coordination between the various state agencies and departments has caused unnecessary delays in construction, according to a January report by the Office of the Legislative Auditor.

The measure was sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault, and Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan).

HF1568/SF1209*/CH135

Legislative history can be researched in printed materials at the Legislative Reference Library or, for the years since 1995, on the Internet. Find directions at:
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/leghist/histstep.htm>



ELECTIONS

Voting in the wrong place



A new law signed May 7 by Gov. Jesse Ventura will modify the penalty for voting in the wrong precinct and update other provisions of election law.

Under the new law, effective Aug. 1, a person who votes in the wrong precinct will receive a letter from the Office of the Secretary of State citing the mistake and informing the person of the correct polling place.

The person will then have to provide proof of residency before voting in the next election. If the same person votes in the wrong precinct a second time, it will be considered a misdemeanor, and a third instance will be considered a felony.

Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley), sponsor of the bill, said so many instances of voting in the wrong place are reported that county attorneys have rarely prosecuted them as felonies, as current law stipulates. Gerlach said the instances are most often misunderstandings, and the new law will make it easier to identify and prosecute instances of repeated violations.

Another provision in the law will drop the requirement that a person can only be a witness to vouch for another person to register to vote if both people live in the same county. The new law will allow any registered voter in Minnesota to vouch for another person to allow them to vote.

Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park) was the Senate sponsor of the measure.

HF1168/SF1144*/CH132



EMPLOYMENT

Tracking job training efforts



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law May 10 that aims to give lawmakers a better picture of the state's job training services.

The new law will require the Department of Economic Security and the Governor's Workforce Development Council to prepare a report evaluating all job training programs in Minnesota that receive state or federal funding.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), the measure's House sponsor, said there are 62 job-training programs in the state and they are administered by 12 different agencies. He said policy-makers need better information to make funding decisions.

"We don't know if they're doing a good job or bad job or what," he said.

Effective Aug. 1, the new law will direct the department to provide a brief summary of each program, a statement describing its need, the number of participants, and the costs and funding sources of the program. The report also will detail the results, including job placement rates and wages of participants following completion of the program.

The report is due to the Legislature by Jan. 31, 2000.

Sen. Randy Kelly (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF1051*/SF971/CH138



ENERGY

Innovative heating systems



A new law signed May 13 would allow more contractors to excavate or install vertical heat exchangers.

Under previous law, only licensed well contractors could drill or excavate wells to install vertical heat exchangers, which are energy efficient heating systems which draw heat from the ground. The demand for those systems is growing because they reduce heating and cooling costs.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, 2000, allows some of the installation work to be done by licensed limited well/boring contractors or limited well sealing contractors. Proponents of the measure say allowing the other contractors to do the work will reduce the up front costs of those systems. Northern Municipal Power Agency is among the groups that supported the measure.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) and Sen.

Playing through



Coach Kathy Williams, of the University of Minnesota women's golf team, receives a standing ovation from lawmakers after a resolution honoring her achievements was presented on the House floor May 12. Williams will resign her coaching position in June to pursue a private teaching career.

LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls) sponsored the measure.

HF2021/SF1539*/CH153



ENVIRONMENT

Honoring DNR leader



A new law will rename the visitor center at Gooseberry Falls State Park in honor of a former Department of Natural Resources (DNR) commissioner. It was signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura May 13. It takes effect Aug. 1.

In addition to honoring Joseph N. Alexander, the new law will permit additions to several state parks and will allow land within another to be sold.

Alexander was the state's longest-serving commissioner. He began his 33-year DNR career as a game warden in 1957 and was promoted to regional enforcement supervisor in 1966. In 1971, he became assistant commissioner for administration. He was serving as special assistant to the commissioner in July 1978 when Gov. Rudy Perpich appointed him commissioner, a position he held until January 1991.

Alexander died Oct. 22, 1998.

The new law also will authorize additions to Banning, Camden, Charles A. Lindbergh, Forestville/Mystery Cave, Judge C.R. Magney, St. Croix Wild River, Scenic, Temperance River, Whitewater, and William O'Brien state parks.

It will approve a land exchange at Lake Bronson State Park and stipulate that Cross River State Wayside become part of Temperance River State Park. Another provision will delete a four-acre parcel from Blue Mounds State Park and allow it to be sold.

Rep. Ray Vandever (R-Forest Lake) and Sen. Leonard Price (DFL-Woodbury) sponsored the measure

HF1301/SF1449*/CH157

Cleaning up fuel leaks

A bill that would expand the use of the state's petroleum tank cleanup fund passed May 10 in the House. The vote was 128-0.

The fund is administered by the Department of Trade and Economic Development to help clean up pollution from underground fuel storage tanks. The bill (**HF595**) would allow the fund also to be used to clean up fuel tanks that are above ground.

Under current law, the fund can be used only in areas where petroleum is the sole pollutant. So in areas where petroleum is one of several pollutants, the money could pay for cleaning up petroleum but no other pollutants at the site. The bill would allow the fund to be used to clean up all pollution.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), sponsor of the bill, said it would help the state be more effective in cleaning up "brownfields," which are mainly abandoned commercial or industrial properties in cities. Those sites often remain vacant or under-used because redevelopment would involve legal liability of

cleaning up the pollution, such as petroleum from leaking fuel tanks.

The bill now goes to the Senate.



GAMBLING

Canterbury card club

A proposal to allow Canterbury Park in Shakopee to operate a card club was approved May 12 by a House-Senate conference committee.

The House had earlier voted against the proposal, which was part of a bill (**HF1825/SF1619***) that would make several minor changes in state gambling laws. The Senate had included the card club proposal in its version of the bill, and the conference committee adopted the Senate position.

The House has not yet acted on the conference committee report.

Under the bill, participants could play cards against each other and make wagers on each hand. Canterbury Park would receive a percentage of the total amount that is bet, and some of the proceeds would go toward increasing purses for horse races.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), sponsor of the bill, had advocated the card club proposal in the House. Higher purses would help Canterbury Park attract more horses to its races and provide an overall benefit to the state's economy, he said. The nearest horse racing track is Prairie Meadows in Des Moines, Iowa, where annual purses are about \$15 million compared to Canterbury Park's \$4 million. Raising the purses in Minnesota would help prevent horse farms from moving to Iowa, Osskopp said.

Another provision in the bill would allow establishments that sell pull-tabs to use machines instead of having a staff person sell them over the counter.

The bill would also increase the maximum consolation prize for bingo games that allow carryover prizes and set a maximum prize for tipboard games. Tipboard games are those that sell tickets for numbers on a board, and when all the numbers have been purchased, the winning numbers are revealed.

A Senate provision that would have raised the legal gambling age from 18 to 19 was not included in the compromise version of the bill.

The bill now goes to the House.

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

Dice for drinks

Dice games would be legal in Minnesota bars, but bets would be limited to stakes of food and drink, under a bill passed on the House floor May 13. The vote was 91-40.

The House had earlier passed a version of the measure that would have allowed dice games with no restrictions on stakes, but during a House-Senate conference committee, House members agreed to a Senate provision limiting bets to stakes of food and beverages.

The bill would allow people to play common dice games, such as "liar's poker," "500 rummy," or "6-5-4," to buy drinks or food.

Current gambling statutes allow "private, social bets." But under liquor statutes, dice are not allowed in bars.

Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) urged colleagues to vote against the measure, saying it is a small expansion of gambling that would lead to more and more gambling in the state.

But Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph), sponsor of the bill, said people just want to have fun.

"If you believe people should have fun, please vote yes," he said.

The bill now goes to the governor's desk.

Bingo for seniors



Minnesota's nursing homes and senior citizen organizations will soon be able to conduct bingo for the pure enjoyment of those participating, with a minimum of regulatory intrusion by the state.

A new law signed May 6 will assure that. It will remove a provision from statute that requires the bingo manager to be registered with the state, and it will eliminate state-mandated record keeping.

To qualify for the exemption, the bingo operation must not be high-dollar, cannot be offered more than twice a week, and the manager and others who operate the games cannot be paid.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) and Sen. Steve Dill (R-Dassel) sponsored the measure, which is effective Aug. 1.

HF132*/SF1138/CH128



GOVERNMENT

State agency finance bill

A \$730 million omnibus state government finance bill was agreed upon by a House-Senate conference committee May 12. The House members on the conference committee accepted the Senate version of the bill with

the addition of several House-approved provisions.

The bill that emerged from conference committee calls for \$90.3 million more in appropriations than the original House measure. The bill would fund several agencies, including the Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Services, the Humanities Commission, and the Government Innovation and Cooperation Board, that had been targeted for elimination or reduced funding in the House version.

A cap on the overall increase in salaries for state employees was among the House provisions left out of the bill. The House version had also called for mergers of several legislative departments, but those proposals were not included in the conference committee bill.

The bill (**HF2386/SF2223***) does include \$100,000 for grants to facilities to improve the safety of bleacher seats.

The following House provisions were added to the bill before it was approved by the conference committee. The full House has not yet voted on the compromise bill.

Give hemp a chance

The governor would be authorized to prepare and submit an application for federal permits to authorize the growing of experimental and demonstration plots of industrial hemp.

The bill directs the governor to consult with the commissioners of agriculture, trade and economic development, public safety, and other appropriate commissioners to establish standards and forms for people who want to register for those experimental plots.

Honoring Stassen

The new Capitol complex building occupied by the Department of Revenue would be named after former Gov. Harold E. Stassen. The building opened in the fall of 1998, and members of the House State Government Finance Committee proposed naming it after Stassen during a committee meeting on Stassen's birthday, April 13.

Limit fee increases

State agencies would be prohibited from increasing a fee or imposing a new fee without legislative approval. Budget proposals for each state agency would have to list proposed fee changes or new fees, including admission fees to state facilities and fees for regulations or licensure.

Stop loan repayment

Another provision would prevent state funds from being used to repay a loan from the Minneapolis Community Development

Agency to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in 1986.

The loan was made to acquire property for the Central Riverfront Regional Park. The bill would also prevent money for that purpose to be spent from political subdivisions of the state, such as the Metropolitan Council.

Telecommunication policy

The administration commissioner's oversight of the ongoing operation of information technology would be modified. The commissioner would be responsible for administering the state information infrastructure, which includes high-speed cables that provide telephone services, Internet access, and other information services.

The bill would remove the commissioner's responsibility for "operation of" the information infrastructure under current law.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) had advocated for the provision to help rural telephone cooperatives compete with the state in providing those services.

Cost-benefit for bids

Proposals to purchase goods or services costing more than \$5 million would be subject to a cost-benefit analysis by the administration department. If the analysis demonstrates that a proposal would not provide the most effective way to provide a public benefit, the governor would be able to approve an alternative proposal.

New veto authority



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a measure May 6 that will give governors the authority to veto rules adopted by state agencies.

Effective July 1, the new law will require copies of all new rules promulgated by state agencies to be sent to the governor. If the governor chooses to veto a rule or a part of a rule, the Legislature could propose bills to address the problems or concerns surrounding those rules.

If the Legislature does not propose an alternative measure to the vetoed rule, the rule would automatically go into effect.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall), who sponsored the measure in the House, said the state could have benefited from this measure regarding two recent controversial rules — the so-called diversity rule and the Profile of Learning — that were considered or created by the State Board of Education.

In those examples, the governor could have vetoed the entire rules or only certain parts, such as the much-criticized paperwork

requirements that accompanied the Profile of Learning initiative. The Legislature could then have proposed alternatives to address the problems, Seifert said, instead of allowing the agency to impose the rules on school districts.

He described the bill as a "modest proposal to give the governor and the Legislature some oversight in the rulemaking process."

Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF1905*/SF1993/CH129

Cash for strapped agencies



One-time budget boosts totaling \$17 million go to seven state agencies and departments with budget shortfalls in the current fiscal year, under a new law effective May 12.

The Minnesota Zoo receives \$800,000 to make up for lower than anticipated revenue over the past year. The zoo had originally requested \$1 million, but a House-approved measure proposed funding only \$600,000 of that request. The \$800,000, which will come from the state's general fund, represents a compromise reached in a House-Senate conference committee.

The new law also requires the zoological board to submit a report to the governor and Legislature on possible alternatives to the zoo's current status as a state agency, including

converting the zoo to a private nonprofit.

The bulk of the deficiency money — about \$11.7 million — goes to the Department of Human Services to make up for a budget shortfall due to a delay in federal reimbursements for MinnesotaCare.

Although the state and federal government have reached an agreement concerning the delayed funds and reimbursements began March 1, the state funding is still needed to cover costs the department has had to cover in the past months. The money will come from the state's Health Care Access Fund.

Among the other payments in the new law are \$3.5 million to the Department of Children, Families and Learning to pay legal costs of two ongoing, major lawsuits — one in Minneapolis and one in St. Paul. Both involve claims that school districts are providing constitutionally inadequate education.

And the Department of Public Safety receives \$629,000 to pay for license plates for new automobiles, due to higher than expected automobile sales and other factors. That money comes from the state's Highway Users Tax Distribution Fund and will be paid back as the license plates are sold. The department also receives \$200,000 from the general fund to pay for additional security for Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The Department of Economic Security gets \$370,000 from the state's general fund for State Services for the Blind. The department is

Statehood week



Minnesota Historical Society tour guide Dan Gomez-Palacio dressed in 1857 period costume to play N.B. Robbins, a 23-year-old delegate to the Minnesota Constitutional Convention in 1857. As part of Minnesota Statehood Week, a group of fourth-graders from Hopkins were on hand May 11 to hear 1857 arguments concerning the shape of the future state.

also required to review the program's operation to determine why the current shortfall came about.

The Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board receives \$15,000, also from the general fund, to pay court-ordered payments.

Also under the new law, the Office of the Secretary of State receives \$975,000 for a year 2000 compliance program, but that amount is not included in the \$17 million total appropriation because it is to be transferred from unused portions of funds previously directed to the Department of Administration for a technology management program.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) and Sen. Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HFnone/SF2234*/CH141

Challenging state rules

Rules adopted by state agencies could be contested by local units of government under a bill passed May 10 by the House. The vote was 112-19.

The bill (**HF879/SF1636***) would allow a local unit of government, such as a city council or a county board of commissioners, to petition an agency to amend or repeal a rule.

Some lawmakers said the bill could create loopholes for cities or counties to get around tough environmental rules. Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) proposed an amendment that would allow the petition process to be used only if the result would not allow additional discharge of sewage into a body of water, but her proposal was voted down.

Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), sponsor of the bill, said his goal is to enable local units of government to appeal rules that are out of date.

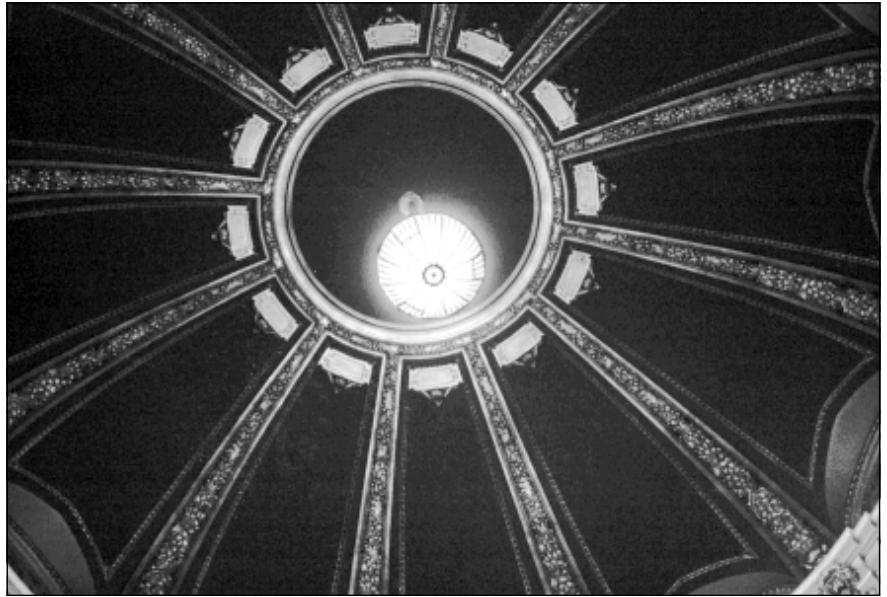
Under the bill, the local unit of government would have to provide evidence that the rule is unnecessary or that there would be a less costly or intrusive way to achieve the rule's purpose.

An agency that receives a petition would have 30 days to respond to the petition and 90 days to act on the request. If the agency disagrees with the petition, the issue would be settled by an administrative law judge.

The local unit of government that starts the petition would have to pay half the costs of the administrative hearing.

Knoblach said those provisions would make it unlikely that the petition process would be used very often. He said administrative law judges oversee the rulemaking process so it is appropriate for those judges to oversee the appeal process. He added that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency does not oppose the bill.

Celebrating statehood



The chandelier hanging in the Capitol rotunda is lit once a year for Statehood Day, May 11. This year Minnesota celebrated the 141st anniversary of its becoming the nation's 32nd state in 1858.

The bill was modified on the House floor to prohibit the petition process from being used to allow a local unit of government to increase property taxes or deny a person access to health care.

The measure now moves to a House-Senate conference committee.

Regulatory proposals



Proposals to regulate an occupation will have to be brought before the chairs of the related legislative committees, under a new law signed May 11.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will require such proposals to include answers to several questions, including why the regulation is necessary, who is advocating the regulation, and how the proposal would affect the practitioners of that occupation and the students who are preparing to enter that field.

That information will have to be submitted to the appropriate committees at least 15 days before a bill on the subject is introduced.

The measure was introduced in response to a February 1999 report from the Office of the Legislative Auditor. The number of occupations that are regulated in Minnesota has increased dramatically in recent decades.

Regulating occupations has been criticized, according to the report, because it can limit people from pursuing an occupation or "fence out" competitors. Minnesota's criteria for regulating an occupation is that unregulated practice could cause "significant threat to

public health, safety, or well-being." However, the report found that lawmakers have not applied that criteria consistently.

Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) and Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan) sponsored the new measure.

HF2023/SF1746*/CH144

Public employee contracts

The House voted May 13 to ratify labor agreements concerning state employees made between legislative sessions. The vote was 116-14.

While the agreements had already been put into effect by the joint Subcommittee on Employee Relations, they required routine ratification by the Legislature. But before passing the bill, lawmakers debated a provision that raises the salary for the chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system.

MnSCU officials chose to raise the salary of Chancellor Morrie Anderson by 8.8 percent effective July 1, 1998. The pay raise also included a retroactive salary increase of 32 percent effective July 1, 1997. From 1995 to 1998, Anderson's salary grew from \$108,780 per year to \$185,000 per year.

Some lawmakers said they disagreed with the MnSCU decision about offering a retroactive pay raise. Rep. Mark Gleason (DFL-Richfield) unsuccessfully offered an amendment that would have allowed the pay raise but canceled the retroactive policy. He

said the increase "shocks the conscience" in a time when lawmakers are trying to shrink the size of government.

But others supported the provision, saying that Anderson is still paid less than University of Minnesota President Mark Yudof, even after the raise.

"This current chancellor is worth every dime he has been paid and more," said Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls).

And Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey) urged fellow lawmakers to support the provision because he said the process of collective bargaining should be honored and those decisions should not be changed on the House floor.

Labor agreements that would be ratified under the bill include those between the state and the Minnesota Nurses Association, the Interfaculty Organization, the United Technical College Educators, and some employees in the Higher Education Services Office.

The bill also makes technical changes in the law governing public employees. One of those changes is the extension to unclassified executive and legislative employees the ability to transfer vacation and sick leave hours when they move between positions in the two branches.

Subcommittee Chair Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) is sponsoring the measure (**HF1877/SF1721***), which moves to the desk of Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Taking the lead for PUC



A new law effective May 7 changes the way the state's Public Utilities Commission (PUC) conducts its work. The measure became law without the signature of Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The Public Utilities Commission regulates the gas, electric, and phone service companies in the state. The law contains three changes designed to make the commission more efficient and responsive to the industries it serves.

The first provision allows noncontroversial cases to be approved if the commission has not acted on them in 60 days. The second change lets the commission delegate some responsibilities to subcommittees.

Finally, the law authorizes the commission to designate lead commissioners to handle certain cases or subject areas. That commissioner can preside over hearings and make non-binding recommendations on issues before the full commission. However, the lead commissioner would not have full authority over a case.

In a letter explaining why he chose not to sign the bill, Ventura stated that designating

lead commissioners to handle cases could lead to commissioner specialization which might decrease checks and balances on the commission.

"The PUC commissioners must be sensitive to the power granted to them under this law," he wrote. "They must not engage in the practice of commissioner specialization."

The governor said if the new law does not prove successful, he would examine it before it is up for renewal in 2002.

Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville) and Sen. Steve Novak (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF359*/SF684/CH125



HEALTH

Abortion amendment approved

The House passed May 11 a proposal to prohibit groups that provide or promote abortions from receiving state funds for family planning services.

The abortion-related changes were added to a bill (**HF1608**) addressing health department policy.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), included proposed changes in regulating health occupations, administering the Health Care Administrative Simplification Act, and distributing material and child-health block grants.

Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie) offered the amendment that added the abortion-related language.

Several lawmakers questioned the move.

Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina) said the governor would veto any bill with language restricting abortions. He called adding the amendment "an effort in futility."

"Governor Ventura has changed his mind before," Otremba countered.

Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls) said he was "sick and tired" of the House making choices about legislation based on what the governor wants. He said it is the governor's prerogative to veto the bill if he does not like it, but it is up to the House to pass legislation and override a veto, if it decides to do so.

"Let's ignore the threats and work the process through," Wenzel said.

The amendment was adopted on a vote of 83-45.

Among other provisions in the bill is a proposal to require home care entities that receive funding from the department to submit claims on one of two forms.

Under existing law, home care organizations use a variety of forms, which complicates the payment procedure. The two forms

referenced in the bill are approved by the Health Care Finance Administration.

The bill would also require registration for speech-language pathologists and audiologists and add new rules for unlicensed mental health practitioners.

And it would amend the definition of unlicensed mental health practitioners to exclude Native American medicine men and women, licensed attorneys, probation officers, school counselors employed by a school district, registered occupational therapists, and occupational therapy assistants. It would also provide a mechanism for unlicensed practitioners to become licensed under certain circumstances.

The measure was sent to the Senate.

Midwifery law



A measure affirming the status of midwives through a system of licensing became law without the governor's signature May 13.

Effective Aug. 1, the new law contains provisions for a voluntary licensing procedure for those who provide assessment and care outside a hospital for women and newborns during pregnancy, labor, birth, and the postpartum period.

The state's Board of Medical Practice has been uncertain about how to regulate practicing midwives and thus virtually ended the custom of issuing licenses under the existing law more than six decades ago.

But the development of a national standardized test for midwives several years ago provides a basis for establishing credentials. The new law will combine a list of educational and training requirements for licensure.

Midwives will have to prepare a written plan for each client to ensure continuity of care, including what would happen should something go wrong and a physician be required.

The practice of midwifery has been driven underground because of fears of being prosecuted for unlicensed practice of medicine.

Consequently, if a woman in labor is transferred to a medical facility, the emergency room physician often has to assess her condition and determine treatment without the benefit of the midwife's input.

Under other provisions of the new law, the midwife will have to keep extensive records on clients. It also will establish a five-member midwifery advisory council to review applications for licensure and field complaints from the public.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF949/SF383*/CH162

Paying spouses for care



A new law designed to allow qualified spouses in certain instances to be paid to provide private duty nursing was signed by the governor on May 13.

The measure will permit a spouse who is also a licensed nurse employed by a Medicare-certified home health agency to be paid when he or she cares for a spouse. The measure is effective Aug. 1.

Under existing law, payment isn't possible in certain instances, which had caused a hardship for at least one Minnesota family.

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

HF60*/SF591/CH156



HOUSING

Fees for nothing



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law May 13 that targets landlords who aren't being upfront with prospective tenants when they charge application fees.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will prohibit landlords from taking a screening fee when the landlord knows or should know that there are no units available.

Many landlords require that prospective tenants pay a screening fee to be used for background checks when the tenant applies for an apartment.

Rep. Julie Storm (R-St. Peter), sponsor of the measure in the House, said that while most landlords treat prospective tenants fairly, some are taking advantage of the housing shortage and charging prospective tenants when they know that they don't have any properties available. Those landlords then pocket the money.

Storm said that the new law "sends a message to unscrupulous landlords."

"It protects prospective tenants," she said. "It also gives a message to landlords that they cannot do this anymore."

The measure also will require that landlords return any screening fees collected if they don't actually do the background check, and will provide methods for returning the payment. It will require landlords to tell prospective tenants which screening service will be used.

The new law will provide penalties for violators, including a \$100 civil penalty to be paid along with any court costs and the return of the original screening fee to the would-be tenant.

Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF1613/SF1471*/CH150

Rental history reports

The House passed a bill May 11 that would provide landlords in Hennepin and Ramsey counties more information on prospective tenants while giving tenants additional protections. The vote was 128-4.

Current law prohibits tenant-screening services in these two counties from including information on eviction actions taken against prospective tenants in reports provided to landlords, unless the reports include the outcome of the cases.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth), would repeal that requirement and allow the services to include eviction actions that have not yet been resolved.

"This bill would simply treat Hennepin and Ramsey counties the same as the other 87 counties," Van Dellen said.

He said cities and neighborhood groups are holding landlords more accountable for the actions of their tenants and it is important that they get the best information on prospective tenants as soon as possible.

The bill also would allow courts to seal records of the eviction proceedings if the landlord's case has no basis in fact or law or if the judge feels that sealing the case is in the best interest of justice.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), who backed these provisions, said the bill would allow tenants to remove unjustified blemishes from their rental records.

The bill (**HF1195**) now goes to the Senate.



HUMAN SERVICES

Prompt payment for care



A new law signed May 11 requires health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and nonprofit health service plans to promptly pay claims for home care services.

Effective July 1, a valid claim must be paid within 30 days of receipt by the health plan or interest can be requested by the organization submitting the claim.

Prompt payment language was adopted by the Legislature in 1997 for claims filed on state-operated funding programs, reducing the average wait to 14 days.

In the private sector, home care agencies reported it is not uncommon to wait 60 to 90 days for payment, and sometimes as long as

120 days. That slices into their cash flow and makes it difficult to pay workers on time.

Most of the services are physician-ordered and pre-authorized. For claims to qualify for rapid processing under the new law, they must be submitted in a complete fashion.

The language of the new law reflects a compromise between the Minnesota Home Care Association and insurers Blue Cross-Blue Shield and Allina Health System.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) and Sen. Sheila Kiscaden (R-Rochester) sponsored the measure.

HF1658/SF1268*/CH146

Services for hard-of-hearing



A new law signed May 13 will help make life easier for the state's deaf community.

Effective Aug. 1, the process for obtaining deaf interpreter services will be amended and outdated provisions dealing with the way the Department of Human Services purchases communication devices for the state-run Equipment Distribution Program will be repealed.

Also, the state Department of Health will be added as a fourth member of the interagency management team for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Service Division.

Through feedback from forums held around the state, the division learned that there continues to be a shortage of quality interpreter services across Minnesota. The new law will add "interpreting" services to the division's purview to enable it to explore alternatives for getting interpreting services to consumers in those areas of the state where there are no freelance interpreters.

The new law will also repeal the requirement to contract out for referral services in the metro area, making it optional to accommodate the changing nature of services in the area.

For many years, there was only one sign language interpreter referral service available in the Twin Cities area — the service receiving state support. In recent years, competition in the referral marketplace has developed because of increasing demands for interpreting services.

As a result, it is expected over time that the metro area's need for state-supported referral services will diminish. The new law will give flexibility to allow that to happen.

All of the revisions came about as a result of periodic review of legislation that impacts the division's programs.

Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) and Sen. Charles Wiger (DFL-North St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF1414*/SF1584/CH149

Seeking service solutions



A task force to develop a new rate structure for state reimbursement for certain services offered to the developmentally disabled will be established under a new law effective May 14.

The task force is required to report to the Legislature by Jan. 15, 2000, and must operate under the umbrella of the commissioner of human services.

Although the method of providing services to the developmentally disabled in the state has shifted focus from large institutions to individual needs, the system of reimbursements for those services hasn't kept pace.

Also, the current payment procedure provides a higher reimbursement rate for new agencies entering the market than for existing operations.

The new law instructs the task force to develop a plan "that reflects individual consumer needs and demands for services" that is flexible, simple, and equitable.

The Minnesota Habilitation Coalition and Minnesota Day Activities Center Association supported creation of the task force. The task force will include officials from a variety of parties interested in reimbursements for services, including the counties.

Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) and Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the measure.

HF1933/SF1615*/CH152



INSURANCE

Cap on benefits raised

A new law effective May 8 increases the maximum limit of lifetime health benefits under the Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association (MCHA) insurance program.

MCHA provides insurance to Minnesotans who are unable to obtain health insurance through the private market because of pre-existing conditions. Participants pay higher premiums than they would for private plans.

The law raises the lifetime cap on health benefits to \$2.8 million from \$2 million. Proponents of the measure said MCHA participants often have high health-care costs and would benefit from the increased limit.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), who was the House sponsor of the measure, said he originally wanted to remove the cap entirely. He said an 8-year-old boy in Red Wing who requires constant supervision and a special ventilator to breathe would benefit from the

raised cap, because his medical needs cost about \$30,000 per month.

The measure became law May 7 without Gov. Jesse Ventura's signature.

Ventura said raising the benefit limit will further increase MCHA's deficit. The state subsidizes the association because of the high claim costs, and Ventura said he is wary of supporting a program that continues to suffer losses.

"I greatly appreciate the importance of assisting individuals who are in danger of exhausting health care benefits under (MCHA)," he stated in a letter explaining why he didn't sign the new law. "However, I am becoming increasingly concerned about the growing unfairness of the financing mechanism that supports MCHA."

Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF270*/SF470/CH130

Health coverage alternatives

A bill aimed at increasing competition in the state's health care insurance market is on its way to the governor.

The House gave final passage to a modified version of the measure May 12. The vote was 90-39.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), sponsor of the bill, said the plan would provide options for less expensive and less comprehensive employee health policies for small businesses, many of them in rural areas.

The bill would permit insurance companies

that do not already have a major presence in the state — those that have less than 3 percent market share — to offer plans that don't include all of the state's currently mandated coverage.

Under existing state law, insurers and health maintenance organizations may offer small employers — those with fewer than 50 employees — the same benefit sets they offer to large companies or they may sell two alternative plans with lower costs and lower benefits. Haas' bill would provide another option to those small firms.

The bill would permit policies with different copayments and deductibles, as well as those that would pay on a basis other than medical expenses incurred, such as a flat dollar amount per day in the hospital or a flat dollar amount upon a diagnosis of cancer.

The bill (**HF870/SF841***) was originally passed by the House on April 28, but went to a House-Senate conference committee. The House-backed measure had called for mandating five specific areas of coverage, including breast cancer screening, cleft palate treatment, minimum maternity hospital stays, outpatient mental health treatment services, and immediate coverage for newborns.

Most of those provisions were removed in conference committee, which concerned Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth), who asked whether as vigorous a fight as possible had been waged for the House position.

The bill has faced persistent opposition from Huntley and Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls). Both claim the "stripped-down" policies will

Tobacco wall



Wendy Audette of St. Paul and her 3-year-old son Luke take a look at the Tobacco Memorial Wall, which was set up temporarily in the Capitol rotunda May 7. The wall, circling the perimeter of the rotunda, was covered with photographs and stories of tobacco-related deaths. It was erected as part of a rally to mark the first anniversary of the state's multi-billion-dollar settlement with tobacco companies.

not be embraced by small business because the coverage would be substandard.

Haas contends that the bill simply offers options that are not available and even if they're not successful, at least an attempt to do something about the high cost of insurance will have been made.

The Senate passed the bill May 11.

Coverage for translation



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law May 7 that requires no-fault automobile insurance to cover the cost of sign language interpreting and language translators as part of medical benefits.

The state's no-fault automobile insurance law is designed to ensure prompt payments by insurance companies for medical and other benefits to victims of car accidents. It was created to relieve the financial burden of uncompensated victims who might have costly medical or repair bills as a result of an accident.

In order to communicate their illness or injury, people who don't speak English often need a family member or professional interpreter to accompany them to the doctor's office.

Effective May 8, the law directs insurance companies to pay for translators as necessary medical expenses, but the services will only be covered if they relate to medical care associated with an accident and will not apply if a family member serves as the translator.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), the House sponsor of the measure, said he discovered many insurance companies were not covering translating services as part of necessary medical expenses.

Sen. Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF684/SF521*/CH134

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will also clarify state law regarding contributions to senior and youth centers. That provision was requested by the city of Paynesville, where officials discovered that while the city could operate a transit program, it couldn't legally give financial support to an existing service operated by someone else.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) and Sen. Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville) sponsored the measure.

HF371*/SF461/CH155

Covering expenses



A new law effective Aug. 1 increases per diem rates for board members of some Minnesota sanitary districts. Gov. Jesse Ventura signed the legislation May 11.

A per diem rate is paid to a person much like an allowance to cover travel, dining, or other expenses associated with that person's duties as an employee or elected official.

Board members who serve the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District will see their per diem rates rise from \$35 to \$50.

Per diem rates for board meetings of the Moose Lake-Windemere Sanitary Sewer District will also increase from \$35 to \$50, but the annual maximum of \$1,000 will not change. In addition, the per diem for the board's chair will rise from \$45 to \$50. For events other than meetings, that district's per diem for its board members will increase from \$35 to \$50.

Both sanitary districts were established in the 1970s, and their rates have not changed since they were created.

Rep. Willard Munger (DFL-Duluth) and Sen. Sam Solon (DFL-Duluth) sponsored the measure.

HF258/SF376*/CH145

Hospital district addition



A new law effective May 12 authorizes the Paynesville area hospital district to add the city of Richmond to its domain. Gov. Jesse Ventura signed the measure May 11.

Under state law, only cities that lie geographically next to hospital districts, which may levy taxes, can become part of the districts without approval from the Legislature.

In this case, Richmond is separated from the hospital district by a township. The hospital is building a new clinic in Richmond and wanted the city to be part of the district in the event that it might have to impose a tax in the future.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) said the request needed legislative approval because of the hospital district's taxing authority, in addition to granting the geographic exception.

Stang and Sen. Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville) sponsored the legislation.

HF174*/SF156/CH147



SAFETY

Bleacher safety

A bill that would establish safety requirements for bleachers was passed May 7 by the House, but some lawmakers said the measure as amended on the House floor is too watered-down to be effective.

The bill (**HF1124**) would require bleachers, such as those in sports stadiums, indoor arenas, or parks, to include guardrails or safety nets. Open spaces between floorboards, seats, and guardrails would have to be four inches or less, or safety nets would have to be installed.

In response to concerns that the costs of complying with the requirements would be a burden for school districts and local units of government, Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) proposed allowing bleachers to remain out of compliance if a sign is placed near them that requires children under age 10 to sit in the first three rows.

The House approved that proposal, along with a proposal from Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) that would raise the minimum height at which the requirements would be in effect. The bill would have applied to bleachers taller than 30 inches, and Bradley's amendment raised the minimum to 60 inches.

Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), sponsor of the bill, estimated the cost of putting safety nets underneath a 90-foot section of bleachers would be about \$200 to \$600. Adding guardrails and reducing the gaps between floorboards and seats for a section that size would cost about \$3,000.

The bill would provide \$500,000 in state grants to help communities replace or remodel old bleachers. Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar) proposed increasing that amount to \$1 million, and Rep. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm) proposed increasing it to \$2 million. Both proposals were defeated.

Smith said bleacher safety has traditionally been neglected despite reports of accidents throughout the state, including the recent fatality of a boy from Mound. Six-year-old Toby Lee died in January after falling from a set of bleachers while attending a hockey game at a Hutchinson arena. Smith said that the arena had recently spent \$750,000 on repairs, but



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Funding historical projects



Most Minnesota cities will be able to make unlimited donations to historical projects under a new law signed May 13.

A \$500 cap on what cities can spend on historical projects was enacted in 1957 and later raised to \$2,000 in 1977.

The proposal to eliminate that cap was supported by the Minnesota Historical Society as a way of encouraging additional historical investment by cities.

none of that money went toward fixing the bleachers.

Existing bleachers would have to comply with the new standards by Jan. 1, 2001, and new bleachers that are installed after July 1, 1999, would all have to comply.

"I believe Minnesota will lead the way on this issue," Smith said, comparing it to the state's requirements for automatic garage door openers. Minnesota was the first state to require a safety mechanism to halt automatic door closing at a sign of resistance. Several other states have since adopted similar measures.

The bleacher safety bill now goes to the Senate.



TAXES

Tax collection streamlined



Minnesota's district courts have been removed from the loop when the Department of Revenue pursues collection of certain back taxes, under a new law signed May 11.

The revenue commissioner is now allowed to serve a summons and complaint by certified mail to the taxpayer's last known address.

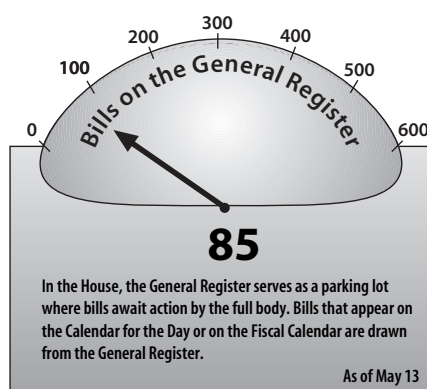
Under prior law, the department was required to file with the court administrator showing the taxes due. The court administrator then began the collection process.

The association that represents the court administrators requested the change. The procedure applies primarily to collection of taxes from people who have left the state.

The new law, effective May 12, represents a streamlining of tax collection procedures in the state.

Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights) and Sen. Jane Ranum (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the measure.

HF1131/SF1115*/CH143



TRANSPORTATION

Seat belt plan revived

A seemingly mundane bill up for a vote on the House floor May 13 became the vehicle to rebuff a veto by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

An amendment tacked onto a Minnesota Department of Transportation housekeeping bill would change the so-called seat belt gag rule to allow defective seat belt claims to move forward in court. Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) offered the amendment.

The entire bill (**SF1762*/HF1551**) passed on a 124-6 vote.

On April 27, Ventura vetoed a separate bill, (**HF462/SF303***) sponsored by McGuire, that would have exempted claims of defective or malfunctioning seatbelts from the state's gag law. In his veto message, the governor stated that the Legislature had overstepped its bounds by designating what evidence the courts can consider. He also said that the bill had not gone far enough and that the entire gag rule should be repealed. The Senate voted to override the veto April 28.

The current gag rule law states that the fact that a person is wearing or is not wearing a seat belt cannot be considered by the courts when deciding personal injury or property damage claims resulting from a car crash.

In a 1997 case, the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that the gag rule law, as it is written, also applies to cases in which the claim is filed against the auto manufacturer for a defective seat belt.

If plaintiffs can't establish that they were actually wearing the seat belt, they can't prove that the seat belt caused or failed to prevent the injury. And the cases cannot move forward.

The bill passed May 13 would, like McGuire's original measure, exempt claims of defective or malfunctioning seat belts from the gag rule law.

Another amendment, offered by Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) and accepted by the House, would change the admissibility of helmet use by motorcyclists as evidence in cases where cyclists are seeking damages. The state does not require motorcyclists to wear helmets.

The measure would not require courts to include helmet use as evidence in such cases. Motorcycle groups have argued that the law that allows such evidence is unfair because it can punish motorcyclists for perfectly legal behavior.

The rest of the bill deals with the operations of the state transportation department. Workman, who is sponsoring the legislation, said it would bring many of the department's proce-

dures into the 1990s.

The measure would make many technical changes to the current state law, such as allowing 18-year-olds to drive 3,500-gallon petroleum tankers.

It also would raise to \$150,000 from \$75,000 the amount above which the department must go through the competitive bidding process for construction projects. Workman said that provision would allow the department to act quickly on emergency road repairs because time is saved by not having to go through the bidding process.

Workman's bill now moves back to the Senate for consideration of the House amendments.

Ending emissions testing

The House passed a bill May 11 that would put an end to the state's motor vehicle inspection program no later than March 1, 2000.

The House voted 114-10 to scrap the emissions testing program, passing a bill that would allow the state to terminate the inspections next spring, pending air quality approval by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

But if the EPA deems air quality in the Twin Cities area has met federal air quality standards before the March deadline, the bill would allow for the 8-year-old program to end earlier.

The measure (**HF7**) is sponsored by Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View) and has endured a long trip of legislative hurdles as lawmakers debated over an end date for the program.

The March 1, 2000, date is a product of a House-Senate conference committee. The House had originally pushed for a Jan. 1, 2000, end date and the Senate had set July 1, 2000, as the date to eliminate the program.

Haake's bill goes to Gov. Jesse Ventura, who is expected to sign the measure.

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* news magazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

Exception for milk trucks



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law May 13 that eases restrictions on milk haulers.

Until 2003, vehicles carrying milk will be exempt from seasonal road restrictions and the state's 5-ton per axle weight limit.

The seasonal weight restrictions, in effect statewide from March 20 to May 15 each year, are designed to prevent costly wear and tear on roads that can be caused by heavy vehicles. But the springtime restrictions often put milk transporters in positions where they are breaking the law.

Under federal food regulations, milk carriers are not allowed to make two trips on one load and often end up carrying more than allowed under the seasonal limits. Penalties for such violations include fines and can put a milk carrier's license in jeopardy.

The law exempts milk carriers from the weight restrictions from one point of production to the first processing point. Subsequent trips are not covered under the measure, which in turn prevents haulers from carrying many farmers' loads at one time.

The law allows carriers to exceed restrictions by 2 tons per axle on roads with restrictions of 5 tons per axle.

The measure also eliminates a reference to an obsolete test for determining the fat content of milk, effective Aug. 1. All other provisions of the bill are effective May 14.

Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar) and Sen. Dean Johnson (R-Willmar) sponsored the legislation.

HF1641/SF1645*/CH154

New deadline for banks



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law May 7 that will close a legal loophole that can cause car dealerships to break the law.

The new law will decrease the

Front and center



Two-year-old Tommy Workman, son of Rep. Tom Workman, found the center aisle of the House chamber a good place to stretch his legs during a May 7 visit to the Capitol.

amount of time banks are allowed to release a title after a car is paid off. Under current law, banks have 15 days to do so. The new provision, effective Aug. 1, reduces that to seven days when the cars are sold by most types of auto dealerships.

Under the present system, car dealers have only 10 days to transfer titles to buyers after a vehicle is sold. This can be a problem when dealers need to obtain titles from a bank. If the bank takes longer than 10 days, the dealer's deadline has not been met and they break the law.

Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) is sponsoring the measure, which would require banks to release a title within seven days for new and used auto dealerships and leasing companies.

The law also includes a change in state law regarding the mounting of television screens in motor vehicles.

That provision, effective May 8, allows television screens in any place except where visible by the driver of an automobile.

Under the new law, Minnesota dealers will now be able to sell the Oldsmobile Silhouette

minivan. The van's television screen previously did not fit state law, which restricted screen mounting to a space specifically behind the driver.

Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF790/SF778*/CH131

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.

To find out who represents you at the Capitol . . .

Call the House Public Information Office at (651) 296-2146

Administration	296-6013
Agriculture	297-2200
Children, Families and Learning	582-8200
Commerce	296-4026
Corrections	642-0200
Economic Security	296-3644
Employee Relations	297-1184
Job Information	296-2616
Finance	296-5900
Health	215-5800
Human Rights	296-5663
Toll Free	1-800-657-3704

Minnesota State Agencies

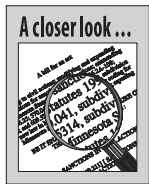
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Human Services	296-6117
Labor and Industry	296-6107
Military Affairs	282-4662
Natural Resources	296-6157
Pollution Control Agency	296-6300
Public Safety	296-6642
Driver and Vehicle Services	296-6911
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Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division	296-6159

State Patrol	297-3935
Public Service	296-5120
Revenue	
Taxpayer Assistance	296-3781
Toll Free	1-800-652-9094
Trade and	
Economic Development	297-1291
Office of Tourism	296-5029
Transportation	296-3000
Veterans Affairs	296-2562
State Information	296-6013

Ethics bill passes without cup-of-coffee exemption

By Jon Fure



A campaign finance and ethics bill passed the House May 11 without a controversial provision for a \$5-and-under exemption to the state's so-called gift ban on lawmakers. The vote on the bill was

69-63.

Current law prohibits elected officials from receiving gifts from lobbyists or principals — organizations that hire lobbyists. But some lawmakers have argued that the gift ban should not apply to food or beverages in some situations.

Rep. Doug Reuter (R-Owatonna) told colleagues of one such situation that arose shortly after he was elected, when he met with a lobbyist for the city of Owatonna. Reuter said the lobbyist provided background information and described the city's positions on certain laws and pending legislation.

The meeting lasted about three hours, and Reuter said he had three cups of coffee. As he got up to leave, he was told he had to pay for the coffee.

"I thought, 'This is ridiculous,'" he said. "Since then I have made it a point to ask people in my district if I should be impeached — if I should lose my office — for taking a cup of coffee from a lobbyist, and not one person has said yes."

But lawmakers voted against an amendment proposed on the House floor by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) that would have exempted food and beverages costing up to \$5 from the ban. Bishop called the current gift ban a "loony provision of law." He said buying someone a cup of coffee is common courtesy and his proposal would allow a "minimal level of hospitality."

Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), sponsor of the bill (HF441/SF516*), strongly opposed Bishop's proposal. He said a former representative from his district had described the days before the gift ban, when lobbyists would pay for a legislator's breakfast, lunch, and dinner. And many receptions would be held throughout the year with food and beverages provided by lobbyists.

"Sometimes it's a bit of a pain, I know, but I feel we're better off with zero tolerance rather than a (\$5 exemption)," Knoblach said.

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) agreed.

"We've learned to live with it, and we don't have to worry about whether something costs



The House rejected a proposed exemption to the state's gift ban that would have allowed lawmakers to accept a cup of coffee and other food items valued at less than \$5.

\$5 or \$5.02," she said. "It seems to be working well."

While the House voted against the \$5 exemption, the bill does contain some other exemptions to the ban. Under the proposal, a lobbyist could give a gift to an elected official at a wedding or other significant family event if they have a history of gift exchanges prior to the recipient becoming an elected official. A gift given in that instance would only be allowed if the person who paid for the gift does not seek a business reimbursement or tax deduction and does not give a similar gift to other people attending the event.

The bill also would allow elected officials to accept a gift or a meal from their employers in the normal course of business, provided that all other employees receive the same gift. Under current law, an elected official who works as a teacher, for example, would have to pay for a meal provided to all other teachers at an event sponsored by the teachers' union, Education Minnesota. The House measure would not require the elected official to pay for the meal or gift in those kinds of situations.

Knoblach's bill would modify several provisions of state law relating to campaign spending.

Current law requires political candidates to file statements of economic interests, to declare their sources of income. The bill would expand those provisions to apply to income that a candidate earns as an independent contractor or consultant. Candidates who are independent contractors or consultants would have to disclose their sources of income that

are more than \$1,100 per year.

Another provision would require candidates to disclose assets of spouses and dependents, so that a person couldn't avoid disclosing a conflict of interest by transferring an asset to a family member.

The bill also would extend disclosure laws to apply to special funds that are created by candidates, such as a legal defense fund or a fund for an inaugural party. Under current law, disclosure requirements do not apply to those types of funds. This issue drew attention when Gov. Jesse Ventura undertook a drive to raise private funds for his inaugural celebration.

Another disclosure-related provision was removed from the bill. Lawmakers voted to uphold current law that requires a candidate to disclose the name, address, employer, and occupation of anyone who donates more than \$100 to his or her campaign.

House members deleted a provision that would have required such information only from people who donate more than \$250, which is the requirement for federal candidates. For donations of less than \$250, the bill would have required only the name and address of the donor.

Other provisions that were removed from the bill on the House floor would have allowed corporations and nonprofit organizations to communicate with their employees, members, or shareholders to advocate political candidates. Knoblach said he felt those provisions were reasonable, but he proposed removing

Continued on page 26

Fans of Capitol architect join to honor his work

By Sarah Tellijohn

No matter what, architect Cass Gilbert will always be remembered in Minnesota for his design of the Capitol.

But a group of his fans want to ensure the famed architect is honored for the other nearly 80 buildings he designed in and around the Twin Cities. Of those structures, about half are private residences.

About 60 members make up the Cass Gilbert Society, formed in response to a 1998 seminar that focused on his work on the East Coast. The Oct. 11, 1998, event honored the 100th anniversary of the opening of Gilbert's New York office.

Gilbert designed six buildings in New York City, including the Woolworth Building, the U. S. Customs House, the Broadway Chambers Building, and the Brooklyn Army Terminal.

He is also famous for the U.S. Supreme

Gilbert rowhouse left in the city. Comprised of five units, the structure was most likely intended to be rental property and does not have as many intricate details as some of Gilbert's other homes, Velleu said.

However, the homes are treated today as individual units. They are sold separately, much like condominiums.

The couple has lived in the 2,300 square-foot rowhouse for 24 years. Years earlier, Cass Gilbert and his new bride, Julia Finch, lived in the Velleu's 5-bedroom home when it was first built.

Velleu said construction began on the building in 1884 and the entire structure was completed in 1888.

"We celebrated the birthday two times in order to be right," Velleu said. "Another reason to have a party, I guess."

Velleu and her husband have renovated the home a bit, exposing a brick wall and wooden

The non-profit society's members consist of Cass Gilbert homeowners, architecture enthusiasts, scholars, and people who are just fond of his work. Corporate members include Macalester College, Edina Realty, the University Club of St. Paul, the New Louisiana Cafe, and Ace Grand Avenue Hardware Co.

A board of directors, comprised of four officers and committee chairs makes decisions on the group's long-range plans.

Those plans include publishing a catalog of Gilbert's work and offering walking tours around neighborhoods that contain the architect's residential or church designs. Another proposal is a traveling exhibit about Cass Gilbert, which could be used nationally.

The society is in the middle of sponsoring a four-piece lecture series. One of the lectures, held in March, focused on the Minnesota Capitol building. The next lecture is set for 7 p.m. June 8 at the University Club in St. Paul. The speaker will be Geoffrey Blodgett, a professor at Oberlin College and author of a book about Gilbert.

Memberships are available for \$25 per household (\$50 for corporations). Send name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and fax number, as well as a check, to: Cass Gilbert Society, 550 Portland Ave., St. Paul, MN 55102. 🐼



Minnesota State Capitol architect Cass Gilbert designed and briefly lived in this house on Portland Avenue in St. Paul, which today is home to the president and founder of the Cass Gilbert Society.

Court in Washington, D.C., and state capitols in Arkansas and West Virginia. At least 10 other states also boast samples of his work.

A group of Minnesotans who attended the New York celebration were concerned that Gilbert's Minnesota work was going unnoticed. So they invited some of the New Yorkers to tour the Minnesota Capitol and, consequently, the society was born.

Jean Velleu, the society's president, lives at 550 Portland Ave. in St. Paul. She and her husband Richard reside in the only existing

ceiling beams. But the place had already been changed from its original state when they arrived; the large sitting area in the front used to be two rooms. The newel posts that used to sit atop the house's carved banisters were sawed off, too.

Velleu said the unique windows in her house show Gilbert's technique for bringing in natural light. Common features in his other homes include leaded glass, sunbursts in wood or stone, eyebrow windows, and sawtooth shingles.

Cass Gilbert creations

Public buildings

Minnesota Capitol
U.S. Supreme Court, Washington, D.C.
U.S. Customs House, New York

Commercial structures

Woolworth Building, New York
Great Northern Railway Depot, Willmar
Endicott Building, 141 Fourth St., St. Paul

Residential designs

Cass Gilbert House, 1 Heather Place, St. Paul
William Lightner House, 318 Summit Ave., St. Paul
Elizabeth Wheeler Gilbert House, 471 Ashland Ave., St. Paul
Crawford Livingston House, 339 Summit Ave., St. Paul

Ecclesiastical architecture

Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church, Dayton Avenue at Mackubin Street, St. Paul
Virginia Street Church, 170 Virginia St., St. Paul
Saint John's Episcopal Church, Moorhead

Lawmakers in Minnesota and elsewhere face limits

By Grant Martin

While some people might say that May 17 is just another day of waiting before the new Star Wars movie opens, lawmakers in Minnesota have had that day circled on their calendars all year.

For them, it represents the finish line. The Minnesota Constitution requires the Legislature to have its work done by the third Monday after the first Saturday in May — May 17 this year. And lawmakers will probably work right up to the midnight deadline.

And if they don't get their work done by that date, they face an option that, at this point, may be scarier than the Phantom Menace — a special session.

If lawmakers need to meet after the May deadline, a special session is necessary. And under the Constitution, only the governor can call a special session.

Minnesota's regular legislative session calendar is dictated by the state constitution, state law, and resolutions passed in both houses of the Legislature.

The first year of the two-year legislative cycle — the odd-numbered year — doesn't offer too many surprises. State law requires the Legislature to convene on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January — Jan. 5 this year.

And because the first year is used to develop the two-year budget for state government, lawmakers need all the time allotted and typically meet right up to the deadline.

The second year of the legislative cycle — the even-numbered year — is typically used to approve a capital improvement budget and any supplemental budgets.

Lawmakers are allowed to establish the start-date for the second year. At the end of the first year, leadership in both the House and Senate make a motion to adjourn to a date in the following year, and lawmakers in both bodies must give the thumbs up.

The end-date in the second year is also flexible. The constitutional provision prohibiting the Legislature from meeting past the

1999 end dates for state legislatures	
February	Virginia
March	Georgia, Idaho, New Mexico, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia, and Wyoming
April	Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, and Washington
May	Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Vermont
June	Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Louisiana, Maine, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and South Carolina
July	North Carolina
August	Oregon
Year-round legislatures	California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.
Did not meet in 1999	Kentucky

Source: Stateside Associates

May deadline is still in place, but it is typically another constitutional provision that dictates the end-date in the second year.

The constitution prohibits lawmakers from meeting more than 120 legislative days over the two-year cycle. So, for the second year, lawmakers can use any days that they didn't use in the first year.

Legislative days are different from calendar days. The constitution defines a legislative day as any day that either the House or Senate meet in session. As of May 13, lawmakers have used 64 legislative days this year.

Minnesota lawmakers have yet to decide on an opening day for the 2000 legislative session. Most recently, the Legislature has reconvened in late January of the odd year and adjourned in early April.

State legislative sessions around the country are also governed by several factors, including state constitutions, state laws, and sometimes simply custom.

Most states began their legislative sessions in January this year. Nevada and Oklahoma started their sessions in February. And Alabama, Florida, and Louisiana began in March.

Kentucky is the only state where lawmakers didn't meet in 1999. Legislators in the Bluegrass State meet for only three months every two years. The Kentucky Legislature meets next in January 2000.

Nine state legislatures meet year round with schedules similar to the U.S. Congress. Those states are California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.


Of the part-time legislatures, end dates for the sessions vary quite a bit. The majority of states end their legislative sessions in March, April, May, or June. North Carolina ends in July, and Oregon lawmakers go home in August.

Virginia finishes in February. The Virginia Legislature meets one month in the odd year of their legislative cycle and two months in the even year.

Six state legislatures won't meet in regular session next year. Arkansas, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, and Texas only meet in the odd year of their two-year legislative cycles.

Unlike Minnesota, 30 states have mechanisms for members of the state legislature to call themselves back into special session without the governor's approval. Most require supermajorities — such as two-thirds or three-fifths of the members — to call a special session.

In Maine, lawmakers can call a special session without the governor's approval. But in order to do so, the presiding officers in both bodies must get approval from a majority of members from each individual party within each house.

That task could be difficult because each house of the Maine Legislature has an independent lawmaker. If those members don't agree to a special session, it's no go. 

Frequently called numbers

(Area code 651)

Secretary of the Senate			Index, Senate			Information, House		
231 Capitol	296-0271		110 Capitol	296-2887		175 State Office Building	296-2146	
Voice mail/order bills	296-2343		Index, House			TTY, Senate	296-0250	
Chief Clerk of the House			211 Capitol	296-6646		Toll free	1-888-234-1112	
211 Capitol	296-2314		Information, Senate			TTY, House	296-9896	
			231 Capitol	296-0504		Toll free	1-800-657-3550	

Many famous politicians are together in the end

By Grant Martin

Even in death, two of Minnesota's most influential early political figures are at a standoff.

On a grassy hill in St. Paul's Oakland Cemetery sits a six-foot-tall, white stone monument to Minnesota's first governor, Henry H. Sibley. On the same hill, barely 50 feet to the southeast, sits the new granite monument to the state's second governor, Alexander Ramsey.

In the 1860 governor's race, Ramsey — the prominent Republican appointed as Minnesota's first territorial governor — defeated Sibley — the Democrat who had been the first elected representative for the Minnesota Territory and was the first governor after statehood.

The two monuments don't face each other. Ramsey's monument looks south toward the Capitol less than a mile away, and on the other side of the hill, Sibley's monument looks to the north.

The monuments themselves — with their backs to each other — seem to suggest the politicians' lifelong rivalry, which was a friendly but hard-fought one.

Ramsey and Sibley are just two of the four Minnesota governors buried at Oakland Cemetery.

Oakland Cemetery and Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis have come to host a large number of Minnesota's prominent political figures after their deaths. Both have become the final resting place for several former governors, judges, state lawmakers, and members of the U.S. Congress.



The worn gravestone for Henry H. Sibley, Minnesota's first governor, stands facing north in St. Paul's Oakland Cemetery. The headstone for Alexander Ramsey, the state's second governor, sits to the left of Sibley's monument, facing south. Oakland Cemetery and Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis are the final resting places for many prominent Minnesota politicians.

Before becoming an official cemetery, Oakland Cemetery had been an unofficial burial ground for the newly developing village of St. Paul.

In 1853, the cemetery organized as a non-profit company and all funds earned from sale of the plots went back into the development of the property. Sibley and Ramsey actually served as trustees of the cemetery — at different times, of course.

About 15 years after Oakland opened, Col. William S. King, a Minneapolis newspaper publisher, approached several community-minded businessmen with the idea of a public cemetery in the village of Minneapolis.

The group organized a search committee in 1871 and began looking for sites to develop such a facility. The group first settled on a location next to present-day Loring Park; however, a speculator got wind of the proposal and swiped up the land.

Luckily, King had a 130-acre plot of land along Lake Calhoun that he was willing to part with. He agreed to sell the land for \$21,000 to be paid over one year's time at 7-percent interest.

The group met later that year and formed the Lyndale Cemetery Association. The following year, the group changed the name to Lakewood Cemetery.

The last major political figure to be buried at either Oakland or Lakewood was Muriel Humphrey Brown, the wife of former Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey Jr. and mother of former Minnesota Attorney General Hubert H. "Skip" Humphrey III. In 1978, Brown was appointed to the U.S. Senate when her husband died during his term.

Brown died in 1998 and was buried next to her husband at Lakewood.

Politicians buried at Oakland Cemetery, St. Paul, include:

Henry H. Sibley (1811-1891) — Sibley was the Minnesota Territory's first representative to the U.S. Congress from 1848 to 1853, and the first governor of the state of Minnesota from 1858 to 1860.

Alexander Ramsey (1815-1903) — Ramsey served as the first territorial governor from 1849 to 1853, as the state's second governor from 1860-1863, and in the U.S. Senate from 1863-1865.

Henry Mower Rice (1816-1894) — Rice served as a U.S. senator from 1858 to 1863.

Edmund Rice (1819-1889) — Brother to Henry Mower Rice, served in the Minnesota Legislature, as mayor of St. Paul, and ran unsuccessfully for governor.

Willis A. Gorman (1816-1876) — Gorman was appointed the second territorial governor from 1853 to 1857 and also served in the Minnesota House.

Samuel James Renwick McMillan (1826-1897) — McMillan served as U.S. senator for the state from 1875 to 1887.

Arthur Emanuel Nelson (1892-1955) — Nelson was the mayor of St. Paul from 1922 to 1926. He also served in the U.S. Senate.

Frederick Clement Stevens (1861-1923) — Stevens served in the U.S. Congress from 1897 to 1915 and in the Minnesota House.

Christopher Columbus Andrews (1829-1922) — Andrews served as foreign minister to Sweden from 1869 to 1877.

Politicians buried at Lakewood Cemetery, Minneapolis, include:

John S. Pillsbury (1828-1901) — Pillsbury was the state's eighth governor from 1876 to 1882. He also served in the Minnesota Senate.

John Lind (1854-1930) — Lind was governor from 1899 to 1901 and served several terms in U.S. Congress.

Floyd B. Olson (1891-1936) — Olson was elected as the first Farmer-Labor governor in 1931, and served until 1936.

Hubert H. Humphrey Jr. (1911-1978) — Humphrey served as mayor of Minneapolis from 1945 to 1948, as U.S. senator from Minnesota from 1949 to 1964 and 1971 to 1978, and as U.S. vice president from 1965 to 1969. He ran unsuccessfully for president in 1968.

Muriel Humphrey Brown (1912-1998) — Brown was the wife of Hubert H. Humphrey Jr. She was appointed to the U.S. Senate when her husband died in 1978.

Rudy Perpich (1928-1995) — Perpich was governor of Minnesota from 1976 to 1979 and 1983 to 1991. He also served as lieutenant governor and in the state Senate.

Charles A. Lindbergh (1859-1924) — Lindbergh was a U.S. congressman from 1907 to 1917. He also ran unsuccessfully for both governor of Minnesota and U.S. senator. He was the father of Charles Lindbergh Jr., the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

William Drew Washburn (1831-1912) — Washburn served in the Minnesota House from 1861 to 1879, in the U.S. Congress from 1879 to 1885, and in the U.S. Senate from 1889 to 1895.

Cyrus Aldrich (1808-1871) — Aldrich was a congressman from Minnesota from 1859 to 1863. He also served in the Minnesota House.

John Grant Alexander (1893-1971) — Alexander served in the U.S. Congress from 1839 to 1841. He also ran unsuccessfully for governor.

Governor's Desk

CH1-CH165

Bills await governor's action

Once a bill has passed both the House and the Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill. The governor 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 results in the bill becoming law in the first year of the biennium.

The timing of these actions is as significant as the actions themselves.

In the first year of the biennium, the important thing to remember is that the

governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill. If the governor doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law with or without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

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 objects. As with all vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

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.mainserver.state.mn.us/governor/>

(Select "It's a New Day" and then click on "Legislative Logs")

Key:

CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
Res. 1	544*	638	Resolution for Minnesota/Ontario border lakes trade agreements violation resolution.	3/26/99	
Res. 2	719	757*	Resolution to prohibit federal recoupment of state tobacco settlement recoveries.	3/29/99	
Res. 3	426*	534	Resolution for Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness management facilitation.	4/23/99	
1	139*	88	Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board member qualifications specified.	2/17/99	
2	26*	29	Mississippi education center previous grantee changed to the city of Grand Rapids, and condition imposed.	2/17/99	
3	133*	107	Minneapolis and St. Paul residency requirements repealed.	3/4/99	
4	6*	40	Snowmobile metal traction device restrictions modified and recreational vehicle rulemaking authority modified.	3/4/99	
5	171	121*	Health-related licensing board licensees infection control.	3/8/99	
6	370	424*	Nonregistered pesticide distribution permitted for certain uses outside the state.	3/8/99	
7	248*	324	Crooked Lake detached banking facility.	3/15/99	
8	214*	241	Emergency medical services volunteer ambulance attendant definition.	3/15/99	
9	536	464*	Carisoprodol classification as controlled substance effective date delay.	3/15/99	
10	356	73*	Consumer support program for persons with functional limitations financial eligibility criteria modification.	3/15/99	
11	382	343*	Real estate provisions modifications.	3/15/99	
12	49*	162	Peace officers or firefighters killed in line of duty spouse health insurance coverage.	3/16/99	
13	302*	579	Ambulance services shared service purchasing.	3/16/99	
14	74	301*	Health care directive form modification.	3/16/99	
15	453*	416	Minneapolis skilled workers and apprentices deferred compensation plan participation.	3/18/99	
16	157*	379	Laura Ingalls Wilder historic highway route modification.	3/18/99	
17	454*	564	Nursing home administrators sharing authority expansion.	3/18/99	
18	610	649*	Safe drinking water act public water supply definition modification.	3/25/99	
19	812	914*	Legislative Electric Energy Task Force membership modification.	3/25/99	
20	434	593*	St. Cloud paramount arts district regional arts center grant recipient change.	3/25/99	
21	48	50*	Public utilities performance based natural gas purchasing plans sunset repeal.	3/25/99	
22	137*	463	Collector watercraft license numbers and display requirements exemption.	3/26/99	
23	56*	90	Health care provider actions statute of limitations modification.	3/26/99	
24	193	255*	Emergency telephone (911) calls interference crime expansion.	3/29/99	
25	165	460*	Special disability license plates for modified motor vehicles.	3/29/99	

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
26	438	407*	McLeod West School District #2887; secondary educational facility grant.	3/29/99	
27	564	609*	Landscape irrigation systems rain check installation requirement.		4/1/99
28	732	99*	Criminal offenders costs payment for failure to appear after release.	4/1/99	
29	1305*	1280	Kenyon Trunk Highway #56 relocation easements transfer.	4/1/99	
30	475*	517	Town officers or employees criminal charges defense costs reimbursement.	4/1/99	
31	379*	381	Mortgage registry and deed taxes technical corrections and administrative changes.	4/1/99	
32	183*	144	Civil Commitment; minors voluntary chemical dependency admission and treatment parental consent conditions modifications.	4/12/99	
33	413*	418	Physicians, acupuncturists, and athletic trainers licensing and registration requirements modifications.	4/12/99	
34	492*	518	Minnesota State University, Mankato authorized to construct the Taylor Center multipurpose facility.	4/12/99	
35	766*	739	Motorcycle blue lights display.	4/12/99	
36	1126*	862	Family day care licensure child age groupings definitions.	4/12/99	
37	1258*	487	Marriage dissolution summary process revival.	4/12/99	
38	733	117*	Criminal offenders restitution challenge hearing requests time limit.	4/12/99	
39	640*	488	Mental Health State Advisory Council membership representation requirements modification.	4/12/99	
40	1336	727*	Contracts continuity under European currency.	4/12/99	
41	2024	1660*	Government innovation and cooperation board local government services delivery laws or rules exemptions.	4/12/99	
42	1986	1888*	Otter Tail veterans memorial drive designation.	4/12/99	
43	1184	794*	One call excavation notice system requirements modifications.	4/12/99	
44	1265	1150*	Rural residential districts speed limit.	4/12/99	
45	414*	428	Pseudorabies control program continuation appropriation and vaccine reimbursement requirement.	4/12/99	Line item
46	1565*	1677	Eligibility expanded for certain state military service.	4/15/99	
47	1556*	2043	Extending the civil service pilot project in the Housing Finance Agency.	4/15/99	
48	525*	404	Anoka County dangerous dog registration system administration responsibility.	4/15/99	
49	240*	236	DWI investigations county sheriff contingent funds use.	4/15/99	
50	216*	237	County prisoners transfer authority clarification.	4/15/99	
51	614*	913	Community integrated service networks net worth reserve corridor increase and utilization review.	4/15/99	
52	583*	735	Township mutual insurance companies authorized investments expansion.	4/15/99	
53	1066*	1190	Township mutual insurance companies territories of operation regulation modifications.	4/15/99	
54	1660*	1650	Nonprofit organizations human diseases research personnel unlawful practice of medicine exemption.	4/15/99	
55	1216*	1391	Chiropractors licensed in other states practical examination requirement modification.	4/15/99	
56	1403	1173*	Scott County Blue Lake wastewater treatment plant consumptive water use permit approval.	4/15/99	
57	1109	803*	St. Louis River estuary fishing guide license requirement.	4/15/99	
58	982	984*	Psychological test results release regulation.	4/15/99	
59	384	836*	Food handlers licensing period and fee modifications for state operators.	4/15/99	
60	1132*	1116	Delinquent real estate taxes duplicate publication copies filing requirement.	4/16/99	
61	643*	676	All persons under civil commitment status provided the same legal rights.	4/16/99	
62	408*	170	Pharmacy practice definition modification.	4/16/99	
63	1714*	1693	Pharmacists to pharmacy technicians ratio requirements waiver.	4/16/99	
64	735*	495	Crime of adulteration scope expansion and penalty increases.	4/20/99	
65	841	881*	Stearns, Benton, and Sherburne counties regional parks and trails plan.	4/20/99	
66	645*	651	Water and wastewater treatment system modifications.	4/20/99	
67	1421*	1239	Podiatry temporary permits extension.	4/20/99	
68	1809	1554*	Duluth Seaway Port Authority new name.	4/20/99	
69	908	465*	County recorders minimum security deposits requirement authority.	4/20/99	
70	1507	1600*	Motor vehicle registration requirements modified.	4/20/99	
71	1153	973*	Juror compensation system study.	4/20/99	
72	197	198*	Criminal trials closing arguments rebuttal limits elimination.	4/20/99	
73	1151	1176*	Waste Management Act technical modification.	4/20/99	
74	53	129*	Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act modifications.	4/20/99	

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
75	182	257*	Statutory cities special elections to fill office vacancies.	4/20/99	
76	868*	866	Crime of theft expansion to personal property rental.	4/20/99	
77	67*	32	Killing or injuring a search and rescue dog provided felony penalties.	4/20/99	
78	793*	1497	Rental motor vehicle lien and right of retainer.	4/20/99	
79	1171	98*	Crime victims' and witnesses' birthdates confidentiality.	4/20/99	
80	960	829*	Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority surplus state land purchase.	4/20/99	
81	1404	972*	Migratory waterfowl refuge designation.	4/20/99	
82	1097	1188*	Uniform municipal contracting law dollar limit increases.		4/22/99
83	40*	25	Nursing home residents allowed to request the use of restraints.	4/22/99	
84	463*	578	Ambulance services and first responders health care review.	4/22/99	
85	836*	833	Business corporations regulation provisions modifications.	4/22/99	
86	1037*	950	Revisor's bill.	4/22/99	
87	872*	682	Construction contracts environmental liability modifications.	4/23/99	
88	528*	1259	Underground fuel storage tanks specifications requirements.	4/23/99	
89	627*	616	Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority commissioners term modification.	4/23/99	
90	1968*	1827	Medicare supplemental insurance regulation provisions modifications.	4/23/99	
91	1975	1920*	State archaeologist position appointment process modification.	4/23/99	
92	1248	1528*	Harmful exotic species provisions modifications.	4/23/99	
93	1046	1324*	Commercial motor vehicle disqualification and violations modifications.	4/23/99	
94	566	673*	Health plans network shadow contracting restriction.	4/23/99	
95	1944	1470*	Paul Bunyan state trail route modification.	4/23/99	
96	896	854*	Counties, cities, or towns lawful land uses termination prohibition.	4/23/99	
97	1178*	1253	Landlords' prelease deposits acceptance regulation.	4/26/99	
98	142*	1634	Subsequent controlled substance conviction definition expanded.	4/26/99	
99	1003*	840	Legislative Audit Commission modifications.	4/26/99	
100	1150	1182*	Funeral or burial insurance sales restrictions eliminated.	4/26/99	
101	101	1527*	Convicted sexual offenders prohibited from school board candidacy.	4/26/99	
102	1309	1273*	Nursing home administrators licensing and examiners board modifications.	4/26/99	
103	661	832*	Small company securities offering registration modifications.	4/27/99	
104	1035	1017*	Marriage dissolution summonses alternative dispute resolution requirements.	4/27/99	
105	1052	451*	Uniform Commercial Code agricultural crops financing modifications.	4/27/99	
106	462	303*	Seat belt use evidence admissibility clarification.		4/27/99
107	877	1218*	Re-employment insurance housekeeping changes.	4/27/99	
108	451	436*	Emergency telephone service (911) dispatchers liability immunity.	4/27/99	
109	984	983*	Psychologists licensing and regulation provisions.	4/27/99	
110	893	1041*	Warehouse operators regulations modified.	4/27/99	
111	1125*	1087	Local correctional fees imposition responsibility transferred.	4/27/99	
112	1*	106	Agricultural assistance and tax relief.	filed without signature	
113	1538	1463*	Towns capital reserve funds.	5/3/99	
114	1161	480*	Port authorities revenue retention.	5/3/99	
115	673	1012*	Itasca County road and bridge money authority.	5/3/99	
116	1622	1368*	Certain professions payment requirements exemption.	5/3/99	
117	1169	496*	Financial institution search warrants extension.	5/3/99	
118	489	283*	Civil commitment procedures modified.	5/4/99	
119	585*	595	Isle School District grant modification.	5/4/99	
120	1708*	1675	FAIR plan modifications.	5/4/99	
121	1106*	1075	Insurers restricted from using HIV vaccine information.	5/4/99	
122	863	834*	Putative fathers adoption registry modified.	5/4/99	
123	483	296*	Special education provisions modified.	5/4/99	

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
124	92*	397	DWI implied consent law modified.	5/6/99	
125	359*	684	Public Utilities Commission powers expansion.	filed without	signature
126	1553*	2078	Department of Corrections conditional release and other provisions modified.	5/6/99	
127	1707*	1602	Sex offender registration plea negotiation modified.	5/6/99	
128	132*	1138	Nursing home bingo game regulation modified.	5/6/99	
129	1905*	1993	Governor veto authority over state agency rules.	5/6/99	
130	270*	470	Increasing maximum benefits for Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association.	filed without	signature
131	790	778*	Vehicles' security interests release time reduced.	5/7/99	
132	1168	1144*	Elections provisions modified.	5/7/99	
133	1183	1060*	Secretary of state records provisions modified.	5/7/99	
134	684	521*	Certain no-fault insurance benefits to cover translation services.	5/7/99	
135	1568*	1209	State building and energy code provisions modified.	5/10/99	
136	1359*	1023	Crime victims unclaimed restitution payments requirements.	5/10/99	
137	1564	1715*	Department of Commerce enforcement bill.	5/10/99	
138	1051*	971	Employment and training programs information collection and report.	5/10/99	
139	1310	184*	Juvenile delinquency and child protection provisions recodified.	5/11/99	
140	1384	1357*	Public Utilities energy conservation improvement program modified.	5/11/99	
141	none	2234*	State departments deficiency appropriations.	5/11/99	
142	263	411*	Crime of counterfeited intellectual property.	5/11/99	
143	1131	1115*	Delinquent taxes collection legal actions process modified.	5/11/99	
144	2023	1746*	Occupational regulation legislation supporting documentation requirement.	5/11/99	
145	258	376*	Certain sanitary districts' board members per diems increased.	5/11/99	
146	1658	1268*	Health maintenance organizations home care providers prompt payment.	5/11/99	
147	174*	156	Paynesville area hospital district Richmond annexation authority.	5/11/99	
148	70*	197	Law enforcement agencies forfeited firearms sale and use authority.	5/11/99	
149	1414*	1584	Deaf and hard-of-hearing services division provisions modified.	5/13/99	
150	1613	1471*	Tenant screening fee limits.	5/13/99	
151	1175	1330*	Department of Commerce banking bill.	5/13/99	
152	1933	1615*	Mental retardation day training payment rate structure task force.	5/13/99	
153	2021	1539*	Vertical heat exchanger contractors licensing and regulation.	5/13/99	
154	1641	1645*	Milk transporters seasonal highway weight restrictions exemption.	5/13/99	
155	371*	461	Senior center, youth center, and historical work appropriations approval requirements.	5/13/99	
156	60*	591	Medical assistance reimbursement for spousal private duty nursing.	5/13/99	
157	1301	1449*	State park additions, deletions, and name changes provided.	5/13/99	
158	1477	1541*	Environmental improvement pilot program modified and made permanent.	5/13/99	
159	1393	1585*	Human services technical changes.	5/13/99	
160	1008	1047*	Garnishment, attachment, or levy of execution exemption for Roth IRAs.	5/13/99	
161	502	626*	Wabasha county tax-forfeited land sale.	5/13/99	
162	949	383*	Midwifery practice regulation.	filed without	signature
163	1255	2120*	Gamma hydroxybutyrate as controlled substance.	5/13/99	
164	1112	1180*	Juvenile court habitual truants jurisdiction extension.	5/13/99	
165	66	9*	Police civil service commissions abolishment by city council vote.	5/13/99	

Bill Introductions

HF2439-HF2450

Friday, May 7

HF2439—Kahn (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Minneapolis upper harbor area redeveloped, state and local funds provided, tax increment financing districts authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2440—Mares (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Amateur Sports Commission required to develop a statewide new facilities plan, grants authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2441—Seifert, J. (R) Civil Law

Revisor's bill correcting miscellaneous oversights, inconsistencies, ambiguities, unintended results, and technical errors.

Monday, May 10

HF2442—Mulder (R) Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Pipestone aquatic center litigation losses grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2443—Mullery (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Hennepin County human resources system modifications provided.

Tuesday, May 11

HF2444—Paymar (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Airport noise abatement council elected, and powers and duties specified.

HF2445—Krinkie (R) Commerce

Land surveyor and appellate boards established, and money appropriated.

Wednesday, May 12

HF2446—Abeler (R) Education Policy

Reading and mathematics basic competency level provided.

Thursday, May 13

HF2447—Holsten (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Recreational vehicle, hunting, and firearm training course provisions modified; and money appropriated.

HF2448—Skoglund (DFL) Crime Prevention

Inmate name change request notice to victims and criminal justice system officials provided, and inmate name changes for harassment purposes prohibited.

HF2449—Davids (R) Commerce

Board of Accountancy membership expanded, educational requirements modified, licensed accounting practitioners certified, and money appropriated.

HF2450—Skoglund (DFL) Crime Prevention

Pistol and semiautomatic military-style assault weapon possession prohibited for persons under age 21.

Continued from page 18

them due to strong opposition from DFL House members.

The bill would also change how inflationary increases in campaign spending limits are calculated. Those limits are currently based on the consumer price index, and the bill would base them on the media cost-per-thousand index instead. Knobloch said the media cost-per-thousand index is more relevant to campaign spending, because it is based on advertising rates. Those costs increase at a different rate than those of other products that influence the consumer price index, he said.

The House also voted to accept a proposal from Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) that would prohibit a city, county, town, or other governmental subdivision from using tax money to pay a registered lobbyist.

The bill now moves to a House-Senate conference committee. 🐼

Another issue not included in the brokered deal is what will happen to the Profile of Learning, a plan designed to improve public education in the state. The House voted to dump the plan entirely, while both the Senate and Ventura want to keep the program and make changes to make it more acceptable to teachers, administrators, and parents.

The timing of the agreement means a showdown between the Legislature and Ventura over a special session may have been averted. Ventura said he was willing to "shut down the government" if necessary if no agreement were reached.

The Legislature is obligated by the Minnesota Constitution to adjourn by May 17. If no agreement is reached on the major spending bills, Ventura would have to call a special session or the state would begin running out of money July 1, when the next fiscal year begins. That has never occurred in the state's history. 🐼

Committee Schedule

As Session Weekly went to press, the times for House floor sessions had not been set. Please check the House Web site at: www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/schedule.htm or call the House Public Information Office at 651-296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550 for schedule updates.



It's so hard to find good help these days — especially given Minnesota's current labor shortage. And that trend will likely continue through the next decade, according to a recent report from Minnesota Planning.

The shortage can be attributed to the fact that a smaller number of workers are joining the work force while labor demand has remained relatively constant. The labor force will only grow at a 1.1-percent annual rate over the next few years. Meanwhile, jobs will grow at a 1.4- to 1.5-percent rate, according to the report.

The planning department says that the shortage may cause employers to develop new technologies to make fewer workers more productive. Or, the department warns, the shortage could result in businesses choosing to locate or expand elsewhere, an effect that could have dire consequences on the state's economy.

Continued from page 4

included in the Senate version of the bill. Ventura recently sent letters to all of the members of the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee revealing his intent to veto any bill that contains new abortion restrictions.

Order a free copy of *New Laws 1999*

Complete this form to receive your copy of *New Laws 1999*, a publication describing the new laws passed this year. The publication will provide brief, easy-to-read summaries of the bills that were passed by both the House and Senate and signed or vetoed by the governor. *New Laws 1999* will be available a few months after the session ends. Copies will be mailed without charge to those who order them.

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Readership Survey: 1999 *Session Weekly*



Please take a moment to tell us what you think about the *Session Weekly*. Your opinions will help us plan for next year.

1. Where do you live? (Please check one.)

☐ Minneapolis/St. Paul ☐ Greater Minnesota ☐ Twin Cities Suburbs ☐ Other ☐

2. How often do you read the *Session Weekly*? (Please check one.)

☐ Once a month ☐ Twice a month ☐ Three times a month ☐ Every week

3. Which sections of the *Session Weekly* do you most often read? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ Reflections (page 2)
☐ First Reading (page 3)
☐ It's a Fact (page 4)
☐ Highlights

☐ Features
☐ A Closer Look
☐ Committee Schedule
☐ Member Profiles

☐ Governor's Desk
☐ Bill Introductions
☐ Information (i.e., lists)
☐ Minnesota Index

4. Please rate the following aspects of the *Session Weekly* by checking one answer in each set.

Writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat understandable	<input type="checkbox"/> Easy to understand
Story Length	<input type="checkbox"/> Too short	<input type="checkbox"/> Too long	<input type="checkbox"/> Just right
Readability (type size)	<input type="checkbox"/> Too small	<input type="checkbox"/> Too large	<input type="checkbox"/> Just right
Photographs	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent
Layout	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent

5. What do you like about the *Session Weekly*? _____

6. Do you have any suggestions for improving the *Session Weekly*? _____



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

Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota's health

Minnesotans covered by health insurance in 1997, as percent	90.8
Rank in United States	3
Minnesotans lacking access to primary health care in 1998, as percent	4.2
Rank in United States	48
Minnesotans lacking access to mental health care in 1998, as percent	10.7
Rank in United States	28
Percent of Minnesota adults who had been tested for AIDS, 1997	32
Rank in United States	45
AIDS cases reported in Minnesota in 1998, per 100,000 population	3.8
Rank in United States	43
E-coli cases reported in Minnesota in 1998, per 100,000 population	4.4
Rank in United States	3
Estimated new cancer cases in Minnesota in 1999, per 100,000 population	410.5
Rank in United States	41
Minnesotans who used vehicle safety belts in 1998, as percent	65
Rank in United States	20
Minnesota adults whose children used a car safety seat in 1997, as percent	93.9
Rank in United States	28
Gallons of alcohol consumed per Minnesota adult, 1996	2.65
Rank in United States	16
Minnesota adults who were considered binge drinkers in 1997, as percent	15.6
Rank in United States	15
Minnesota adults who smoked in 1997, as percent	21.9
Rank in United States	37
Percent of 1996 Minnesota births to women who smoked during pregnancy	13.1
Rank in United States	29
Minnesota adults who were overweight in 1997, as percent	29.7
Rank in United States	33
Minnesotans who used exercise equipment, 1998	600,000
Rank in United States	27
Golfers in Minnesota, 1998	472,000
Rank in United States	19

Source: *Health Care State Rankings 1999: Health Care in the 50 United States*; Morgan Quitno Press.

For more information

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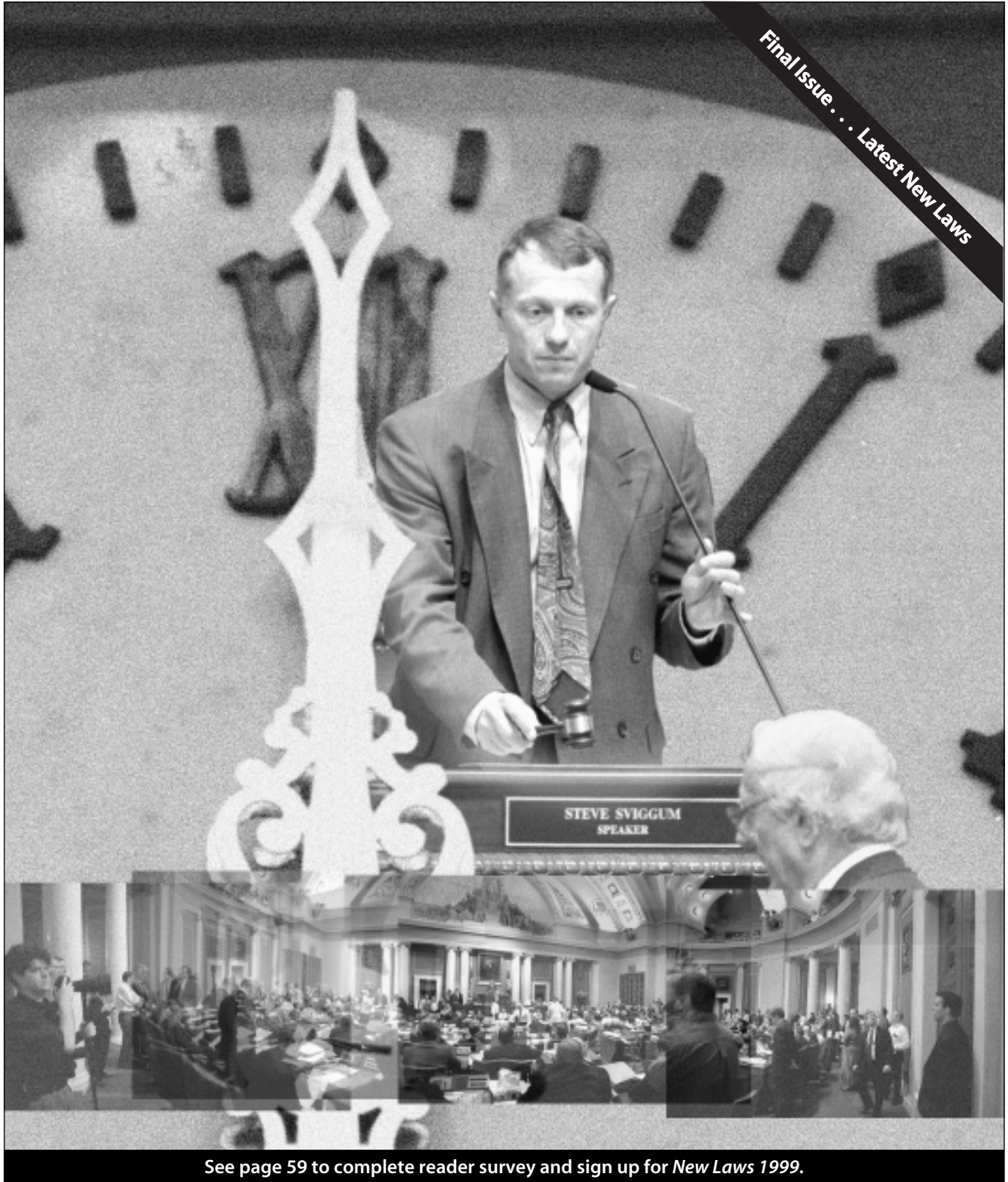
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SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ May 21, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 20

Final Issue . . . Latest New Laws



See page 59 to complete reader survey and sign up for *New Laws 1999*.

Session Weekly is a nonpartisan publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Office. During the 1999-2000 Legislative Session, each issue reports daily House action between Thursdays of each week, lists bill introductions and upcoming committee meeting schedules, and provides other information. The publication is a service of the Minnesota House. No fee.

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SESSION WEEKLY

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Reflections

While the Minnesota Legislature was completing its final days of the 1999 session, here and across the country a major concern for people was, could they get tickets for the latest Stars Wars movie. But at the State Capitol, the most important interest for lawmakers, staff, and lobbyists was the passage of funding bills that would provide the state's largest tax cuts and rebates ever; money for K-12 education; funds for health care; a go-ahead to construct light rail in Minneapolis; and other important bills.

As movie fans lined up outside theaters for days to see what "Episode I" of Star Wars would convey, everyone at the Capitol was anxiously waiting inside and outside each chamber to know what would be the final outcome of the first year of the 81st Legislature.

For Capitol inhabitants during this time, the only connection to the movie industry's latest hype was a "Phantom Menace" known as sleep deprivation.

Certainly, no legislator or staff member could be found waiting in line for tickets to the new George Lucas phenomenon on May 17, the last day of session, or even two weeks ago. For that matter, nor were they seen at the governor's annual fishing opener on May 15 for the first time in years.

In the last few days of the legislative session, most lawmakers and key staff got little or no sleep, as House and Senate members attempted to reach some kinds of funding compromises agreeable to both legislative bodies. Some lawmakers did sneak brief opportunities to relax as they often waited during many recesses, but not enough to catch up on sleep.

Also, sergeants were seen running across the complex to pull lawmakers out of committee to make a crucial vote in the chamber, while clerk's staff from the House and Senate broke track records as they delivered messages from chamber desk to chamber desk for immediate floor action in each body.

Behind the scenes, the revisors who ensure legal accuracy of bills and House Research staff who continue to provide expert advice on the content of bill, often accumulated no-sleep records of over 24 hours at a time. Even those in Duplicating worked in the wee hours of the morning to print hundreds of new bills for placement on chamber desks before lawmakers reconvened.

But it is not unusual for the Chief Clerk's main desk staff and others in the office to spend hours at work long after a daily session ended.

To the legislators, who have now gone back home to a normal, well-rested routine, and to the staff, who never catch up on sleep:

May the force be with you!

— LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Speaker Steve Sviggum adjourns the House at midnight May 17.

—Photos by Tom Olmscheid and Andrew Von Bank

—Photo illustration by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

Tripartisan government . . .

Historic session ends with action on tax cuts, major bills

By Grant Martin & Sarah Tellijohn

The 1999 legislative session — the state's first under tripartisan control — ended at midnight May 17 with lawmakers approving several significant pieces of legislation, including the largest tax cut in the state's history, a commitment for the use of the one-time tobacco settlement funds, and a record K-12 education funding plan.

But right up to the last minute, it looked like the three-legged stool of state government — Republicans in the House, DFLers in the Senate, and a Reform Party governor — might topple to the floor.

"Tripartisan government works," Gov. Jesse Ventura announced at a May 11 press conference after signing off on a preliminary budget agreement with House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) and Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine). The deal was expected to tie up the loose ends and bring the session to a close by the constitutional deadline.

But with less than nine hours to go before adjournment, it looked as though the "global agreement," as Sviggum called it, might break down on the House floor.

Sviggum was forced to keep the voting board open for nearly two hours to get the votes needed to pass the bonding bill — a measure that required 81 votes to pass. That bill was a key piece of the agreement because it includes a \$400 million cash-to-bonding proposal and the governor's light-rail transit plan.

And after Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) presented the health and human services funding bill without the abortion provisions early approved by the House, a motion to send it back to conference committee failed by just three votes.

But the 1999 session will be remembered more for the tripartisan compromises than for the stumbling blocks that came close to tripping up the process.

In his opening address after being elected the new speaker Jan. 5, Sviggum set the priority for House.

"You have my word that this body will permanently and significantly cut your taxes," Sviggum said, addressing the television cameras in the House chamber.

True to his word, House Republicans successfully achieved the income tax cut they had been fighting for all session. Effective July 1, all three income tax brackets will be reduced by



After the final gavel, House Speaker Steve Sviggum takes a few moments to discuss the Legislature's achievements this session with the Capitol press corps.

0.5 percent, and the middle-income bracket will get an extra 0.25-percent reduction.

In total, all tax cuts would amount to about \$1.3 billion annually. The marriage penalty, which forces married joint filers to pay more than they would if they filed individually, would also be eliminated under the tax plan.

And in August, most Minnesotans should see a sales tax rebate check in the mail. The sales tax rebate — advocated by both the governor and DFL lawmakers — was eventually accepted by House Republicans, who had originally argued for a rebate based on income tax.

The rebate, based on 1997 income tax records, could total \$1.3 billion once officials are finished processing it. Checks would range from \$100 to \$5,000 for married joint filers and to a maximum of \$2,500 for single filers.

Lawmakers also came to an agreement on the use of the state's one-time tobacco settlement funds. Almost \$1 billion would be used to set up endowments for medical education and research, smoking prevention, and public health initiatives.

House Republicans battled most of the session to use some of that money to eliminate the state's health care provider tax, but eventually agreed to the endowments as a condition of income tax cuts.

However, the House did succeed in preventing a scheduled increase in the so-called

sick tax, which is used to support MinnesotaCare, the state's health insurance program for low- and moderate-income residents.

Lawmakers also passed a \$7.9 billion K-12 education funding bill. The bill would provide a 4.7-percent increase in the basic school funding formula for 2000 and a 3.2-percent increase for 2001, partly contingent upon the next state budget forecast. The bill would provide the largest boost to the general formula in the last 10 years.

The plan would include \$86 million targeted for class-size reduction and \$6 million for school breakfast programs.

It also looks like Gov. Jesse Ventura might get his wish to ride mass-transit rail in 2002. After suffering a defeat in the House, it appeared that continued funding for light-rail transit would not become a reality this session. But House and Senate leaders compromised on the issue and included \$60 million in the bonding bill that will be used to leverage \$250 million in federal funds.

The money would be dedicated to the planned light-rail line along the Hiawatha corridor in Minneapolis and would run from the Mall of America in Bloomington, past Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, and into downtown Minneapolis.

Lawmakers also succeeded in their attempt



House Minority Leader Tom Pugh greets members of the press after wrapping up the legislative session.

to put an end to the 8-year-old motor vehicle inspection program. The repeal effort, led by Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View), was signed into law May 18 and sets March 1, 2000, as a final end-date for the program. There is one catch, however. The Twin Cities air quality must pass muster with the federal Environmental Protection Agency before emissions testing can cease, but officials expect that approval to be forthcoming.

Lawmakers also approved \$70 million in aid for Minnesota farmers. The new law seeks to provide relief to farmers who are currently struggling due to low commodity prices. The relief payments will provide most farmers between \$2,000 and \$3,000 in aid.

Other issues weren't resolved before the May 17 deadline and will have to wait until next year for possible legislative action.

Lawmakers on a House-Senate conference committee failed to reach a compromise this year on the controversial Profile of Learning, which makes up one-half of the state's Graduation Standards.

The House voted to get rid of the Profile of Learning earlier in the session, but the Senate chose only to change some of its provisions, allowing schools the choice to opt out of the profile's requirements. Both proposals could be revived again next year.

Christine Jax, the state's education commissioner, has said she will look at administrative ways to make the Profile more flexible for teachers, students, and school districts.

Lawmakers also failed to reach an agreement on several abortion provisions approved by the House.

One such provision would have banned a late-term abortion procedure called partial-birth abortion. The House also backed a plan that would have required making certain information available to women seeking an abortion and mandated a 24-hour waiting period.

A third provision would have required more detailed reporting by judges who approve a

Continued on page 49

Portraits range from mournful to modern



Although the sequence of 35 gubernatorial portraits adorning the first and ground floors of the Minnesota Capitol may seem like an integral part of the building's character, the tradition of honoring each former governor with a portrait was not initiated by architect Cass Gilbert.

When the Capitol was completed in 1905, free-standing electric lamp posts stood in front of wall panels where the portraits now hang. And a few portraits, such as former Gov. Knute Nelson's likeness, hung in the governor's private office.

In 1944, Gov. Edward J. Thye commissioned all the portraits to be hung in the public areas of the Capitol building so that visitors could enjoy them. Plaques now accompany the portraits, telling stories about each governor's political personality and achievements.

However, visitors taking an independent tour of the small gallery of portraits can learn and imagine much more about the statesmen than what appears on the plaques. Many of the earlier paintings show traditional head-and-shoulders only likenesses. It is not until the later nineteenth century that other images or styles appear in the portraits. One governor is shown in an office with a law book, and some are depicted standing.

Former Gov. John A. Johnson (1905-1909) is depicted in an original Capitol armchair and does not make eye contact with the viewer. Instead, the portrait has a quality that some have termed somber or withdrawn, evoking a sense of loss because the beloved governor died during his third term. The frame around Johnson's portrait was carved by his son and contains Minnesota's state symbols, such as the lady slipper and gopher.

Johnson's portrait was painted by Nicholas Brewer, whose son and granddaughter also painted other gubernatorial portraits.

In the 1930s the works became more personalized, with the portrait of former governor Floyd B. Olson. St. Paul artist

Carl Bohnen showed Olson, who was known for his charisma and media savvy, in a crisp gray suit holding a radio microphone.

"It's a portrait that fits with the public image (of Olson)," said Thomas O'Sullivan, curator of art for the Minnesota Historical Society.

In the 1960s, Frances Cranmer Greenman painted Gov. Karl F. Rolvaag in her signature, unusual style. Broad, sketchy brush strokes roughly outline Rolvaag's figure, creating a sense of spontaneity.

"She captured that sense of a living person," said O'Sullivan, who noted that he has received calls from people complaining that the portrait appears unfinished.



A portrait of former Gov. John A. Johnson, adorned with a hand-carved frame, hangs in the Capitol.

Despite the tradition, there has never been a straightforward or simple process of commissioning a governor's portrait once he leaves office. Some are not finished until several years after a term ends, and others have been ready to hang months into a governor's retirement. The cost of a portrait can range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 depending on the

prominence of the artist.

Former Gov. Arne Carlson's portrait, which is being done by artist Stephen Gjertson, is expected to be completed sometime this summer.

Often a ceremony will mark the unveiling of the portrait, an event coordinated by the Minnesota Historical Society and the governor's family.

The only guidelines that exist stipulate that the portrait should keep up with the tradition. While the standards are not in law, the Minnesota Historical Society and the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board suggest that oil paints on a long-lasting linen be used by the artist the governor chooses. Current portraits — not including the frame — measure from 46 inches by 36 inches to 55 inches by 38 inches, a range the guidelines suggest artists stay within.

With the exception of those guidelines, a retiring governor is free to direct the

Continued on page 49

Highlights



AGRICULTURE

Sweet smell of compromise

The House passed a bill May 14 that would ease restrictions on feedlot operators. The vote was 73-59.

The compromise measure approved by a House-Senate conference committee added significantly to the original House version but omitted at least one major provision.

The original House bill contained a specific exemption from state-mandated ambient hydrogen sulfide emission levels. That provision remains in the final version, although it was broadened to include an exemption only for larger feedlot operations.

The compromise was viewed by most as a way of helping feedlot operators work through other mandates and save money at a time when the farm economy is weak.

Gone from the final version of the bill (HF1235/SF692*) is a House-backed requirement to notify neighbors when feedlot operators are going to begin stirring and extraction from manure pits.

Although the manure-containing basins found at most feedlots are covered with a thick odor-reducing crust most of the time, that crust occasionally must be removed so the manure solids can be extracted. The byproduct is often spread on nearby land as a natural fertilizer.

Bill sponsor Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet) said the neighbor notification language came out as part of the overall compromise.

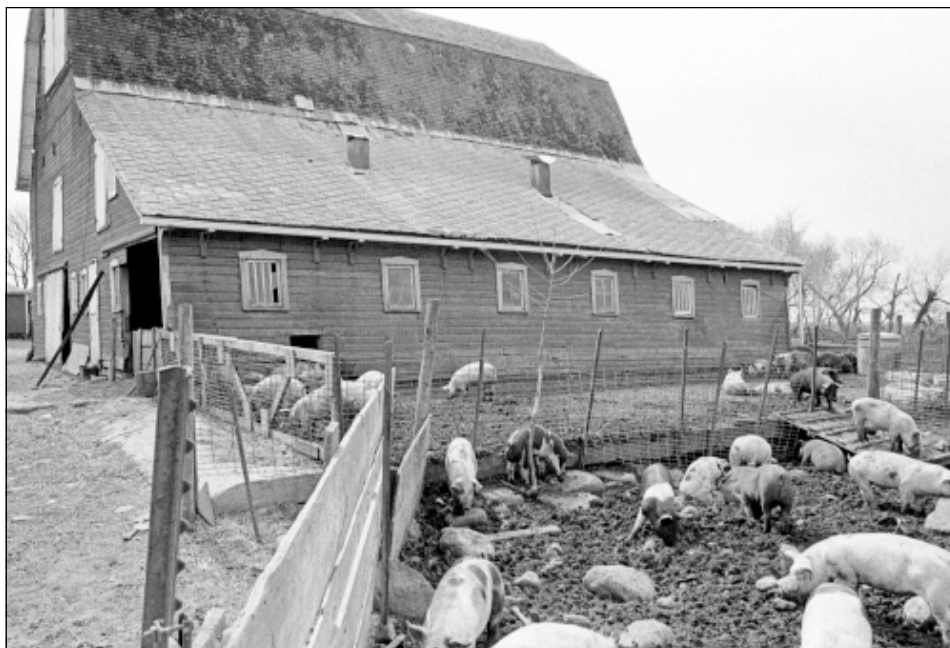
He said the Senate version contained no notification provisions, while the House version required neighbors and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) or the county environmental officer be notified.

Requiring only the MPCA or county to be notified represented a compromise, Swenson said. That's what the final bill would require.

Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar) said the neighbor notification has been implemented in Kandiyohi County and it works well.

But Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) pointed out that under the bill as it's drafted, counties would not be prohibited from requiring neighbor notification. It simply would not be part of state law.

Critics also charged that the compromise language gave too much leeway to large feed-



The House and Senate agreed to a compromise on a bill easing restrictions for feedlot operators. Instead of notifying their neighbors, feedlot owners would only have to let county or state pollution control officials know when they will be extracting or stirring manure pits.

lot operators, who they believe cause the bulk of the problems.

The final version of the bill would also undo "connected action" in reference to feedlots.

In rural Minnesota today, a group of neighboring farmers will often band together to develop a "farrow to finish" operation — they pool their money to purchase baby pigs and raise them for the early weeks of their lives at one site.

Later, when the pigs begin to grow, they're sent to neighboring feedlot operations until they're ready for market.

Under existing law, all of the operation sites connected by farmer agreements are considered one large feedlot, no matter the distance apart, for the purposes of regulation. The bill specifies that although the pigs have a common ownership, the sites on which they are raised would be considered separate operations.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) said similar practices are already legal when out-of-state companies ship pigs to finishing sites in Minnesota, often to a group of neighbors.

"That's legal," he said. "If we can do it with some guy from Omaha, why can't we do it with Minnesota farmers?"

The bill also spells out a process under which feedlot operators could obtain air-quality easements from neighbors. Under that

plan, the monitoring would shift away from the feedlot boundaries to the boundaries of the land contained in the easement.

Conditions under which the MPCA could assess a penalty against a feedlot operator and require a face-to-face meeting between owners and regulators to address issues are also contained in the final version of the bill.

The debate over animal feedlot regulation has confronted the Legislature in each of the past three sessions, fueled by concerns over potential health hazards of air and water quality affected by the facilities and their manure lagoons.

Last year a House-approved moratorium on new or expanding feedlots was rejected by the Senate, but a two-year moratorium on construction of certain swine waste lagoons did make it into law.

And lawmakers directed the Office of the Legislative Auditor to study the issue, resulting in a report released in January that criticized the MPCA for not acting quickly enough to produce rules for feedlot operation.

The bill moves to the governor.

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Financial relief for farmers



A new law effective April 24 provides \$70 million to help Minnesota's farmers.

The measure became law without Gov. Jesse Ventura's signature. In a letter filed with the new law, Ventura said he knows "there is hurt" among the state's farmers.

"However, I also know that there are many farms, especially large corporate farms, that are posting profits," Ventura wrote. "My objections to this farm relief package remain threefold: There is no means-testing to ensure that relief is targeted; the money is spent in one lump sum, leaving no funds for future problems; and the farm package was split away from the original rebate when it was entirely unnecessary to do so."

The governor also suggested that something ought to be done to address the conditions that created the current farm crisis.

"The economics of the agricultural industry are such that no reasonable person believes that next year will be dramatically better," Ventura wrote. "A long-term commitment to market and innovative product development will do more than any cash relief."

The new law provides payments to farmers under one of two plans.

Crop farmers are eligible to receive a payment equal to \$4 per acre with a \$5,600 maximum per farm. Livestock producers on operations less than 160 acres are eligible to receive a payment equal to the first half of their 1999 property taxes.

The law also provides for payments to farmers who rent farmland, as well as owner-operators. Payments must be prorated among partners — according to the percentage of risk — when multiple parties are involved in the operation of the farm.

The law is expected to provide most farmers between \$2,000 and \$3,000 in aid. The money should be in the hands of farmers by July.

Under the plan, the Department of Revenue must send forms and instructions to the county Farm Service Administrations offices, which are to contact farmers.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) and Sen. Doug Johnson (DFL-Tower) sponsored the measure.

HF1*/SF106/CH112

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

Funds vetoed, vaccine OK'd



More than \$1.25 million in state funding for pseudorabies vaccine goes to swine producers in Minnesota whose herds are infected, under a new law effective April 13.

The vaccine is being provided to quell an outbreak of the highly contagious disease, which is not harmful to humans but causes hogs to have reproductive problems and to gain weight more slowly.

Gov. Jesse Ventura line-time vetoed \$245,000 from the measure that was intended to help farmers with financial management. The money was to go to the Center for Farm Financial Management at University of Minnesota.

In his veto message, Ventura said that the state must do everything it can to eradicate pseudorabies and help hog farmers. But he said he believes the appropriation to provide about 500 farmers with assistance to apply for spring operating loans had no place in the bill.

"In my view, all such relief proposals belong in an omnibus bill, especially now that the legislative process has already taken too long to ensure adequate and timely financing application assistance to farmers for this planting season," Ventura said.

Supporters of the measure to provide the vaccine said farmers had done a good job over the years working to decrease incidences of pseudorabies, but in recent months, there has been a resurgence of infected herds.

Bill opponents claimed pseudorabies flared



Hog farmers will receive more than \$1.25 million for pseudorabies vaccine. Pseudorabies is a highly contagious disease that can cause reproductive problems in hogs.

because farmers facing declining pork prices decided to gamble and not vaccinate.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) and Sen. Paula Hanson (DFL-Ham Lake) sponsored the measure.

HF414*/SF428/CH45

Crops as collateral



A new law will change the way the state regards security interests in agricultural crops.

Under existing law, when a crop is used as security for a loan, the legal description of the field where the crop is grown has to be included in the filing statement.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will remove that provision and make other small changes in how crops used for security interest are handled.

Historically, the security derived from an agricultural crop was linked to the field so a creditor could determine the location of the crop in which the creditor had an interest. Critics of that practice argued that the crop must be in the bin before it can be sold and that the value of the crop is what matters, not the value of the parcel of land.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy) sponsored the measure.

HF1052/SF451*/CH105

Regaining their Balance



Minnesota's agricultural supply dealers are now allowed to sell Balance — a new pesticide compound — to customers outside the state, under a new law.

State law prohibits use or distribution of restricted-use pesticides not registered with the state commissioner of agriculture. Balance has received "conditional use" registration by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which makes it legal for use in many neighboring states.

The compound isn't available for use in Minnesota; however, under the new law, dealers may sell it to farmers in other states where its use is legal.

The effective date of the authorization is retroactive to Jan. 1, 1999, to allow out-of-state customers who made a pre-payment on their 1999 agricultural chemical needs to select Balance as their product of choice later in the spring.

The measure was sponsored by Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy).

HF370/SF424*/CH6



BANKING

Banking in Outing



A new law effective March 16 allows a bank to open a branch office in the small community of Outing, located in southern Cass County.

The law provides an exception to existing state law that prohibits banks from operating in townships. Outing is an unincorporated city in Crooked Lake Township.

Minnesota's "home office protection law" allows banks to establish branch offices in cities with a population less than 10,000 only with consent from all the banks that have their home office in that city. Banks are also prohibited from getting around that law by opening in townships just outside city limits.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), House sponsor of the new measure, said First National Bank of Crosby had planned to open an office in Outing, assuming it was an incorporated city. Because Outing has its own post office and zip code, many people don't realize that it has never been incorporated, she said.

Sen. David Ten Eyck (DFL-East Gull Lake) sponsored the proposal in the Senate.

HF248*/SF324/CH7



BONDING

Bonding for light rail

A \$154.2 million emergency bonding bill — a key element in the tripartisan budget agreement — awaits the governor's signature after a close call in the House.

The bonding bill — which requires 81 votes to pass under the Minnesota Constitution — squeaked by the House on an 81-52 vote.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), would authorize the state to borrow money to fund several capital improvement projects considered to be high-priority statewide.

The Legislature typically produces its main bonding bill in the second year of the session, which is the even-numbered year. But smaller bills for emergency needs are usually passed in the first year.

Following a recommendation in the governor's budget, the emergency bonding bill includes a cash-to-bonding provision.



Lawmakers agreed to target \$60 million in bonds for the planned light-rail transit line running from the Mall of America to downtown Minneapolis. The money, which is dedicated for design and construction, would be used to attract federal funds for the project.

That provision would repeal a section in the 1998 tax law requiring that \$400 million of the projected budget surplus be used to pay for projects in last year's capital projects law.

Last year's \$999 million capital projects law authorized the state to both issue bonds and pay cash for capital improvements statewide. Under the law, the state was to bond for approximately half of the projects and pay cash for the other half.

But a tax law provision directed the Department of Finance to replace \$400 million of the bonded sum with a \$400 million cash payment if a sufficient budget surplus was projected for the remainder of the 1998-1999 biennium. That makes last year's bonding package 90 percent cash.

In November 1998, the Department of Finance announced a \$1.56 billion projected surplus. Of that amount, \$400 million is scheduled to pay for the 1998 capital projects.

If this year's bonding bill becomes law, the \$400 scheduled to pay for bonding projects would go back into the general fund — a transfer that is necessary to fund the budget agreement between the House, Senate, and governor.

This provision faced criticism from DFLers on the House floor and seemed to be a sticking point in getting the votes necessary to pass the bill. DFLers said that last year's decision to pay for the projects with cash was based on the fact that the state would save interest payments in the long run.

They also said that the move to repeal last year's law would mean that the state was, in effect, borrowing money to pay for this year's budget agreement, including the proposed tax cuts and rebates.

House Republicans said that it makes more sense to bond for these projects and that using bonding funds over cash for long-term projects is an issue of fairness.

They argued that the bonding projects approved last year will be used by future generations and that a cash payment would mean that this generation would be shouldering too much of the financial burden for the projects.

Here are some other highlights of the bill (HF2205).

Light-rail transit

The bonding bill would provide \$60 million to build a light-rail transit line along the Hiawatha Avenue corridor.

Beginning in downtown Minneapolis and ending at the Mall of America in Bloomington, the proposed 12.2-mile rail line would have 18 stops along its route, including ones at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the University of Minnesota.

In 1998, the Legislature appropriated \$40 million for the light-rail proposal. That same year, the U.S. Congress allotted \$120 million in federal funds for the project, which could be completed as early as 2003.

The new state funding would be contingent on receipt of a federal grant, and the bill would require that the project receive an additional \$223 million in funding from federal and local sources.

The bill would require that if the federal government doesn't approve the project by certain deadlines, the funds must be returned, including any remaining funds from the 1998 appropriation.

And the bill would require the transportation commissioner and the chair of the

Metropolitan Council to submit a report to the Legislature outlining a financial plan for ongoing operation of the transit line.

The governor recommended the \$60 million in state funding for light-rail transit in his proposed biennial budget. The Senate had originally sought to fund the project with cash from the state's general fund, but earlier in the session, the House had rejected the Hiawatha project.

The bonding bill also would give \$10 million to the transportation department for grants to go to local bridge replacement and rehabilitation. And the bill would provide \$10 million to the transportation revolving loan fund also for local projects. Public transit and light rail would be excluded from these grants.

Brooklyn bridge

The bill would provide a \$440,000 loan to the city of Brooklyn Park to help finance the building of a pedestrian bridge and related costs. That financing would be contingent upon the receipt of additional funding from the federal government.

The pedestrian bridge project comes as a result of the tragic death of 11-year-old Kara Kavanagh. In March, Kavanagh was hit by a car while attempting to cross Minnesota Highway 252 in Brooklyn Park.

The proposed bridge would cross the highway a few blocks from where the accident took place.

Wastewater treatment

The bonding bill would also give \$20 million to fund the state's wastewater infrastructure program. The existing program provides assistance to local governments for the construction and improvements to wastewater treatment systems.

Flood prevention

Also in the bill, \$19 million would go to the Department of Natural Resources to be used for flood mitigation projects statewide, including projects in Ada, Breckenridge, Crookston, East Grand Forks, Oakport, St. Paul, and Warren.

MnSCU projects

A total of \$11.1 million would go to the Minnesota State Colleges and University (MnSCU) system. The bulk of that amount would go to Winona State University for a new boiler system and emergency generators.

Moorhead State University would receive \$3.7 million to demolish blighted structures and build new parking facilities on recently acquired land, and Ridgewater Community and Technical College in Hutchinson would

get \$1.3 million for improvements to its heating and cooling system.

State government

The Department of Administration would get \$4.2 million. Of that amount, \$1 million would go for planning and design of infrastructure projects for a possible steel mill that may be constructed in Itasca County. A separate omnibus tax bill (HF2420) also contains a \$20 million appropriation for this project.

Under the bonding bill, the department's appropriation also would include \$190,000 for improvements at the state veterans' home in Hastings. The department also would get \$150,000 for planning and design of a monument to honor World War II veterans.

The Department of Corrections would get \$1.8 million for renovations to the sewer system at a correctional facility in Faribault.

The bill would also direct the Legislative Audit Commission to investigate a mold problem at the state veterans' home in Luverne. The Department of Administration is in the middle of a \$6 million project to remove the mold from the facility.

And the education department would get \$5.3 million to provide two integrated education grants to the Southwest Metropolitan Integration and Interdistrict Arts and Science Middle School, two magnet schools located in the metropolitan area.

The bonding bill also would transfer an additional \$20 million from the general fund to a Minnesota minerals 21st century fund created by the omnibus jobs and economic development funding bill (HF2390), if that bill becomes law. The fund would be used to provide financial assistance for mineral processing facilities.



BUSINESS

New warehouse regulations



A new law will update Minnesota statutes dealing with warehouses, which were written originally in 1915.

Effective Aug. 1, warehouse operators will no longer be required to provide paper receipts for items in storage. Many warehouses deal with multi-national companies and conduct business electronically, making it impossible to fulfill the letter of the old law.

Warehouse operators will also be able to choose which accounting practices they wish to use in running their business, rather than having them mandated by the state.

Also, the new law will separate household

goods warehouse owners, who usually deal with the public, from general operators, who usually deal only with companies and corporations. That provision also will change bonding practice, making it less onerous for certain warehouse operators.

Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) and Sen. Paula Hanson (DFL-Ham Lake) sponsored the measure.

HF893/SF1041*/CH110

Stock sale changes



A new law makes it easier for companies to issue and sell small stocks to investors.

The law, effective April 28, makes technical changes in state law regarding stock holdings of smaller companies. Of those changes, the required value for such stocks is lowered from \$5 to \$1 per share.

Another change requires the commissioner of commerce to approve the sale of stock no more than 20 days after the securities registration form is filed. Under the old law, there was no such deadline.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) and Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley) sponsored the legislation.

HF661/SF832*/CH103



CHILDREN

Child care, family programs

A bill sent to Gov. Jesse Ventura would authorize \$462.1 million in state funding for child care, temporary housing, and family education programs.

Lawmakers in the House passed the omnibus family and early childhood education finance bill May 14 on a 68-65 vote, and the Senate approved it May 15 on a 57-4 vote.

Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior) and Sen. Pat Piper (DFL-Austin) are the sponsors of the legislation.

In addition to state funding, the measure would transfer \$80.4 million in federal funds from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant to the state.

That money would be used for child-care initiatives. It would mostly go to shorten long waiting lists for the Basic Sliding Fee program, which is a state initiative to help low- and moderate-income working families pay for child care using an income-based, sliding-fee scale.

Here's a look at some of the key provisions in the bill (HF1467*/SF1621).

Children and Families

Programs that provide care and development for children would receive \$406.9 million in state and federal funds over the next two years.

That money, which accounts for the bulk of the spending proposed in the bill, would be divided among welfare child-care programs, the Basic Sliding Fee program, early childhood education, and Head Start.

The boost in funding would shorten county waiting lists for the Basic Sliding Fee program. The increase would remove about 3,000 of the 7,000 parents on the current lists. However, the bill would raise family co-payment fees to help pay for the increased aid.

The state's at-home infant care program, which pays subsidies to working parents who want to stay home to care for their babies, would be expanded. Currently, parents who apply for the program are placed on the same waiting list as applicants for the Basic Sliding Fee program. Because of long waiting lists, parents often find that their children have outgrown the need for the infant program when their names finally come up.

The bill would separate the programs on the waiting list, allowing parents to opt for the at-home program right away. That provision was part of a separate bill (HF1362) originally brought forward by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe).

Another plan to shorten waiting lists would require counties to pre-determine a family's eligibility for child-care assistance before putting them on a waiting list. Counties would also have to update their waiting lists at least every six months to keep them current.

Also in the bill is a proposal that would investigate child-care assistance fraud. As part of that plan, a new universal application form would be created and used by county and state officials to help keep track of families receiving child-care assistance.

The fraud prevention initiative includes penalties for families who wrongfully obtain child-care assistance. Those penalties include temporary and permanent disqualification from state-subsidized child-care programs.

Starting in fiscal year 2002, school districts would see a per-pupil funding boost in early childhood family education aid from \$113.50 per child to \$120 per child. In fiscal year 2000, those programs would receive additional aid of \$2.46 per child. The bill also would require districts to set up reasonable sliding-fee scales for those programs.

Self-sufficiency programs

The bill would allot \$42.6 million for adult basic education, and nearly \$2 million in additional money would go to support programs

in rural Minnesota. A total of \$150,000 would fund GED on TV, an initiative that provides instruction for high school equivalency degrees on public television stations in rural areas.

In a provision that originated in a bill (HF819) sponsored by Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), teachers of English as a second language in adult basic education programs would no longer be required to earn a teacher's license. Instead, they could have a four-year degree in English or another approved subject area.

Transitional housing programs would see \$4.2 million and emergency shelters would receive about \$700,000. A portion of the transitional housing funds would go toward programs to help homeless veterans and two St. Louis Park family housing projects.

A lead abatement program that was not included in Ventura's budget recommendations would be funded at \$500,000. State funding would not be continued for energy assistance and weatherization grants.

And \$500,000 in state funds would go toward a program to promote saving money among low-income families. The program, called Family Assets for Independence is a measure brought forward by House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan).

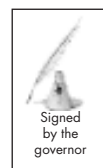
Prevention and Intervention

Many smaller programs that focus on preventing chemical abuse, violence, and juvenile delinquency would also be funded under the bill.

Adolescent parenting grants would total \$1 million, and \$300,000 would go to Native American youth programs. Another \$400,000 would support youth activities hosted by state armories, and \$500,000 would be targeted for organizations that educate young fathers.

After-school enrichment grant programs would receive \$10.5 million, and \$50,000 would help support First Call Minnesota, a statewide information and referral system for families who need to locate organizations that provide social services.

Juvenile law re-organization



A new law will make structural changes to state law dealing with juveniles.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), the measure's House sponsor, said the law will separate the two very different issues of juvenile delinquency and child protection services.

"By separating them out, it will make the law more user-friendly," he said.

The measure rewrites the state's juvenile law — currently a mishmash of policy relating to children — without changing any of the substantive policy.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, divides it into four sections — general organization, truancy, delinquency, and children in need of protective services.

In 1997, lawmakers directed the Office of the Revisor of Statutes to review the state's juvenile law and offer a plan for its reorganization. The new law comes as a result of the office's work.

Sen. Jane Ranum (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF1310/SF184*/CH139



CRIME

Anti-crime finance bill

A \$1.1 billion crime bill seeks to reduce accidents that result from high-speed chases, build a database of DNA samples from dangerous criminals, and provide civil penalties for people who claim responsibility for releasing lab animals.

The House passed the bill May 15 on a 98–35 vote. The bill now goes to the governor.

The spending bill, sponsored by Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights), would fund the state court and correctional systems, law enforcement and public safety agencies, and agencies such as the human rights department and the crime victim services center.

The measure also contains several policy provisions that have an impact on the state's criminal justice budget.

Here are some highlights of the omnibus bill (HF2404/SF2221*).

Police pursuit

The omnibus bill addresses several issues involving police chases. The provisions were originally sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), who is a police officer.

The bill would mandate additional training time for officers, create a statewide pursuit policy, provide new technology for training and pursuit, and strengthen the current laws against fleeing an officer.

Under the bill, the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board would establish a pursuit training course for police officer cadets. The bill would mandate that each cadet receive at least seven hours of training and that all current officers receive at least eight hours of training every three years. And the bill would provide \$300,000 in grants to local law enforcement agencies to assist with the new training requirements.



This year's crime bill contains several provisions that would step up efforts to safely train officers for police chases. The measure also calls for officials to develop a model policy for such pursuits.

The bill also would require the POST Board to develop a statewide model pursuit policy. The policy would be used to develop guidelines for each local law enforcement agency. Under current law, local agencies are given wide latitude to establish their own procedures for pursuit.

And the bill would provide funding for technologies that would both train officers and, supporters hope, end pursuits more quickly, including \$400,000 to pay for so-called "stop-stick" tire deflators to be distributed to local agencies.

The measure also would direct the commissioner of public safety to create a process for distributing these devices.

DNA database

The omnibus bill also includes provisions, originally sponsored by Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji), that would increase the state's database of DNA samples.

Current law requires only sex offenders to submit DNA samples to a statewide database kept by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

The bill would add several crimes not considered sex offenses to the list of crimes for which offenders must submit samples. Those crimes would include murder, assault, kidnapping, and burglary.

The bureau would get \$125,000 to update its facilities to handle the new data, under the bill.

Unauthorized release animals

The bill would also expand possible civil penalties for releasing lawfully confined animals, such as animals in a research lab.

The bill states that people or organizations that claim responsibility for the act are

presumed by the law to be legally liable for damages, even if they weren't directly responsible for the action. It would then be the responsibility of the person or group to prove that they aren't actually liable for damages.

The bill also would set a minimum level of damages — \$5,000 or three times the actual damages, whichever is greater — that can be recovered by plaintiffs.

These provisions come as a response to a break-in at a University of Minnesota laboratory earlier this year in which numerous animals were released. The Animal Liberation Front, an animal rights group, took credit for the break-in, but authorities couldn't take any legal actions against the group.

Sex offenders

The bill would require that agencies responsible for supervising level III sex offenders — those deemed most likely to re-offend — must consider concentrations of sex offenders in certain areas when working with these offenders.

An earlier amendment offered would have prevented these offenders from living within 1,500 feet from another offender or within a block of schools, parks, or licensed day-care centers.

Proponents of that amendment said that certain low-income areas are forced to house a disproportionate share of these offenders.

The final wording in the bill would require the agencies to work to keep this from happening to the "greatest extent feasible."

Post-traumatic stress benefits

The omnibus bill also would require local law enforcement agencies to provide benefits to any officer suffering from post-traumatic

stress disorder if the officer legally took another life or caused great bodily harm.

The bill would require that a licensed psychologist determine that the officer cannot perform official duties due to the incident.

The benefits would include payment of wages for up to one year if the officer can't work due to the stress and payments for medical and psychological treatment.

Last year, lawmakers paid about \$24,000 in the claims bill to a Benton County deputy. In 1996, the deputy 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.

Three strikes

The conference committee removed the so-called three strikes sentencing provisions, originally sponsored by Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury).

Those provisions would have required courts to sentence a person who is convicted of a third violent felony to a life sentence. Under current law, offenders serving a life sentence cannot be released into a supervised release program until they have served a minimum of 30 years in prison.

For second-offense violent felons, the bill would have lowered the threshold necessary to use increased sentences already in place in current law.

Seifert's proposal would have limited the scope of crimes that could be counted toward the mandatory sentence. The measure would have exempted several felony-level crimes from consideration, including certain drug crimes, third-degree assault, second-degree arson, and burglary.

The measure also would have given judges the power to waive the mandatory life sentence if the court found substantial and compelling reasons to do so.

Public safety spending

The Department of Public Safety would get \$86.4 million over the next two years, under the bill.

Of that amount, the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension would get \$50.8 million. A total of \$15,000 would pay for an in-depth study of the Capitol complex's security system, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of current procedures.

Also in the department appropriation, the Division of Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement would receive \$3.6 million, and the state Fire Marshall would get \$6.4 million.

And the public safety department's appropriation would include \$7.7 million for the

Emergency Management Division. Of that amount, \$120,000 would go to an existing program that allows police departments to seek reimbursements for costs incurred from using one of the state's few bomb disposal units.

Currently, local law enforcement agencies must call on one of four police departments in Minnesota with bomb disposal units when dealing with bombs or other hazardous explosives.

The department's funding also would include \$17.8 million for law enforcement grants to be awarded to individual communities.

Included in that amount is \$1.5 million to assist the courts in Minneapolis now dealing with the influx of cases as a result of that city's CODEFOR police strategy.

CODEFOR, which stands for Computer Optimized Deployment-Focus on Results, uses computer analysis to deploy police resources based on daily reports of crime. The management plan also seeks to actively involve the community in policing, holds precincts and divisions accountable for results, and focuses on crime reduction as the overall police mission.

Under the bill's community grant provisions, \$5.1 million would go to the state criminal gang oversight council and strike force, and \$1 million would go to assist in the development of a statewide, integrated criminal justice computer system.

The bill would provide a \$500,000 community grant to the Ramsey County Attorney's Office to implement a domestic assault and child abuse prosecution pilot project. The project would combine city and county prosecutors into one unit to deal with the crimes.

And \$1 million would be provided for Asian-American juvenile crime intervention and prevention grants. This program is currently overseen by the Department of Human Services; the bill would move it under the public safety department.

Courts and public defense

The state court system would receive \$222.6 million over the two years, under the bill.

Of that amount, the state Supreme Court would get \$51.8 million, the state Court of Appeals would get \$13 million, and the trial courts would get \$156 million.

Included in the trial court appropriation, the bill would provide 13 additional district court judges. The proposal would increase the number of judges in five of the state's 10 judicial districts, and it would provide \$4.7 million for these new positions and related costs.

The original request called for 18 new



Mary and Larry Antonich of Two Harbors have been awaiting the trial of their son's alleged killer for two and a half years. Lawmakers approved more than \$46 million to help crime victims and their families over the next two years.

judgeships in the state. Court officials say that their original proposal would have provided a 6.5 percent increase in judgeships since the last time new judges were approved in 1995. Meanwhile, caseloads have increased by 10 percent over the same period.

The Board of Public Defense would receive \$91.9 million over the two-year budget period. Of that amount, the state public defender would get \$6.5 million, and district public defenders would receive \$83 million.

Funds for corrections

The bill would provide \$669.7 million to the Department of Corrections for operation of the state's correctional system over the next two years. Minnesota's correctional system currently houses 5,500 inmates.

Included in that amount, the Community Service Division would receive \$192.7 million. A total of \$6 million would go for probation caseload reductions and intensive supervisions programs. Currently, more than 115,000 offenders are in probation or community services programs across the state.

The bill would close the Camp Ripley work program, providing a \$2.7 million savings. The work program was established by the Legislature in 1997 to provide a sentencing alternative for nonviolent offenders. The program was seen as a way to relieve pressure on county jails.

But the program hasn't been used by counties to its full potential, and lawmakers are proposing to discontinue the program.

The bill would give the corrections department the statutory authority to open the planned Rush City prison facility, but it would only allow the facility to operate until July 1, 2001, without the Legislature's approval. The facility will open in January 2000 and will house over 950 inmates.

Crime victims

The bill would provide \$793,000 to fund the state's Ombudsman for Crime Victims. The ombudsman investigates complaints of unfair treatment of crime victims and witnesses by criminal justice agencies and reviews the state's victim assistance programs.

And the bill would appropriate \$45.2 million to the Minnesota Center for Crime Victims Services. The center administers the crime victim reparations program. Created in 1974, the program provides financial assistance to victims of crime. The program also receives funding from restitution paid by offenders and state and federal inmate wage deductions.

Included in the center's appropriation, the bill would provide \$100,000 to an existing emergency fund. This fund would be available to crime victims with immediate needs. For example, victims who may be forced to travel long distances to attend trials could seek reimbursements from this fund to pay the additional lodging and travel expenses.

Last word for prosecutors



A new law will make Minnesota like the other 49 states that give prosecutors the final word in criminal trials.

Current Minnesota law states that the prosecutor goes first in final arguments and is followed by the defense attorney. Judges are allowed to give the prosecutor a response to the defense's final arguments only to address misstatements of fact or law, or if the defense's argument is prejudicial or inflammatory.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will guarantee the prosecutors an absolute right to respond following the defense's final arguments. The response can only address issues brought up by the defense's argument.

Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), the new law's sponsor in the House, said it is only fair that prosecutors — who have the heavy burden of proving the case — be allowed to go last. He pointed out that Minnesota is the only criminal system in the nation that allows the defense to go last.

Pawlenty also said that crime victims and victims' families suffer under the current system. He said sometimes the last thing that victims' families hear in the courtroom are disparaging remarks from the defense about the victim, and the prosecution doesn't get a chance to challenge the claims.

Critics argued that the measure violates the separation of powers clause in the state constitution and that the Legislature shouldn't

interfere in court procedures, an area that should be overseen by the courts themselves.

Sen. Randy Kelly (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF197/SF198*/CH72

Drug banned



Gamma hydroxybutyrate — a drug commonly known as GHB — will become a controlled substance in Minnesota, under a new law signed by the governor May 13.

GHB is a central nervous system depressant with effects similar to alcohol. Overdoses of GHB can lead to seizures, respiratory problems, or coma. It has also been reported that GHB is being used as a date-rape drug.

The drug can easily be manufactured from chemicals available from mail-order supply houses and recipes can be found on the Internet.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will classify GHB as a schedule III controlled substance. Doctors will be able to prescribe GHB if the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves the drug, under the measure.

Schedule III drugs are classified under the law as serious controlled substances, although not as serious as schedule I and II drugs — such as heroin, cocaine, and marijuana. To be classified as a schedule III drug, the substance must also have an accepted medical use.

In 1987, the FDA classified GHB as an orphan drug, meaning that it may provide treatment for people with rare diseases or disorders. The FDA approved GHB for investigational research, but has yet to approve the drug for medical use in the United States.

Minnetonka-based Orphan Medical, Inc. — a company that specializes in orphan drugs — is currently researching a GHB-based drug for people who suffer from narcolepsy. The company hopes to eventually get FDA approval to market the drug nationwide. The new law will allow the company to continue its research.

The FDA recently went after several companies making dietary supplements containing Gamma Butyrolactone (GBL). When taken orally, the body converts GBL into GHB.

Companies that manufactured the dietary supplements claimed that the products improved physical performance, restored hair, reduced stress, enhanced sex, increased life expectancy, and helped with sleeping problems.

Most companies ceased manufacturing the dietary supplements and recalled their products.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) and Sen. Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington) sponsored the measure.

HF1255/SF2120*/CH163

Guns for sale



Local sheriffs and police chiefs will soon be allowed to sell confiscated firearms.

Current law requires those agencies to destroy all forfeited weapons that they cannot use, including firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories.

The new measure, effective Aug. 1, will give agencies the authority to either destroy those weapons or to sell them to federally authorized dealers.

The new law also will require local agencies to sell any antique guns they seize. But semi-automatic, military-style assault weapons will continue to be destroyed, under the law.

And the measure will allow the Hennepin and Ramsey county boards to prohibit their respective sheriffs from selling confiscated firearms.

Under existing law, local law enforcement agencies keep 70 percent of the proceeds from the sale of any forfeited property, county attorneys and other prosecutors get 20 percent of the proceeds, and the state receives the remaining 10 percent.

Critics of the plan say that the measure will just put guns back on the streets to be used illegally.

Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee) and Sen. Pat Pariseau (R-Farmington) sponsored the measure.

HF70*/SF197/CH148

Tribal police forces



A new law effective May 19 allows tribal law enforcement agencies to share authority with local sheriffs on tribal land.

The law outlines the conditions under which a tribal law enforcement agency can exercise concurrent jurisdictional authority over criminal violations with the local sheriff.

The measure also allows tribal police officers to become certified by the state's officer licensing board.

Supporters of the law say the plan will help ensure public safety on reservations and that the certification provisions will help the tribal governments recruit and retain qualified police officers.

Some tribes have recently established police agencies or beefed up existing police forces in response both to an increase in crime and a 1997 Minnesota Supreme Court decision.

In that decision, the court ruled that non-tribal state and local law enforcement agencies don't have jurisdiction over civil and regulatory violations — such as traffic violations — on tribal lands.

Prior law authorized the Mille Lacs Band, the Lower Sioux Indian Community, and the Fond du Lac Band to exercise concurrent jurisdictional authority. The new measure expands the law to include the other eight tribes in Minnesota.

Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound) and Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine) sponsored the legislation.

HF1607*/SF1674/CH175

Protecting callers in crisis



A measure signed by the governor clarifies an existing law frequently used to prosecute domestic assault offenders.

Under a 1997 law, prosecutors can charge a person who interferes with a phone call to a 911 dispatcher with a gross misdemeanor crime. The law is often used against domestic assault offenders who try to prevent their victims from calling the police for help.

The new law, effective March 30, expands the existing law to include all emergency calls to police, ambulance services, or fire departments, not just calls placed through 911.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Jane Ranum (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the measure.

HF193/SF255*/CH24

Countering counterfeiters



There will be new criminal penalties for people who trade in counterfeit products.

The measure, effective Aug. 1, will create a new crime of counterfeiting intellectual property. The law will prohibit the manufacture, possession, or sale of counterfeited property.

Current Minnesota law has no criminal penalty for counterfeiting property. Counterfeit claims must be brought forward by the person or company owning the rights to the property, and must go through the civil court process.

Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley), the measure's House sponsor, said that the

practice of attaching registered trademarks or trade names to unauthorized products is growing. He said counterfeiters can see big profits from the sale of the fake goods and face no risk of prosecution.

Gerlach said tougher penalties are needed because counterfeiters take business away from legitimate companies, and defective and inferior goods produced and distributed by counterfeiters can pose a danger to consumers.

The new law also outlines penalties for the counterfeiting crime based on number and value of the items counterfeited. The maximum penalty will be a five-year prison sentence and a \$100,000 fine.

And the law will include the new crime under a list of crimes that can apply to racketeering charges. Increased penalties can be applied if the counterfeiting crime is proven to show a pattern of organized crime.

Sen. Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF263/SF411*/CH142

Payback for crime victims



A new law will make several changes to the ways crime victims can seek financial relief.

The law, effective Aug. 1, will allow courts to deposit any unclaimed restitution payments collected from offenders into the state's reparations account for crime victims. The court will be required to forward the victim's name and last known address along with the amount being deposited to the Crime Victims Reparation Board.

The measure will also expand the time limit to file a claim from the reparations account from two years to three years, and will make changes to requirements involving child abuse claims.

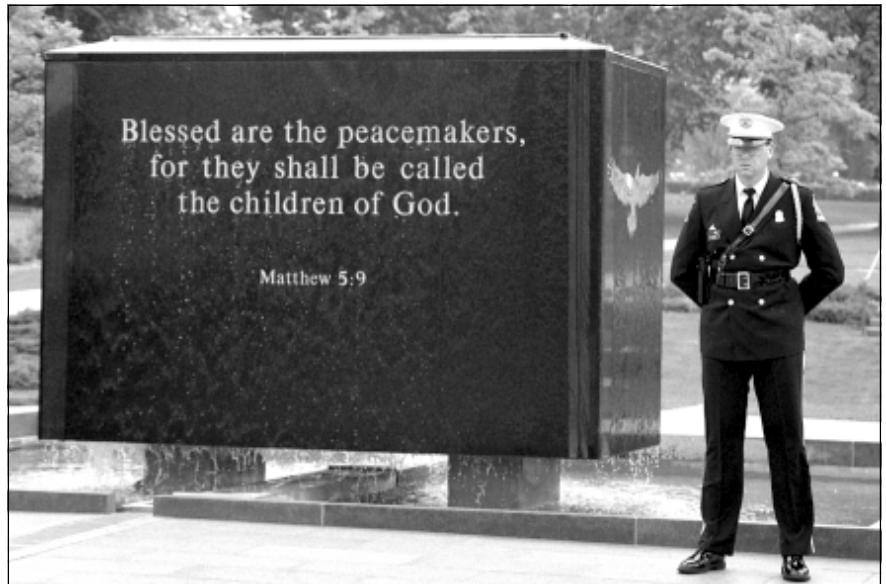
And the new law will allow crime victims to make claims for moving expenses and other related costs due to the crime. It will cap those payments at \$1,000.

The reparations account was established in 1974 to provide financial assistance to victims of crime. In addition to receiving a state appropriation, the program receives funding from restitution paid by offenders and state and federal inmate wage deductions.

Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF1359*/SF1023/CH136

Silent vigil



A lone officer guards the Peace Officers Memorial on the Capitol mall. The vigil was part of the annual Police Officers Memorial Day service on May 15, which drew police officers from all over the state.

Strict line on poisoning



A new law aims to get tough on the crime of poisoning.

Specifically, the new measure will expand the law against adulteration, which is the crime of intentionally adding a dangerous or poisonous substance to another person's food, drink, or medication.

Under current law, the person committing the crime must know that the dangerous substance will cause harm. The new law will require only a knowledge that the substance is capable of causing harm.

The measure, effective Aug. 1, also will increase penalties for the crime of adulteration. And the measure will create a penalty for cases in which actual physical harm does not occur.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the new measure.

HF735*/SF495/CH64

Waiting in the workhouse



A new law will authorize county sheriffs to transfer prisoners waiting for trial from the county jail to the county workhouse.

Current law allows sheriffs to transfer only prisoners who have been sentenced. The new measure, effective Aug. 1, will allow sheriffs to do the same with pretrial prisoners.

Under the new law, sheriffs and workhouse administrators will be required to have an agreement in place on the conditions of the transfer, including how costs will be handled.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove) and Sen. Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington) sponsored the measure.

HF216*/SF236/CH49

Drug law loophole closed



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law that will close a loophole for people guilty of multiple drug crimes.

Current law allows courts to defer judgement for certain first-time drug offenders as long as the offender agrees to participate in diversion programs.

But if the same person commits another drug crime, the stay of adjudication doesn't apply as a prior conviction for the purposes of enhanced penalties for repeat offenders. As a result, the offender is only sentenced as if he or she has no prior convictions.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will make such stays of adjudication the same as a prior drug conviction when courts consider if the enhanced penalty can apply.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure.

HF142*/SF1634/CH98

Challenging court orders



There will be a time limit on when criminal defendants can challenge court-ordered restitution, under a new law effective Aug. 1.

Currently, courts can order that a person convicted of a crime pay the victim expenses resulting from the crime. Restitution can include medical bills, therapy costs, or the replacement of lost wages.

Current law also outlines a process whereby defendants can challenge the amount claimed by the victim.

The new law will give the defendant 30 days to challenge the amount of the restitution. The clock starts ticking when the defendant is informed of the amount requested or is sentenced to pay, whichever is later.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure.

HF733/SF117*/CH38

Violating rental deals



A new law will target people who rent items and then fail to return them on time.

The measure, effective Aug. 1, will change the criminal theft law to apply to rental situations where the value of the property is \$100 or more.

Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), House sponsor of the new measure, said that people sometimes keep expensive rental property past when it is due and the business owners have little recourse.

He said that these people are denying the owners potential income from other rentals, and he said that should constitute theft, regardless of whether or not the property is eventually returned.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, outlines conduct in rental agreements that will qualify as a violation of that law, including failure to return the property and failure to pay the agreed-upon rental charges.

The measure will also change the definition of value in the current theft law to include damages to the rental property and the potential rental value that the owner could have received had the property been in his or her possession.

Sen. Paula Hanson (DFL-Ham Lake) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF868*/SF866/CH76

Protection for search dogs



Effective Aug. 1, state law will include criminal penalties for killing or harming search and rescue dogs.

Under current law, harming or killing a police dog is a crime that can be punished by up to two years imprisonment. The new measure will add search and rescue dogs to that law.

Search and rescue dogs often belong to private associations that offer volunteer services to police and fire departments. Those private associations sought the change in state law.

Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and Sen. Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington) sponsored the new law.

HF67*/SF32/CH77

Making no-shows pay



Lawmakers passed a new law that will help prosecutors recoup costs when defendants don't show up for court appearances.

Under current law, criminal defendants who skip a court appearance can be charged with the additional crime of failure to appear in court. Judges can order jail time and fines for defendants found guilty of failing to appear.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will allow judges to also order those defendants to pay any costs incurred by the county or city attorney.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure.

HF732/SF99*/CH27

Paying for DWI enforcement



The governor signed a new law that will help county sheriffs pay for DWI investigations.

Under current law, sheriffs maintain a fund made up of fines collected for violations of controlled substance and liquor control laws. Sheriffs can use the money to finance investigations into violations of these laws.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will expand the list of crimes the funds can be used to investigate to include DWI investigations.

Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound) and Sen. Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington) sponsored the measure.

HF240*/SF236/CH49

Stopping child porn

Investigators say they are seeing a proliferation of child pornography on the Internet, and a plan to give them the tools to fight it is headed for the governor's desk.

The House passed the final version of the bill May 15. The vote was 133-0.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), would clarify the definition of these crimes to make it easier to prosecute Internet offenders.

The measure (HF1081/SF1404*) also would increase the crime level for possessing and distributing child pornography from a gross misdemeanor to a felony, and would increase penalties for those crimes.

Check bouncers

A measure that would create a diversion program for people who write bad checks just needs the endorsement of the governor to become law.

The bill, passed by the House on May 15, would allow prosecutors to establish a diversion program and to dismiss charges for offenders who complete the program.

Bill sponsor Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove) said the measure would separate people who intentionally write bad checks from those who just have money management problems. He said his bill would get the unintentional offender out of the criminal justice system and into programs that could provide help.

The bill also provides a list of criteria that prosecutors would have to consider when accepting offenders into the program, including past dishonored check complaints, evidence of intent to defraud, and the victim's wishes.

Offenders in the program would be required to successfully complete a class on check writing and money management, pay restitution to the victim, and pay all service charges required.

The bill (HF624/SF441*) would also create a new five-year prison penalty for writing a dishonored check valued at more than \$500.



DEVELOPMENT

Funds for jobs, housing

A \$499 million jobs and economic development bill — with a heavy emphasis on affordable-housing initiatives — just needs the governor's signature to become law.

The House passed the bill May 15. The vote was 83-47.

The appropriations bill, sponsored by Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville), would provide

funding for two dozen state agencies over the next two years, including the departments of commerce, economic security, housing, labor, and trade and economic development.

The bill also includes several one-time funding initiatives designed to address short-term job and development issues.

Here are some highlights of the bill (HF2390).

Housing initiatives

The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency would get \$120.5 million — \$45 million more than was provided in the last two-year budget — to address a current shortage of affordable housing.

Included in that amount, \$30 million would go toward preserving federally subsidized rental housing. Some owners of federally subsidized properties are opting out of the program and charging market-rate rents. The funds would provide incentives for these owners to remain in the program.

The bill would direct the department to establish a “challenge grant” program. The grants and loans could be made available to developers, non-profits, and cities for housing development specifically targeted for job creation and economic development. Under the bill, a one-time appropriation of \$20 million would go for the challenge grants and loans.

The bill also would establish an “innovative and inclusionary housing” program. The program would finance housing developments that use innovative building techniques and are located in communities willing to waive housing regulations that might increase the costs of the new building practices.

The developments could be owner-occupied or rental units and would have to serve families with a broad range of incomes. The program would receive a one-time appropriation of \$8 million under the bill.

The omnibus bill also includes a housing proposal originally sponsored by Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan). The plan seeks to provide stable housing for families with school-aged children.

Specifically, the measure would enable organizations to apply for grants through the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program, which was established by the Legislature in 1993. That program provides grants to counties and nonprofit organizations for efforts to prevent homelessness.

Under Pawlenty’s plan, a new project aimed at providing stability for homeless children would be added to the existing program.

The program would combine the housing services with job training, social services, and

the schools. The bill would provide \$1 million for the project.

The bill would provide \$1.8 million for home ownership assistance programs and \$8.6 million housing rehabilitation programs. And it would give \$1.2 for a mortgage foreclosure prevention program and \$6.5 million for homelessness-prevention programs.

Change on Iron Range

The bill originally included a plan to replace lawmakers who serve on the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) with appointed citizens.

House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon), sponsor of these provisions, argued that the IRRRB’s current makeup causes constitutional problems, because legislators are prohibited from holding other public offices.

Sviggum’s proposal would have required the governor to appoint 10 board members who were not legislators.

The IRRRB oversees six different accounts that appropriate money for environmental or economic development projects in northeastern Minnesota. The board administers funds received through a specific tax paid by mining companies in the area.

Under current law, the House speaker appoints five state representatives to serve on the board, and the Senate Subcommittee on Committees appoints five state senators. The 11th member is the commissioner of natural resources.

The final bill includes a compromise of the Sviggum plan. The board would be increased from 11 members to 13 members. Ten of the members would remain lawmakers, five from the House and five from the Senate.

The other three would be non-legislators who live in the Iron Range tax-relief area — one appointed by the speaker, one by the majority leader of the Senate, and one by the governor. The commissioner of natural resources would be dropped from the board.

Funding economic development

The Department of Trade and Economic Development would receive \$102.9 million over the next two years. Of that amount, \$10 million would go to the Office of Tourism to increase marketing and advertising.

The tourism office would provide \$1.6 million to the Minnesota Film Board to be matched with non-state resources. The funds would be used to partially reimburse film producers for wages paid to Minnesota film crews.

The economic development department would be required to come up with a comprehensive marketing plan to attract trade, tour-

ism, and economic development to Minnesota. The plan would be submitted to the Legislature next year.

The department would also be directed to establish a “Minnesota minerals 21st century” account for financing mineral processing facilities. Any financing in the Iron Range tax-relief area would have to be matched with IRRRB funds.

The Department of Economic Security would receive \$82.6 million over the next two years for job training and employment services.

Included in this appropriation, State Services for the Blind would receive \$10.9 million. The department is required under the bill to audit State Services for the Blind to find the cause for the deficit that occurred in the agency’s 1999 budget.

The bill would provide \$36.4 million to the Department of Commerce over the next two years. Of that amount, \$1.4 million would fund an upgrade of the database systems used by the department, and \$90,000 would go towards the development of an online licensing Web site.

The bill would also provide \$1.1 million to the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, \$638,000 to the Chicano Latino Affairs Council, \$563,000 to the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, and \$649,000 to the Council on Black Minnesotans. Of the appropriation to the Council on Black Minnesotans, \$25,000 would go to the annual planning of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

Also under the bill, the Department of Labor and Industry would be appropriated \$49.6 million, and the Department of Public Service would receive \$19.4 million.

The Minnesota Historical Society would get \$52.7 million, including \$50,000 to be given to the city of Little Falls for the establishment of a fishing museum and environmental education center.

Several boards would also receive funding. The Board of Accountancy would get \$1.2 million, the architecture board would receive \$1.6 million, and the Board of Barber Examiners would get \$293,000.

But the state Board of Boxing would be eliminated next year, under the bill. This provision came as a result of recommendations made by the legislative auditor in a report on occupational regulation. The auditor suggested that the functions of the board could best be handled by a private organization.

HMO regulation

Earlier versions of the bill would have split the regulation of health maintenance organizations (HMOs) between the departments of

health and commerce. Under current law, the Department of Health is the agency responsible for regulating those organizations.

Under the plan, the Department of Commerce would have been responsible for the financial regulation of these entities, and the Department of Health would have regulated quality of care issues.

Other risk-bearing health organizations, such as community integrated service networks (CISNs), health care cooperatives, and community purchasing arrangements, would have also fallen under the change.

Instead, the bill would require that these departments study how HMOs can be better regulated in the state and provide a report to the Legislature next year.

Building code enforcement



Authority over the energy-related portions of the state building code will be transferred from the Department of Public Service to the Department of Administration.

The administration department currently oversees many provisions of the state building code. However, other parts of the code are developed and enforced under the departments of health, public safety, or public service. Several state agencies and boards also have input in inspecting and reviewing building plans for public buildings.

A new law effective July 1 is a step toward consolidating that authority.

Disagreements and poor coordination between the various state agencies and departments has caused unnecessary delays in construction, according to a January report by the Office of the Legislative Auditor.

The measure was sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), and Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan).

HF1568/SF1209*/CH135

Bloomington land deal



A new law allows the Department of Human Services to sell a piece of property to the city of Bloomington. The law took effect April 21.

The 14,000 square-foot parcel currently contains a state-owned group home for the developmentally disabled. It is one of three parcels the city is amassing to accommodate construction of a 41-unit seniors housing facility at the corner of Beard Avenue and Old Shakopee Road.

The department hopes to build another

group home in the Bloomington area. Legislative action was required so that the proceeds from the sale could be used for purchasing a new site, rather than being channeled into the state's general fund.

Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington) and Sen. William Belanger (R-Bloomington) sponsored the measure.

HF960/SF829*/CH80



EDUCATION

Billions for education

A \$7.9 billion K-12 finance bill is on its way to the governor, with an emphasis on general aid to all schools rather than special programs.

"I think we're going out with a very strong bill," Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington), who sponsored the measure, told colleagues on the House floor May 17.

House Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) said he was "delighted and encouraged" by the bill, which passed the House on a 129-2 vote.

The school funding plan that emerged from a House-Senate conference committee represents a \$100 million increase from the House's original proposal — bringing it more in line with the Senate's plan but further away from the governor's recommendation. About one-half of that increase would only be spent if the state's November 1999 budget forecast shows a sufficient surplus.

The measure would provide the largest boost in a decade to the general formula, through which school districts receive the bulk of their funding.

And while it would provide about \$86 million over two years specifically for class-size reduction initiatives, the compromise plan represents a decrease in that category from both the earlier House bill and the governor's proposal.

Seagren said districts would be able to use the additional formula money for reducing class sizes, and they would benefit from being able to decide locally how to proceed.

The measure would also address funding disparities between districts and support special education, charter schools, and all-day kindergarten programs. Here's a look at highlights from the bill (HF2333).

Formula boost

School districts would get an extra \$167 per pupil unit next year, under the plan. That 4.7-percent increase would be followed with a 3.2-percent formula boost for the 2000-01 school year, bringing the annual per-pupil

funding from \$3,530 currently to \$3,925 in 2001. (That increase would include a shift of \$43 per pupil that now is in a separate component called graduation standards funding.)

Of the second-year spending hike, \$50 per pupil unit would be contingent upon the state's November 1999 budget forecast.

General formula funding is figured on weighted per-pupil units, with secondary students receiving more revenue than elementary students.

The proposed hike would cost the state more than \$400 million, which would be part of the \$6.1 billion sent to districts in general formula funding during the biennium.

Class-size reduction

The measure does not fund class-size reduction initiatives at the level proposed by the governor, but it does set aside about \$86 million for that purpose. Ventura, who advocated reducing all kindergarten through third-grade classes to 17 children per teacher, called for \$150 million in two-year funding for the initiative.

The original House plan called for spending about \$107 million over the biennium. But proponents of the compromise bill say districts would be able to use extra per-pupil formula money to help reduce class sizes, and they would have more discretion in the process because they won't be required to OK their plans with the state.

Earlier proposals by both the House and the governor would have required districts to submit a plan to the commissioner of the Department of Children, Families and Learning for approval.

Under the compromise bill, districts would have to reserve \$3 per pupil unit in 2000 and \$11 per pupil unit in 2001 of their general formula funding for class-size reduction, all-day kindergarten, or certain special education initiatives. School boards would be required to pass a resolution stating which program they plan to fund.

School breakfasts

The bill would establish a grant program aimed at ensuring that all children eat breakfast each school day. Almost \$6 million over two years would go to districts that have high percentages of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches.

The grants would expand the current Fast Break to Learning program, which provides money for in-school breakfast to 41 districts. Under the bill, districts would have to match every \$3 of state money with \$1 of local funding.

The programs in the pilot schools have been

shown to increase test scores and reduce discipline problems.

Charter schools

Fledgling charter schools would see more state money under the plan. Funding for building lease costs would jump to \$1,500 per pupil unit from the current level of about \$465 per student.

And \$3.7 billion would be targeted to help with charter school start-up costs over the biennium. That's the amount recommended by the governor, but it's \$1.7 billion less than proposed in the original House bill.

Other provisions are aimed at making it easier to create new charter schools. Cities, towns, and educational cooperative boards would be added to the list of entities that can sponsor charter schools, and districts would be required to convert existing schools to charter schools if 60 percent of full-time teachers at a school petition for the change. Under current law, 90 percent of those teachers must petition to force the conversion.

Also, a nine-member charter school appeals board would be created to approve charter school applications. Currently, those applications are handled by the State Board of Education, which will be abolished at the end of this year under a 1998 law that transfers most of the board's duties to the Department of Children, Families and Learning.

The bill would also require school districts that are considering sponsoring a charter school to make the decision in 90 days or less. And, if the district rejects the proposal, the measure would provide for an automatic appeal to the State Board of Education or the new appeals board.

And charter school teachers would be allowed to perform administrative duties even if they do not have an administrator's license. That provision comes in response to complaints that it is impossible for many small charter schools to find and pay administrators.

Funding disparities

The bill also includes provisions to address statewide funding disparities between districts. Currently, about 32 percent of school districts' budgets come from local levies, and districts that, for whatever reason, have trouble getting voter approval for levy hikes face recurring funding crunches.

The bill would direct almost \$42 million over the upcoming biennium to a new funding component called equity revenue. Equity revenue would provide additional money, on a sliding scale, to districts that have less than the state's average per-pupil funding based on combined state and local revenue.



Lawmakers passed a \$7.9 billion K-12 education funding bill that would direct \$86 million for reducing class sizes, a plan touted by Gov. Jesse Ventura. While the figure is not as high as Ventura wanted, districts could choose to use other funding increases in the bill for further class-size reductions.

And it would increase the level at which the state "equalizes" local referendum funding. Currently, additional state funds are provided for districts' first \$315 in per-pupil funding from local levies, based on the districts' property tax base. The bill would raise that level to \$350 for fiscal year 2000 and to \$415 the following year.

"We wanted to attempt to close the gap between the high-spending and low-spending districts, and we think this is fair," Seagren said.

She said districts such as Big Lake, Renville, Montevideo, and Pine City would benefit from the measure.

A new method of formula calculation would also help schools with declining enrollment — a common problem in rural schools where smaller classes mean less state money coming in but many of the same fixed costs faced by districts.

The bill calls for funding to be calculated 90 percent on the district's current year enrollment and 10 percent on the previous year's enrollment.

Technology in classrooms

The Telecommunications Access Grants program, set to expire this year, would see limited funding under the omnibus bill, a conference committee reduction that upset some lawmakers from rural districts.

The grant program provides money for districts to upgrade technology and to secure Internet access for students and staff, and is used most by greater Minnesota districts.

"That's the biggest issue with some of my rural districts," Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda)

said on the House floor. "We're already down to peanuts this year and probably nothing next year."

The original House plan would have funded the grants with \$20 million in one-time funds next year, but the final version of the bill would spend only \$5 million for the grants.

And the final bill does not include individual technology grants that would have been funded under the earlier House measure. The House bill called for nine grants to school districts across the state, ranging from \$50,000 to \$200,000 each, aimed at compensating districts that suffered losses when a prevailing wage law was passed. That law required districts to pay prevailing wage for construction contract work.

Some districts that had already bonded for certain projects had to re-bid and often cut technology plans out of their proposals. Several districts received similar technology grants last year, and Seagren said the nine grants this year would have helped the remaining districts with technology initiatives.

But Seagren said the intent of the bill is to provide as much money as possible, with limited restrictions, to all districts via the general formula increase. And most individual appropriations were stripped from the bill in conference committee.

Special education

Special education programs would see a funding increase of almost \$100 million over the two years, under the bill.

Seagren said that money would help alleviate much of the burden on districts that now spend much of their general formula

allowance on special education costs. Ventura pushed for the new spending in that area.

All-day kindergarten

The bill would provide \$14 million over two years to fund all-day kindergarten pilot programs around the state. The first-grade preparedness program was initiated in 1996, with \$5 million in spending, and it was given a \$1.5 million funding boost in the 1998 omnibus education law. Proponents of the program say that attending all-day kindergarten dramatically increases children's academic and social skills.

Profile of Learning intact

Lawmakers' attempts to abolish or retool the controversial Profile of Learning failed this session as members of a House-Senate conference committee did not agree to a compromise on the issue.

The Profile, one half of the state's two-pronged Graduation Standards program, has been criticized by lawmakers, teachers, and parents as a set of mandated curricula with burdensome record-keeping requirements. Basic skills tests in math, reading, and writing at various grade levels comprise the second part of the Graduation Standards.

Earlier in the session, the House voted to scrap the Profile in exchange for locally determined rigorous standards. But the Senate chose to keep the statewide program and change some of its rules, including a provision that would let schools opt out of some of the

Profile's requirements.

However, lawmakers were at an impasse after several meetings of the House-Senate conference committee, and ended the session without reaching a compromise.

Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake), was co-chair of the conference committee for the Profile of Learning bill (HF15). He said that the Senate finished its version of the bill later than expected, which left little time to work out a compromise in the midst of many other complex bills.

That leaves the issue to next session or to the Department of Children, Families and Learning, where officials have said they will attempt some administrative changes within the mandated framework of the current Profile. Department Commissioner Christine Jax has said the Profile needs fixing but should not be abolished.

However, not much can be done to change the requirements of the graduation rule without a directive from the Legislature. And until then, Minnesota schools will become more and more familiar with the Profile because all districts began implementing it in the 1998-99 school year.

Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie) sponsored the bill to scrap the Profile.

Keeping classrooms safe

A bill awaiting action by Gov. Jesse Ventura would bar anyone convicted of criminal sexual conduct from teaching in Minnesota's classrooms.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Doug Fuller (R-

Bemidji), would require the state Board of Teaching to revoke or refuse a teaching license to any person convicted of criminal sexual conduct in the first to fifth degrees.

Lawmakers in the House passed the bill May 14. The vote was 131-0.

Criminal sexual conduct can range from rape (first degree) to exposing genitals in the presence of a minor (fifth degree), as defined by state law. In addition to these offenses, those convicted of child abuse would also be ineligible for teaching licenses.

The measure would exempt individuals with non-felony convictions for fifth-degree offenses.

Under the bill, courts would be required to notify the Board of Teaching once they discover a convicted sex offender is a licensed teacher. The board would then revoke the teacher's license and notify the school board that employs the teacher.

The bill (HF14) also would allow the state board to refuse to issue or renew licenses to applicants convicted of criminal sexual conduct.

A similar measure already exists for school bus drivers.

Fuller said he sponsored the legislation because of recent publicized incidents in which teachers were found to have sexually abused their students or other children.

Offenders banned from boards



A new law will prohibit registered sex offenders from becoming school board members.

Any person who has been convicted of a sexual offense and is a registered predatory offender will be ineligible to run for election to a local school board, under the measure.

The law, effective Aug. 1, follows a New Ulm school board election that included a candidate who had served 41 months in prison for sexual abuse. The man's history was revealed shortly before the election, and he was not elected.

Sen. Dennis Frederickson (R-New Ulm), who sponsored the legislation in the Senate, said that incident prompted him to introduce the measure this year.

He said sex offenders should not have access to positions of authority over children, especially those that would allow them entrance to school facilities.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) sponsored the bill in the House.

HF1845/SF1527*/CH101



Richfield public school students visited the Capitol earlier this session to demonstrate what they learned under the Profile of Learning. Although lawmakers sought to make changes to the academic standards program, they did not reach an agreement this session.

Limits on special education



A new law will lower the age until which Minnesota schools are required to provide special education instruction.

In 1998, lawmakers approved a new set of laws concerning special education policies to make them consistent with federal law. The new law finishes that process by tying up some loose ends of certain state laws that exceed federal requirements. The 1998 law left those provisions to be examined by lawmakers and special education officials to determine which ones should still exceed federal law.

Under current law, Minnesota requires special education services to be provided until a student is 22 years old. Under federal law, that requirement is 21 years old.

Effective July 1, 2002, the state law will change to age 21 and school districts will be required to provide instruction only until July 1 after the student turns 21.

Other changes included in the measure deal with discipline procedures for special education students and state reimbursement for litigation costs incurred by school districts.

Many of the bill's provisions, except the age change, are effective July 1. Other provisions have various effective dates.

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) and Sen. Martha Robertson (R-Minnetonka) sponsored the legislation.

HF483/SF296*/CH123

Grant to district cut



A new law effective May 5 reduces a 1998 grant to the Isle School District.

The grant, originally in the amount of \$1 million, was given to the school district to convert a school building into a community center.

The law decreases the grant to \$700,000 and eliminates school district kitchen facilities from the community center's description. Lower than expected bids and the change in kitchen plans brought the cost of the project down.

In addition, the law requires that the grant money will only be available as matching funds are committed on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton) and Sen. Dan Stevens (R-Mora) sponsored the measure.

HF585*/SF595/CH119



ELECTIONS

Voting in the wrong place



A person who votes in the wrong precinct will no longer face the possibility of a felony charge on the first offense, under a new law that will also update other provisions of election law.

Effective Aug. 1, a person who votes in the wrong precinct will receive a letter from the Office of the Secretary of State citing the mistake and informing the person of the correct polling place.

The person will then have to provide proof of residency before voting in the next election. If the same person votes in the wrong precinct a second time, it will be considered a misdemeanor, and a third instance will be considered a felony.

Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley), House sponsor of the bill, said so many instances of voting in the wrong place are reported that county attorneys have rarely prosecuted them as felonies, as current law stipulates. Gerlach said the instances are most often misunderstandings, and the new law will make it easier to identify and prosecute instances of repeated violations.

Another provision in the law will drop the requirement that a person can only be a witness to vouch for another person to register to vote if both people live in the same county. The new law will allow any registered voter in Minnesota to vouch for another person to allow them to vote.

Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park) was the Senate sponsor of the measure.

HF1168/SF1144*/CH132

Voting rights returned



A law effective April 17 repealed an election measure passed in 1998 that some say could have placed the entire civil commitment process for sex offenders in legal jeopardy.

The 1998 law took away the voting rights of any person who is civilly committed because of conduct that caused the person to be convicted of a crime. For the most part, the law applied to people committed as "sexually dangerous persons" or "persons with a sexual psychopathic personality."

The new law simply repeals those 1998 election provisions, returning the election law to its pre-1998 status.

Under that law, offenders who have

completed their sentence but are civilly committed are given the right to vote, unless they have been found incompetent to vote by a judge.

Proponents of the repeal argue that the 1998 law could have been legally troublesome to the current law allowing for civil commitment. They say it would have applied a different standard for sex offenders who are committed. And they suggest that courts might have ruled the 1998 law a denial of equal protection under the law for those offenders.

The civil commitment procedure for sex offenders has often been the source of legal controversy. The courts have, in some cases, ruled that the process is unconstitutional and is used to punish — not to treat — the offenders. In 1996, the Minnesota Supreme Court upheld the current Sexually Dangerous Persons Act, stating that the law allowing for commitment of sexually dangerous individuals did not violate the offenders' constitutional rights.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) and Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley) sponsored the 1999 measure.

HF643*/SF676/CH61



EMPLOYMENT

Tracking job training efforts



A new law aims to give lawmakers a better picture of the state's job training services.

The new law will require the Department of Economic Security and the Governor's Workforce Development Council to prepare a report evaluating all job training programs in Minnesota that receive state or federal funding.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), the measure's House sponsor, said there are 62 job-training programs in the state and they are administered by 12 different agencies. He said policy-makers need better information to make funding decisions.

"We don't know if they're doing a good job or bad job or what," he said.

Effective Aug. 1, the new law will direct the department to provide a brief summary of each program, a statement describing its need, the number of participants, and the costs and funding sources of the program. The report also will detail the results, including job placement rates and wages of participants following completion of the program.

The report is due to the Legislature by Jan. 31, 2000.

Sen. Randy Kelly (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF1051*/SF971/CH138



ENERGY

Innovative heating systems



A new law will allow more contractors to excavate or install vertical heat exchangers.

Under current law, only licensed well contractors can drill or excavate wells to install vertical heat exchangers, which are energy efficient heating systems that draw heat from the ground. The demand for those systems is growing because they reduce heating and cooling costs.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, 2000, will allow some of the installation work to be done by licensed limited well/boring contractors or limited well sealing contractors. Proponents of the measure say allowing the other contractors to do the work will reduce the up front costs of those systems. Northern Municipal Power Agency is among the groups that supported the measure.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) and Sen. LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls) sponsored the measure.

HF2021/SF1539*/CH153



ENVIRONMENT

Ag, environment funding

The House approved an omnibus spending bill for agriculture, environment, and natural resources projects May 15. The vote was 98-31.

The bill (HF2388/SF2226*) would fund the budgets of several state agencies for the 2000-2001 biennium.

The appropriations include \$517.1 million to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), \$251 million to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), \$168 million to the Department of Agriculture, \$46.8 million to the Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA), \$38.4 million to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BOWSR), \$8.2 million to the Agriculture Utilization Research Institute, and \$6.3 million to the Animal Health Board.

Money for those budgets comes from several sources, including the state's general fund, permit or license fees, or other dedicated funds.

The bill would also appropriate \$42.3 million from the lottery-financed Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

(LCMR). The money would pay for 120 projects throughout the state, which are designed to provide environmental or recreational benefits in addition to programs that are administered through the state agencies. Many of the LCMR projects are funded through grants that require matching funds from local communities.

The bill also would set a \$12 fee for use of snowmobile studs.

Under an earlier House-approved version of the bill, the Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Commission would have been eliminated, but the Senate provision included in the final bill calls for keeping the commission and providing \$371,000 in funding.

Another House provision that was not included in the final bill would have required the city of Minneapolis and other state and local authorities to issue permits for a metal shredding facility, called a Kondirator, located along the Mississippi River.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater) sponsored the bill.

Pollution provisions

A \$901,000 increase to the MPCA budget would pay for enforcing feedlot regulations. Some of that money would help counties prevent pollution by requiring newly constructed feedlots to comply with codes.

Research on deformed frogs would continue in the state through a \$600,000 appropriation to the MPCA. The House had proposed eliminating that funding because that research is also being done at the federal level. Holsten, chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee, argued that the Legislature should try to spend more money on projects that clean up the environment instead of continually studying the issues without taking action. But the Senate version of the bill included the funding for the study, and the House accepted it in the conference committee.

Another study that would be funded under the bill is a \$200,000 appropriation to the University of Minnesota to develop a plan to allow cooperative wastewater treatment systems. The purpose of the provision is to allow groups in rural areas to build a wastewater treatment system, instead of having a septic system or connecting to a city system.

Cleanup efforts through the MPCA would include a \$2.75 million increase to supplement the Clean Water Partnership Grant Program, \$323,000 to implement a program for reducing pollution from mercury, and \$965,000 to allow additional solid waste disposal facilities to be included in the landfill cleanup program.

The bill would also appropriate \$250,000 from the petroleum tank cleanup fund to purchase equipment to clean up oil spills along the Mississippi River in rural areas. The equipment would be used by local fire and rescue departments in communities near the river.

A landfill trust fund would be created, which would be overseen by the State Board of Investment. The bill would put \$10.2 million in that fund, and future revenue from the fund would be spent on maintenance to landfills.

DNR funding

Some hunting and fishing advocates had supported fee increases for licenses, but the bill would keep license fees at the current levels.

The bill would increase funding for some projects to enhance hunting and fishing in the state, including a \$3.1 million increase to DNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife and \$1 million for walleye stocking programs.

The bill would also include a proposal to offer hunting and fishing licenses electronically. The DNR would receive \$800,000 in the year 2000 and \$1.9 million in 2001 to pay the costs of developing the new licensing system, some of which is projected to be offset by money that is saved from the costs of issuing paper licenses and stamps.

The DNR also would receive \$3 million for Red River flood mitigation, \$2 million for proposed recreational trails throughout the state, a \$1.7 million increase to State Park operations, and a \$1.2 million increase to enhance computer systems in the department.

Ag and Rural Development

Marketing initiatives were among the major agriculture provisions of the bill, including \$900,000 for the biennium to pay for collaborative efforts with the commissioner of agriculture, the Department of Trade and Economic Development, the World Trade Center Corporation, and other organizations with marketing expertise.

The goals of the provision are to promote, develop, expand, and enhance the marketing of agricultural products from Minnesota producers and processors. Under the bill, the commissioner would have to report to the agriculture committees in the Legislature by Oct. 1, 1999, on what the efforts have accomplished.

The bill also would add \$1.6 million to the Department of Agriculture's budget for information technology to equip office and field staff with computer equipment.

Some money would also be available under the bill to reimburse farmers for losses of crops or livestock to wild animals, including a

\$160,000 increase for reimbursement of live-stock losses due to timber wolf depredation and \$130,000 for damage caused by beavers.

The bill would also allocate \$750,000 to continue research on feedlot technology, including tests of chemicals that are designed to reduce the odor from manure pits.

Among the House provisions that were not included in the final bill were a plan to develop an urban agricultural high school and a proposal to allow farmed cervidae — the animal family that includes deer and elk — to be hunted.

New effort to halt milfoil



The governor signed a measure that modifies the state's policy for controlling the spread of Eurasian water milfoil and other exotic species.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed the Exotic Species Program after Eurasian water milfoil was found in Lake Minnetonka in 1987 and zebra mussels were found in Duluth harbor. The program includes inspection of boats and trailers at launching sites of lakes that are known to be infested.

The new law, effective April 25, extends those inspections to lakes that are not infested, and it allows more time for those inspections. Under previous law, the DNR inspected boats from May 1 to Oct. 15 each year, but that period will now be extended to the entire open water season.

Previous law also prohibited people from harvesting bait from infested waters. The new law allows the DNR to grant permits for that purpose to people who have had training in handling exotic species.

Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack) and Sen. Leonard Price (DFL-Woodbury) sponsored the measure.

HF1248/SF1528*/CH92

International fishing fight



A resolution urging the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to resolve alleged violations of international law by the province of Ontario was signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The resolution states that the provincial government of Ontario imposed restrictions on U.S. residents taking fish from Canadian waters of Rainy Lake in 1994. It also states that the province extended the restrictions to Rainy River and Lake of the Woods in 1998 and has

“threatened to extend” them to the entire Minnesota-Ontario border.

Minnesota resorts have suffered due to the restrictions because Canadian residents are allowed to fish in those areas. The resolution states the restrictions are a violation of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the General Agreement on Trade in Services under the World Trade Organization.

The resolution is sponsored by Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls) in the House and Sen. LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls) in the Senate.

HF544*/SF638/Res. 1

Paul Bunyan trail route



A new law will alter the route of the Paul Bunyan State Trail.

Starting in the city of Baxter — near Paul Bunyan Land amusement park — the trail runs along an abandoned stretch of railroad right-of-way land and is used by walkers, bikers, and snowmobilers in Minnesota's popular resort areas.

The trail is nearly one-half completed, and when finished, the path will stretch 100 miles north to Bemidji.

Effective Aug. 1, the law will change the starting and ending points of the trail to state parks instead of cities. The Baxter starting point will be changed to Crow Wing State Park, and the Bemidji ending point will be moved to Lake Bemidji State Park.

The measure will also permit the use of motorized wheelchairs or carts used by those with physical disabilities on trails that otherwise restrict the use of motorized vehicles.

Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls) and Sen. Don Samuelson (DFL-Brainerd) sponsored the legislation.

HF1944/SF1470*/CH95

State recycling initiative



Responsibility for part of the state's Waste Management Act will be transferred from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to the Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA), under a new law effective Aug. 1.

The Waste Management Act is a state law that requires the MPCA and the commissioner of public service to recommend policy changes to help the state reduce the amount of waste that is sent to landfills. Goals of the program include purchasing products that contain recycled material, conducting tests on

agencies' experiences using those products, and keeping other data related to recycling.

The OEA administers other programs that are designed to reduce waste generated in the state. The new law will transfer the MPCA's responsibility in the Waste Management Act to the OEA. That office, along with the commissioner of public service, will recommend waste management policy changes to the governor and the Environment and Natural Resources committees in the House and Senate.

Sen. Janet B. Johnson (DFL-North Branch) and Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack) sponsored the legislation.

HF1151/SF1176*/CH73

Groundwater relief



A new law effective April 16 allows extended use of a permanent groundwater relief system at the Blue Lake Wastewater Treatment Plant in Scott County. The plant is located in the Minnesota River flood plain in Shakopee.

The new law allows the commissioner of natural resources to issue a permit to the Metropolitan Council to exceed the limit of 2 million gallons of water per day in a 30-day period.

A quarry located near the treatment plant currently pumps a high volume of water, which eases the demand at the Blue Lake treatment plant. However, that quarry is expected to close in the near future, and the treatment plant will have to make up the difference, especially in temporary flooding conditions.

Sen. Claire Robling (R-Prior Lake) and Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan) sponsored the measure.

HF1403/SF1173*/CH56

Honoring DNR leader



A new law will rename the visitor center at Gooseberry Falls State Park in honor of a former Department of Natural Resources (DNR) commissioner. The measure takes effect Aug. 1.

In addition to honoring Joseph N. Alexander, the new law will permit additions to several state parks and will allow land within another to be sold.

Alexander was the state's longest-serving commissioner. He began his 33-year DNR career as a game warden in 1957 and was promoted to regional enforcement supervisor in 1966. In 1971, he became assistant commissioner for administration. He was serving as special assistant to the commissioner in July 1978 when Gov. Rudy Perpich appointed him

commissioner, a position he held until January 1991. Alexander died Oct. 22, 1998.

The new law also will authorize additions to Banning, Camden, Charles A. Lindbergh, Forestville/Mystery Cave, Judge C.R. Magney, St. Croix Wild River, Scenic, Temperance River, Whitewater, and William O'Brien state parks.

It will approve a land exchange at Lake Bronson State Park and stipulate that Cross River State Wayside become part of Temperance River State Park. Another provision will delete a four-acre parcel from Blue Mounds State Park and allow it to be sold.

Rep. Ray Vandeveer (R-Forest Lake) and Sen. Leonard Price (DFL-Woodbury) sponsored the measure

HF1301/SF1449*/CH157



FAMILY

Child support in court

Lawmakers sent the governor a plan that would create a new process for child support hearings to replace an administrative law process recently struck down by the Minnesota Supreme Court.

The House passed the final version of the bill May 14. The vote was 133-0.

Under the previous system, child support cases involving public authorities were heard through an administrative law process. Because counties often enforce child support payments, such cases accounted for most child support cases.

The Legislature had moved the cases from the state district courts in an effort to provide a more expedient process and a more informal setting in which to decide child support issues.

But in a ruling released Jan. 28, the state Supreme Court found that the administrative hearing process for child support cases is unconstitutional.

The court stated that the process violates the separation of powers outlined in the Minnesota Constitution. And the court concluded that such decisions belong in the judicial branch and not in the executive branch.

The Supreme Court stayed the effect of the ruling until July 1 to give the Legislature time to modify the system.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls), would repeal the unconstitutional administrative process and would create a new expedited process in the judicial branch.

The measure (HF510/SF23*) would establish child support magistrates to oversee the hearings, and the state courts would outline rules for this process.

The Office of Administrative Hearings had about 12,000 child support hearings last year. Officials said that 93 percent of all child support orders were issued within 30 days of the hearing.

Kids in treatment



Parents of teen-agers with chemical dependency problems often find their hands are tied when dealing with their children, but a new law aims to give them aid.

Under current law, children under the age of 16 can be admitted by their parents to a chemical dependency treatment program, provided that an independent evaluator confirms the need for treatment. But for minors ages 16 and 17 the treatment must be voluntary.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will make 16- and 17-year-olds subject to the same requirements as children under the age of 16.

"It is highly questionable that a 16- or 17-year-old who is chemically dependent can make this choice by themselves," said Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), who sponsored the measure in the House.

Sen. Claire Robling (R-Prior Lake) was the Senate sponsor.

HF183*/SF144/CH32

Child care terms



A new state law extends a temporary legal definition of day care terms including newborn, infant, toddler, preschooler, and school age. The measure took effect April 13.

The definitions were adopted in 1997 because of concerns regarding adequate day care options in light of welfare reform. They were part of new guidelines aimed at allowing day care operations to take a greater mix of children than was allowable under the prior definitions.

State law dictates how many children in a certain age group — newborns, for example — can be under the care of one day care provider at one time. The 1997 changes were designed to give greater flexibility and to make available more child care options.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. Claire Robling (R-Prior Lake) sponsored the bill.

HF1126*/SF862/CH36



GAMBLING

Canterbury card club

A proposal to allow Canterbury Park in Shakopee to operate a card club was approved May 14 by the House. The vote was 73-60.

The House had earlier voted against the proposal, which was part of a bill (HF1825) that would make several minor changes in state gambling laws. The Senate had included the card club proposal in its version of the bill, and a House-Senate conference committee adopted the Senate position.

Under the bill, participants could play cards against each other and make wagers on each hand. Canterbury Park would receive a percentage of the total amount that is bet, and some of the proceeds would go toward increasing purses for horse races.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), sponsor of the bill, had advocated the card club proposal in the House. Higher purses would help Canterbury Park attract more horses to its races and provide an overall benefit to the state's economy, he said. The nearest horse racing track is Prairie Meadows in Des Moines, Iowa, where annual purses are about \$15 million compared to Canterbury Park's \$4 million. Raising the purses in Minnesota would help prevent horse farms from moving to Iowa, Osskopp said.

Another provision in the bill would allow establishments that sell pull-tabs to use machines instead of having a staff person sell them over the counter.

The bill would also increase the maximum consolation prize for bingo games that allow carryover prizes, and set a maximum prize for tipboard games. Tipboard games are those that sell tickets for numbers on a board, and when all the numbers have been purchased, the winning numbers are revealed.

The bill now goes to governor's desk.

Bingo for seniors



Minnesota's nursing homes and senior citizen organizations will soon be able to conduct bingo for the pure enjoyment of those participating, with a minimum of regulatory intrusion by the state.

A new law effective Aug. 1 will assure that. The law will remove a provision from statute that requires the bingo manager to be registered with the state, and it will eliminate state-mandated record keeping.

To qualify for the exemption, the bingo operation must not be high-dollar, cannot be

offered more than twice a week, and the manager and others who operate the games cannot be paid.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) and Sen. Steve Dille (R-Dassel) sponsored the measure.

HF132*/SF1138/CH128



GOVERNMENT

State government finance

The last legislation approved before the House adjourned at midnight May 17 was the omnibus state government finance bill, the second of two versions of the spending package sent to the governor's desk.

Each version would appropriate \$730 million to fund the budgets for Minnesota's constitutional offices, the Legislature, and the state agencies. The major difference in the two versions is the amounts of money spent on electronic government services initiatives that were proposed by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The governor's budget called for \$30 million to be spent on those initiatives, which include providing business licenses over the Internet and coordinating technology upgrades in other departments. The initiatives are designed to help state agencies provide government services more efficiently.

The first version of the bill (HF2386/SF2223*), sponsored by Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview), would appropriate only about \$15.7 million for those initiatives. The second version of the bill (HF878) would increase that amount to \$31.7 million. But that money would come from cutting another of the governor's initiatives, one that would establish a separate account for the repair and maintenance of state buildings. Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) sponsored the second bill.

Under current law, state agencies pay rent to the Department of Administration, and portions of that money go to the general fund to pay for depreciation costs of buildings. The first version of the bill contains Ventura's proposal to establish a dedicated revenue account for that purpose, which would include \$7.3 million from the rent payments.

But under Bishop's bill, that account would be eliminated. And additional money for the technology initiatives would come from the state employee self-insurance plan. Appropriations to the insurance plan, primarily for contingency reserves and rate stabilization, would be reduced by about \$10 million.

Krinkie, chair of the House State Government Finance Committee, said the passage of the two similar bills was "one of the most bizarre episodes of legislative process I've ever seen."

When Krinkie's bill first left the House, it included \$640 million, about \$90 million less than the Senate version. In a House-Senate conference committee, Krinkie and other House conferees agreed to accept the Senate version, with six House provisions attached. But the negotiations continued, he said, to try to find a way to fund the governor's technology initiatives without increasing the overall spending — about \$730 million — in the final bill.

Krinkie argued that the money could come from eliminating a small government board or office. Krinkie had advocated eliminating or reducing funding to several areas, such as the Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Services and the Government Innovation and Cooperation Board. Or, the money could have come from another popular target of Ventura's — public radio.

"The lesson I came away with is a lot of people talk about limiting the growth of government or making it more efficient," Krinkie said. "But when it comes down to the finish line about doing something, the knees buckle and the mind becomes confused, and somehow it doesn't happen. It didn't happen in either of these bills."

If Ventura signs both bills, the one he signs last will become law. Or he could veto one or both bills.

Both bills include similar major funding provisions for the 2000-01 biennium.

Funds for Legislature, agencies

The Department of Administration would receive \$76.9 million, plus an additional \$10 million to coordinate the technology initiatives under Bishop's bill. Both versions of the bill would appropriate \$6.8 million for public broadcasting within the administration department's budget.

The Department of Revenue would receive \$183.1 million, plus \$6.4 million under Bishop's bill for costs associated with upgrading the department's income-tax computer system.

The Department of Finance would receive \$40.3 million, plus \$2 million under Bishop's bill for costs associated with revamping the payroll system. The Department of Employee Relations would receive \$31.2 million under the first version of the bill and only \$20.9 million under Bishop's bill.

And many appropriations would be identical under either bill.

Base funding for the Legislature for the 2000-01 biennium would be \$53 million for the House, \$39.7 million for the Senate, and \$28.8 million for the Legislative Coordinating Commission. The Senate funding would

include \$40,000 to produce and distribute a videotape on the legislative process and to construct an Internet site.

Budgets for the constitutional offices for the biennium would be \$8.2 million for the governor and lieutenant governor, \$18.3 million for the state auditor, \$4.6 for the state treasurer, \$56 million for the attorney general, and \$17 million for the secretary of state. Under Bishop's bill, the treasurer's office would receive an additional \$278,000 to pay for some costs associated with issuing tax rebates, and the secretary of state would receive an additional \$1 million for upgrading its computer system.

Budgets for state agencies and boards would include \$26.1 million for the Board of the Arts, \$21.9 million for the Department of Military Affairs, \$13.9 million for the Office of Administrative Hearings, \$11.3 million for the Office of Strategic and Long-Range Planning, \$10.3 million for the Department of Veterans Affairs, and \$7.2 million to the Amateur Sports Commission, which would include \$4 million in grants for ice arenas.

State appropriations to pension funds would include \$12.5 million to the Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund, \$8 million to the Minnesota State Retirement Association, and \$12.6 million to Police and Fire Amortization Aid.

Other provisions would fund budgets for smaller agencies, including \$4.4 million for the Gambling Control Board, \$2.8 million for the Minnesota Humanities Commission, \$2.7 million for the Investment Board, \$2 million for the Board of Government Innovation and Cooperation, \$1.4 million for the Campaign Finance and Disclosure Board, \$1.3 million

Legislature 2000

Both the House and Senate will next convene at noon on Feb. 1, 2000.

The Legislature's start date for odd-numbered years is mandated by state law, which says both bodies will meet for regular session on the first Tuesday following the first Monday of those years. The only exception is that if the first Monday falls on Jan. 1, the session will begin on the following Wednesday.

But in even-numbered years, which comprise the second year of the legislative biennium, the start dates are determined by the Legislature, and each body must pass a resolution setting the date for the following year. On the last day of session, the House passed its resolution for next year's start date.

for the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, \$790,000 for the Racing Commission, \$82,000 for Veterans of Foreign Wars, \$40,000 for the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and \$26,000 for Disabled American Veterans.

Fields of hemp

The governor would be authorized to prepare and submit an application for federal permits to allow farmers to grow industrial hemp in experimental and demonstration plots. The bill would require the governor to consult with commissioners of agriculture, trade and economic development, public safety, and other appropriate commissioners to establish standards and forms for people who want to register for those experimental plots.

Honoring Stassen

The new Capitol complex building occupied by the Department of Revenue would be named after former Gov. Harold E. Stassen. The building opened in the fall of 1998, and members of the House State Government Finance Committee proposed naming it after Stassen during a committee meeting on Stassen's birthday, April 13.

Limit fee increases

State agencies would be prohibited from increasing a fee or imposing a new fee without legislative approval. Budget proposals for each state agency would have to list proposed fee changes or new fees, including admission fees to state facilities and fees for goods, services, regulations, or licensure.

Explaining legal costs

The attorney general's office would have to submit reports to the Legislature on some billing policies. The office would have to work with the commissioner of finance to ensure that money for legal services is spent as it is intended by the Legislature, and other policies regarding billing for legal services would have to be clarified.

Stop loan repayment

Another provision would prevent state funds from being used to repay a loan from the Minneapolis Community Development Agency to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in 1986. The loan was made to acquire property for the Central Riverfront Regional Park. The bill would also prevent money for that purpose to be spent from political subdivisions of the state, such as the Metropolitan Council.

Telecommunication oversight

The administration commissioner's oversight of ongoing operation of information technology would be modified. The commissioner would be responsible for administering the state information infrastructure, which includes high-speed cables that provide telephone services, Internet access, and other information services.

The bill would remove the commissioner's responsibility for "operation of" the information infrastructure under current law.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) had advocated the provision to help rural telephone cooperatives compete with the state in providing those services.

Analyzing major purchases

Proposals to purchase goods or services costing more than \$5 million would be subject to a cost-benefit analysis by the administration department. If the analysis demonstrates that a proposal would not provide the most effective way to provide a public benefit, the governor would be able to approve an alternate proposal.

Scrapping the primary

About \$3.5 million is expected to be saved by replacing the proposed presidential primary election with an informal ballot to be distributed at the precinct caucuses, which are held the first Tuesday in March. On that ballot, participants would indicate their preference for presidential or gubernatorial candidates, and the results would be reported to the Office of the Secretary of State.

Under current state law, a presidential primary is set to be held the first Tuesday in April 2000. Printed ballots will have to be prepared, and all of the state's precincts will have to go through the formal election process. The primary carries a price of \$3.5 million.

Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer estimated the costs of reporting the results of the informal preference ballots at about \$8,000, and she said it would accomplish the same goal as the more formal — and more expensive — voting process.

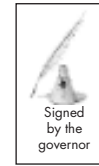
Y2K preparation

In anticipation of some computer systems failing to make the transition from the year 1999 to 2000, the bill would appropriate \$20 million from the general fund to allow school districts and other local units of government to apply for emergency grants.

The grants would be administered as loans and would be used to correct problems that are likely to affect public health and safety or cause "catastrophic loss to property or the environment." The loans would have to be

paid back by the end of the fiscal year 2001.

Tobacco jurors get paid



Three jurors from last year's tobacco trial will receive payments totaling \$30,000 for financial losses during the four-and-one-half month trial, under a new law effective May 18.

The measure is the work of the 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 authorizes payment of some of those claims against the state, as recommended by the subcommittee.

The payment to the jurors came as a request of the chief judge in Ramsey County who testified before the subcommittee. When the jurors were selected they were told they could submit a letter to the trial judge outlining any financial hardships caused by the trial and that the judge would relieve them of jury duty.

But when the jurors sent the letters, the trial judge ignored their request and wouldn't release them from jury duty. The case eventually ended in a settlement.

A separate new law (HF1153/SF973*/CH71) requests that the Minnesota Supreme Court study the several issues involving juror compensation, including a study of daily pay rates, reimbursements for child care and travel, and special considerations for longer civil trials.

Also in the claims law, \$10,000 goes to a couple in LeRoy for costs related to the construction of a new well unnecessarily directed by the health department. And \$5,000 goes to a man who suffered lost wages due to an erroneous criminal background check done by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

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

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) and Sen. Randy Kelly (DFL- St. Paul) sponsored the new law.

HF2221/SF2052*/CH169

Cash for strapped agencies



One-time budget boosts totaling \$17 million go to seven state agencies and departments with budget shortfalls in the current fiscal year, under a new law effective May 12.

The Minnesota Zoo receives

\$800,000 to make up for lower than anticipated revenue over the past year. The zoo had originally requested \$1 million, but a House-approved measure proposed funding only \$600,000 of that request. The \$800,000, which will come from the state's general fund, represents a compromise reached in a House-Senate conference committee.

The new law also requires the zoological board to submit a report to the governor and Legislature on possible alternatives to the zoo's current status as a state agency, including converting the zoo to a private nonprofit.

The bulk of the deficiency money — about \$11.7 million — goes to the Department of Human Services to make up for a budget shortfall due to a delay in federal reimbursements for MinnesotaCare.

Although the state and federal government have reached an agreement concerning the delayed funds and reimbursements began March 1, the state funding is still needed to cover costs the department has had to cover in the past months. The money will come from the state's Health Care Access Fund.

Among the other payments in the new law are \$3.5 million to the Department of Children, Families and Learning to pay legal costs of two ongoing, major lawsuits — one in Minneapolis and one in St. Paul. Both involve claims that school districts are providing constitutionally inadequate education.

And the Department of Public Safety receives \$629,000 to pay for license plates for new automobiles, due to higher than expected automobile sales and other factors. That money comes from the state's Highway Users Tax Distribution Fund and will be paid back as the license plates are sold. The department also receives \$200,000 from the general fund to pay for additional security for Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The Department of Economic Security gets \$370,000 from the state's general fund for State Services for the Blind. The department is also required to review the program's operation to determine why the current shortfall came about.

The Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board receives \$15,000, also from the general fund, to pay court-ordered payments.

Also under the new law, the Office of the Secretary of State receives \$975,000 for a year 2000 compliance program, but that amount is not included in the \$17 million total appropriation because it is to be transferred from unused portions of funds previously directed to the Department of Administration for a technology management program.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) and Sen. Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HFnone/SF2234*/CH141

New veto authority



The governor will soon have the authority to veto rules adopted by state agencies.

Effective July 1, the new law will require copies of all new rules promulgated by state agencies to be sent to the governor. If the governor chooses to veto a rule or a part of a rule, the Legislature could propose bills to address the problems or concerns surrounding those rules.

If the Legislature opts not to propose an alternative measure to the vetoed rule, the rule would automatically go into effect.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall), who sponsored the measure in the House, said the state could have benefited from this measure regarding two recent controversial rules — the so-called diversity rule and the Profile of Learning — that were considered or created by the State Board of Education.

In those examples, the governor could have vetoed the entire rules or only certain parts, such as the much-criticized paperwork requirements that accompanied the Profile of Learning initiative. The Legislature could then have proposed alternatives to address the problems, Seifert said, instead of allowing the agency to impose the rules on school districts.

He described the bill as a “modest proposal to give the governor and the Legislature some oversight in the rulemaking process.”

Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF1905*/SF1993/CH129

Regulatory proposals



Proposals to regulate an occupation will have to be brought before the chairs of the related legislative committees, under a new law.

The law, effective Aug. 1, will require such proposals to include answers to several questions, including why the regulation is necessary, who is advocating the regulation, and how the proposal would affect the practitioners of that occupation and the students who are preparing to enter that field.

That information will have to be submitted to the appropriate committees at least 15 days before a bill on the subject is introduced.

The measure was introduced in response to a February 1999 report from the Office of the Legislative Auditor. The number of occupations that are regulated in Minnesota has increased dramatically in recent decades.

Regulating occupations has been criticized, according to the report, because it can limit people from pursuing an occupation or “fence

out” competitors. Minnesota's criteria for regulating an occupation is that unregulated practice could cause “significant threat to public health, safety, or well-being.” However, the report found that lawmakers have not applied that criteria consistently.

Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) and Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan) sponsored the new measure.

HF2023/SF1746*/CH144

Coverage for survivors



Dependents of peace officers and firefighters who are killed in the line of duty will continue to be eligible for health insurance coverage, even if they are not covered at the time of the person's death, under a law effective March 17.

The measure allows a spouse who is not covered as a dependent at the time of the death — but was eligible or later became eligible to be covered — to be a dependent on the employer's health plan.

A 1997 law provided health coverage to officers and firefighters and their dependents, because many who were disabled by duty-related injuries were receiving pensions but were not eligible for health-care coverage.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) and Sen. Randy Kelly (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the legislation.

HF49*/SF162/CH12

Ventura forces change



The first measure signed into law by Gov. Jesse Ventura addresses a procedural wrinkle caused by the fact that he is a third-party head of state.

Effective Feb. 18, the new law changes the process under which members are appointed to the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board. State law outlines the makeup of the board to avoid having too many members from the same political party. The board responds to questions about campaign finance and economic interest disclosure of candidates for state offices.

Under the old law, two board members had to be former legislators — one from the same political party as the governor and one from a different political party than the governor — and no more than three board members could support the same political party.

But the law had no provisions for how to proceed with appointments when there are no former legislators from the governor's political party, as is the case with Ventura's Reform Party.

The new law avoids the reference to the governor's political party, requiring instead that the board include two former legislators who belong to different parties.

Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park) and Sen. John Marty (DFL-Roseville) sponsored the measure.

HF139*/SF88/CH1

Commission membership cut



The size of the Legislative Audit Commission will be cut and some of its duties will be changed, under a new law.

As of Jan. 1, 2000, the commission will only be made up of 16 members. Twenty legislators now serve on the commission, which works with the legislative auditor to choose which organizations and programs will be subject to financial evaluations.

The commission's membership was increased to 20 members in 1997 to increase bipartisanship, but Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) said that is no longer a concern. McElroy is the current chair of the Legislative Audit Commission.

Under the law, four members from each of the House and Senate caucuses will serve on the commission.

The law also strikes a past requirement that the chairs of the House and Senate tax committees must be commission members.

In an effort to reduce paperwork, the new law eliminates some reports previously required of the auditor or various state agencies. The measure also requires the deputy legislative auditor to hold an active certified public accountant's license and clarifies data privacy guidelines for audit data.

Except for the membership provisions, the law is effective April 27.

Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan), the commission's vice chair, sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF1003*/SF810/CH99

Taking the lead for PUC



A new law effective May 7 changes the way the state's Public Utilities Commission (PUC) conducts its work. The measure became law without the signature of Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The Public Utilities Commission regulates the gas, electric, and phone service companies in the state. The law contains three changes designed to make the commission more efficient and responsive to the industries it serves.

The first provision allows noncontroversial

cases to be approved if the commission has not acted on them in 60 days. The second change lets the commission delegate some responsibilities to subcommittees.

Finally, the law authorizes the commission to designate lead commissioners to handle certain cases or subject areas. That commissioner can preside over hearings and make non-binding recommendations on issues before the full commission. However, the lead commissioner will not have full authority over a case.

In a letter explaining why he chose not to sign the bill, Ventura stated that designating lead commissioners to handle cases could lead to commissioner specialization which might decrease checks and balances on the commission.

"The PUC commissioners must be sensitive to the power granted to them under this law," he wrote. "They must not engage in the practice of commissioner specialization."

The governor said if the new law does not prove successful, he would examine it before it is up for renewal in 2002.

Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville) and Sen. Steve Novak (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF359*/SF684/CH125

Dealing with data

A bill that would modify state government policies for dealing with requests for information and other data practices was passed May 15 in the House. The vote was 129-0.

The bill (HF2058/SF653*), sponsored by Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center), would clarify some situations under which public data could be considered private, and it would make other minor data practices changes.

Building code violations, for example, would be public, except for the names of people who submitted complaints about possible violations and any data on civil or criminal investigations.

Also, data that identifies locations where studies of deformed frogs are being done by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency would be classified as nonpublic until the agency completes its investigation or determines it will not investigate a particular site.

And state and local governments would be allowed to maintain official records on computer, whereas current law requires those records to be stored as hard copies.

The bill also would amend the "whistle blower law" to classify as private data the identity of a person who reports a suspected violation of a law or a situation where the

quality of health care violates a law or ethical standard. The identity of the person could be disclosed if it is necessary for prosecution, under the bill.

Data from an inspection of a school's financial records would remain nonpublic under the bill, unless it is necessary in connection with legal or administrative proceedings.

The bill now goes to the governor's desk.

Labor contracts approved

A measure that passed the House on May 15 would ratify labor agreements concerning state employees made between legislative sessions.

The bill (HF1877/SF1721*) awaits action by the governor.

While the agreements have already been approved by the joint Subcommittee on Employee Relations, they required routine ratification by the Legislature.

The measure would approve a raise for the chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system, a move that was questioned by some lawmakers who said they thought it was too high.

MnSCU officials chose to raise the salary of Chancellor Morrie Anderson by 8.8 percent effective July 1, 1998. The pay raise also included a retroactive salary increase of 32 percent effective July 1, 1997. From 1995 to 1998, Anderson's salary grew from \$108,780 per year to \$185,000 per year. However, lawmakers agreed not to change the MnSCU agreement.

Lawmakers in the House and Senate met in a conference committee and agreed to the House version of the bill, which included an amendment to strike a salary increase for the director of the Higher Education Services Office (HESO). The Senate had previously added the pay raise, which was not part of the original labor agreements approved by the subcommittee.

Labor agreements that would be ratified under the bill include those between the state and the Minnesota Nurses Association, the Interfaculty Organization, the United Technical College Educators, and some HESO employees.

The bill also makes technical changes in the law governing public employees. One of those changes would extend to unclassified executive and legislative employees the ability to transfer vacation and sick leave hours when they move between positions in the two branches.

Subcommittee Chair Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) sponsored the measure.



HEALTH

Midwifery law

Filed
without
signature



A measure affirming the status of midwives through a system of licensing became law without the governor's signature.

Effective Aug. 1, the new law contains provisions for a voluntary licensing procedure for those who provide assessment and care outside a hospital for women and newborns during pregnancy, labor, birth, and the postpartum period.

The state's Board of Medical Practice has been uncertain about how to regulate practicing midwives and thus virtually ended the custom of issuing licenses under the existing law more than six decades ago.

But the development of a national standardized test for midwives several years ago provides a basis for establishing credentials. The new law will combine a list of educational and training requirements for licensure.

Midwives will have to prepare a written plan for each client to ensure continuity of care, including what would happen should something go wrong and a physician be required.

The practice of midwifery has been driven underground because of fears of being prosecuted for unlicensed practice of medicine.

Consequently, if a woman in labor is transferred to a medical facility, the emergency room physician often has to assess her condition and determine treatment without the benefit of the midwife's input.

Under other provisions of the new law, the midwife will have to keep extensive records on clients. It also will establish a five-member midwifery advisory council to review applications for licensure and field complaints from the public.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF949/SF383*/CH162

Bed rails by prescription



Signed
by the
governor

A new law clarifies the conditions under which it is all right to use bed rails in Minnesota nursing homes.

Under provisions of the measure, nursing home residents' right to bed rails and other restraints will be affirmed. Fear of falling will be included as a legitimate medical reason for prescribing bed rails, and a study of the use of restraints will be initiated.



A law signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura will allow nursing home residents to request bed rails or other restraints.

The measure was proposed after a number of nursing homes were fined by the Minnesota Department of Health in 1998 for improperly using bed rails according to the department's interpretation of federal regulations.

Concern about use of bed rails arose because of injuries and even deaths caused when patients became entangled in the rails. The federal regulations called for a moratorium on rail use in cases where a patient would be put in "immediate jeopardy." Many nursing homes subsequently removed bed rails entirely, hoping to avoid fines but leaving some residents and their families upset.

The idea was to craft a bill at the state level that would spell out patient rights under federal guidelines but wouldn't jeopardize the state's Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements.

If the law is eventually found objectionable in the eyes of the federal government, it may have to be revisited next session, said Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), who sponsored the measure in the House.

The new law took effect April 23.

Sen. Don Samuelson (DFL-Brainerd) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF40*/SF25/CH83

Hands off tobacco bucks



Signed
by the
governor

Gov. Jesse Ventura agrees with lawmakers from both bodies on at least one thing — the U.S. Congress should not be casting its eyes upon Minnesota's tobacco settlement money.

Ventura signed a resolution that reminds the federal government it was not part of Minnesota's suit against the tobacco companies and informs it that the federal government has no right to the money.

The federal government has said it may be

entitled to a portion of state tobacco settlements as repayment for its share of Medicaid costs.

But the resolution notes that Minnesota's lawsuit was based on business issues, not health issues. It calls on Minnesota's U.S. congressmen to support legislation — already introduced in Congress — that would prohibit federal recovery of any state tobacco settlement payments.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) and Sen. Ember Reichgott Junge (DFL-New Hope) sponsored the resolution.

HF719/SF757*/Res. 2

Planning organ donation



Signed
by the
governor

Tissue and eyes have been added to the list of organs available for donation on the state's health care directive, under a new law effective March 17.

The new law was designed to help draw attention to the need for donated tissue and eyes — a need said to be critical by regional organ donation program officials.

Under the state's 1998 health care directive law, people can use a directive to address all aspects of advanced planning for health care by either appointing an agent to make their health care decisions or by making statements concerning how they want their health care to be handled.

Proponents of the measure said that while many people are aware of the possibility of donating organs, they do not know that tissue and eyes are organs that can be donated.

The bill was sponsored by Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and Sen. Becky Lourey (DFL-Kerrick).

HF74/SF301*/CH14

New purchasing plans



Ambulance services will be allowed to participate in shared service purchasing arrangements for supplies, materials, and equipment, under a new state law effective Aug. 1.

Supporters of the legislation said ambulance services need more flexibility in approaching purchases, particularly of expensive items such as vehicles. They also expressed concerns that pending changes in the way federal programs reimburse ambulance services may have a negative financial impact.

Current state law requires government-owned ambulance services to let bids on equipment costing over \$25,000. The new law will allow co-ops to purchase ambulances, the most costly expenditure an ambulance provider faces.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy) sponsored the legislation.

HF302*/SF579/CH13

Ambulance volunteers



Volunteer ambulance drivers in Minnesota now have a precise definition in state law, under a new law effective March 16.

The law defines ambulance drivers as volunteers, who as such are not entitled to minimum wage and other workers' protections even if they receive some financial compensation for their services. The need for a definition grew out of a legal debate over wage and hour laws.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) and Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the measure.

HF214*/SF241/CH8

Training demands altered



A new state law will remove the current requirement that the state's boards of dentistry, medical practice, nursing, and podiatric medicine have rules requiring continuing education on infection control, including blood-borne diseases.

Effective Aug. 1, the individual boards will have the option of requiring continuing education that is best suited to the needs of those it licenses, rather than a blanket program prescribed by law.

Proponents of the measure argued that the scope of infection control procedures is changing continually and the various medical boards need the latitude to make changes quickly.

Supporters also argued that the existing law is arcane because it requires even psychiatrists, who generally aren't exposed to blood-borne diseases, to complete infection-control instruction.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) and Sen. David Ten Eyck (DFL-East Gull Lake) sponsored the measure.

HF171/SF121*/CH5

Paying spouses for care



A new law will allow qualified spouses in certain instances to be paid to provide private duty nursing.

The measure will permit a spouse who is also a licensed nurse employed by a Medicare-certified home health agency to be paid when he or she cares for a spouse. The measure is effective Aug. 1.

Under existing law, payment isn't possible in certain instances, which has caused hardships for some Minnesota families.

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

HF60*/SF591/CH156

Clarifying water laws



Effective Aug. 1, the definition of "public water supply" in the state's Safe Drinking Water Act will match the definition in the federal law.

The possibility that some water projects in Minnesota would lose federal funding because of the discrepancy prompted a new state law to make the clarification.

Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover) and Sen. Martha Robertson (R-Minnetonka) sponsored the measure.

HF610/SF649*/CH18

Regulations on psychologists



A new law will clarify fee-splitting practices for psychologists and stiffen penalties for violating the Psychology Practice Act.

Effective Aug. 1, the new law will make it explicit that law prohibits "kickbacks," not legitimate divisions of revenue in a business made in proportion to the psychological services provided.

Violating the Psychology Practice Act will become a gross misdemeanor instead of a misdemeanor, making it the same penalty for violating practice acts used by other profes-

sions, including medicine, nursing, and social work.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) and Sen. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins) sponsored the measure.

HF984/SF983*/CH109

Too young to serve



Nursing home administrators must be at least 21 years of age, under the terms of a new law effective April 27.

The new law also enacts other housekeeping changes requested by the Board of Examiners for Nursing Home Administrators.

The minimum age for nursing home administrators was lowered to 18 during the Vietnam War era, when the prevailing feeling was that anyone old enough for military service was old enough to serve in most public positions.

Over the years, board rules and state law on the age issue had come into conflict. The new law brings them into uniformity and sets the minimum age at 21.

The law also allows a permit process for acting administrators who in the past had to obtain a full-fledged license to serve as administrator on a temporary basis.

The law further makes board members (and others investigating violations of laws and rules administered by the board) immune from civil liability and criminal prosecution when performing their duties, as long as they act in good faith.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) and Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the measure.

HF1309/SF1273*/CH102

Chiropractic care contracts



A new law clarifies the way managed care networks deal with chiropractors in the state.

Effective Aug. 1, networks will be prohibited from requiring chiropractors to provide care under categories of coverage other than those specified in their contract, unless the chiropractor consents.

Chiropractors have complained that health maintenance organizations and preferred provider organizations may have used their general health contracts as "bait" to later dump the chiropractors into a network of providers of noncertified workers' compensation or auto personal injury lines of coverage without prior notification.

If the chiropractor doesn't agree to the other lines of coverage, he or she can lose the contract entirely.

The new law will prevent the health insurers from terminating a contract for this reason, provide time for chiropractors to review their options, and will add a mechanism under which chiropractors can recover damages if a health insurer violates the law.

Rep. Doug Reuter (R-Owatonna) and Sen. Edward Oliver (R-Deephaven) sponsored the measure.

HF566/SF673*/CH94

Protected peer review



Ambulance services and first responders will have the benefit of peer review, under a new law.

The law will allow ambulance services to consider controversial incidents without being subject to discovery should a lawsuit arise.

Peer review is used extensively in a number of medical professions to find solutions and to prevent further problems. In many cases, information exchanged in peer reviews is protected from legal discovery. The idea is that the protection will allow a free discourse so medical professionals can learn from each other's experiences and improve service.

The law, which takes effect Aug. 1, will extend that peer review protection to ambulance services and their employees.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Becky Lourey (DFL-Kerrick) sponsored the measure.

HF463*/SF578/CH84

Health-related regulations



A new law changes state licensing for physicians, acupuncture practitioners, and athletic trainers.

Effective Aug. 1, medical students enrolled in dual-degree programs will have additional time to pass portions of the state licensing exam. The increasing number of double-majors studying at the Mayo Clinic and other facilities has made the current time restrictions unrealistic.

The new law also will provide protection from charges of practicing medicine without a license for acupuncturists, and will authorize a temporary permit for athletic trainers, similar to what is currently in law for other regulated health occupations.

The Board of Medical Practice requested the changes.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure.

HF413*/SF418/CH33

Health care solvency



The state's three community integrated health care service networks will have to maintain a net worth reserve of three times their minimum net worth requirement, under a new law.

The networks, often called CISNs, are managed health care networks similar to health maintenance organizations (HMOs), but the networks have smaller enrollments and operate mostly outside urban areas.

The net worth holdings are required to assure financial solvency.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, is designed to treat CISNs in a way similar to the way the state treats HMOs, which were required to up their net worth holdings under a bill passed last year.

The new law will also accord peer review protection to the CISNs, which will shield deliberations among medical professionals from the legal process should a lawsuit arise.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Doug Johnson (DFL-Tower) sponsored the measure.

HF614*/SF913/CH51

Testing chiropractors



A new law effective Aug. 1 will change state licensing requirements for chiropractors.

Under the law, chiropractors practicing in Minnesota no longer will have to pass the Minnesota licensure practical exam, as long as they have passed any examination that is approved by the Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

The intent of the law is to follow a nationwide effort to standardize the chiropractic field.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. Pat Piper (DFL-Austin) sponsored the measure.

HF1216*/SF1391/CH55

Help behind the counter



A new law will allow the state's Board of Pharmacy to authorize pharmacists to supervise more than two pharmacy technicians. The law is effective Aug. 1.

Until 1997, the board had been given the power to change the ratio on a case-by-case basis. However, after a 2-1 ratio was incorporated into statute, the board believed it no longer had that authority.

To be granted the waiver, a pharmacy will have to prove the consumer's health and safety

is not jeopardized. Pharmacies that request the waiver often are automated, which means the work of the technicians is less intensive and requires less supervision.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) and Sen. David Ten Eyck (DFL-East Gull Lake) sponsored the measure.

HF1714*/SF1693/CH63

Duties for pharmacists



Effective Aug. 1, a new law will make changes to the Minnesota Pharmacy Practice Act.

The measure will allow pharmacists to engage in monitoring of drug therapy, selection of therapeutic devices, drug research, and drug administration for first dosage and emergencies.

It also will allow pharmacists to manage and modify drug therapy on a case-by-case basis according to a written agreement between the pharmacist and a health-care practitioner.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the bill.

HF408*/SF170/CH62

Podiatrists in residency



The state's Board of Podiatric Medicine can extend temporary permits to podiatrists participating in clinical residencies, under a new law effective April 21.

The new law was necessary to clarify a discrepancy between state law and state rules. Existing law mandated the permit to run 12 months; the rule allows the board to extend the permit for additional years under certain conditions.

With the new law, the applicant for a permit extension must have had his training interrupted by circumstances beyond his or her control and must be enrolled in a residency that lasts longer than one year.

Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan) and Sen. Roy Terwilliger (R-Edina) sponsored the measure.

HF1421*/SF1239/CH67

Research opportunities



A new law will exempt some researchers from medical licensing requirements.

The law, effective Aug. 1, will apply to those performing medical research for a tax-exempt, non-profit organization operated primarily to conduct scientific research on causes and cures of human disease.

To qualify, researchers will have to perform duties that are related to public health education and are conducted under the supervision of one or more licensed physicians.

The law will enable organizations to benefit from the expertise of researchers from other countries who are not licensed to practice medicine in the United States.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure.

HF1660*/SF1650/CH54

Guaranteed coverage



A new law effective April 24 makes Minnesota law conform with federal law regarding Medicare supplement insurance.

Federal law enacted in 1997 requires state laws to mandate guaranteed issue, with no preexisting condition limitations, for Medicare supplement insurance in certain situations. (Guaranteed issue means an application for coverage cannot be turned down.)

Minnesota's previous law contained instances in which coverage wasn't assured.

The new law took effect in time to meet the April 29 deadline imposed by the federal government for enacting the changes.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Edward Oliver (R-Deephaven) sponsored the measure.

HF1968*/SF1827/CH90

Growing role for nurses



The state's advanced practice nurses will be accorded separate legal status and their role in the health care world will be defined under a new law signed by the governor May 17.

The law will define education requirements and scope of practice for registered nurses engaged in clinical specialties, anesthesia, nurse-midwife practice, or nurse practitioner roles. Under current law, advanced practice nurses are required to practice under a licensed physician.

In some instances, advanced practice nurses will be allowed to write prescriptions and dispense drugs under carefully crafted wording in the law.

The measure was supported by the Minnesota Nurses Association and Minnesota Board of Nursing. It takes effect July 1.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) and Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine) sponsored the measure.

HF718*/SF225/CH172



HIGHER EDUCATION

Funds for Minnesota colleges

A \$2.6 billion omnibus bill that would fund the state's higher education institutions for the next two years won approval in the Legislature.

Lawmakers in the House and Senate passed the bill May 15. Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley) and Sen. LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls) sponsored the legislation.

The bill (HF2380) would provide funds to increase financial aid for students, provide salary increases for faculty at Minnesota colleges, and authorize the creation of a University of Minnesota campus in Rochester.

Here's a look at key provisions of the omnibus bill.

MnSCU spending

The bill would provide \$1.1 billion to the 53-campus Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (MnSCU).

About \$55.6 million would go toward salary increases for MnSCU faculty, and \$16 million would help fund maintenance for campus buildings. A total of \$10 million also would be appropriated for under-funded campuses in the system.

For various technology projects, the bill includes a \$9.2 million increase in funding over two years. And \$11.1 million would support job training and research projects.

Those projects include a rural research center at Southwest State University in Marshall and tuition subsidies for farm business management programs at MnSCU institutions. MnSCU would also receive \$2.5 million for curricula development.

University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota would get nearly \$1.2 billion from the omnibus bill.

Those funds would include \$15 million for undergraduate education initiatives. The bill would authorize the university to use a portion of that money for a new, non-residential campus in Rochester.

In other areas, the bill would target \$69.4 million to boost salaries of faculty and staff members. Another \$9.1 million would go toward facilities upkeep, and the university's extension service would receive a \$600,000 funding increase.

About \$10.5 million in increases would be divided among technology projects, regional partnerships, an animal health and food safety program, and other programs.

The budget for the university's Academic Health Center, which houses the medical

school, was not increased in the bill because an endowment fund created out the state's tobacco settlement would fund education and research efforts at the center. Those funding provisions are included in the omnibus health and human services finance bill (HF2412/SF2225*). However, the higher education bill would appropriate money for primary care initiatives that would come from the state's health care access fund.

A total of \$250,000 in funds from the state lottery would go to the U of M for research on compulsive gambling.

Financial aid funding

The Higher Education Services Office (HESO), which serves as Minnesota's financial aid bureau, would receive \$310.5 million to fund the state grant program, operate library systems, and provide informational services to current and prospective post-secondary students.

Through several different programs, the bill would provide about \$28 million in aid to Minnesota's higher education students.

First, the minimum state grant would be reduced from \$300 to \$100. That means some students who did not previously qualify for grants could become eligible. Also, the assigned student responsibility — the amount the state expects students to contribute to their education — would be lowered from 47 to 46 percent of the total cost, effective in fiscal year 2001. Another \$13.2 million would offset cost-of-living expenses for students.

And the public tuition allowance and private tuition maximum will be capped at or near the inflation rate. A tuition maximum or allowance is the state's tool for calculating state grants, and it is a flat rate of tuition based on tuition at public and private colleges all over the state.

Because colleges raise their tuition almost every year, increasing the state's tuition maximum takes the actual increases into account when calculating grant awards. However, capping that cost at inflation does not mean college costs would necessarily rise at the rate of inflation, and proponents say it could encourage institutions to keep their tuition increases at a low level.

Much of the financial aid package would be funded with an expected increase in the federal Pell Grant amount per student, which results in about \$10 million in savings from the state grant program.

In Minnesota, the state grant is decreased when the federal grant goes up, so students receive the same amount of money. For the 1999-2000 school year, the Pell Grant will increase to \$3,125 from \$3,000.

The bill would eliminate two programs that provide grants for nursing students, but it would appropriate \$3 million to add more students into work study programs.

Mayo Medical School

The Mayo Foundation would receive its full funding request of \$3.2 million for the biennium, under the omnibus plan. That amount would fund an increase in the base budgets for the Mayo Medical School, a family medicine residency program, and a residency program at St. Cloud Hospital.

The increases would make more grant dollars available to students attending the medical school and would make up for student costs incurred by recent and potential tuition increases.

In addition, the bill would increase the state's share of some residency program participants' stipends and maintain the same level of funding for other participants. The programs are designed to encourage students to practice medicine in Minnesota, particularly in rural or under-served geographical areas.

Other changes

Other provisions in the bill include an updated policy on private career school regulation and changes in how information on hazing rules is distributed to students.

Lawmakers also approved a plan for general education requirements for technical college students. Under the bill, general education courses such as math or English would only be included in a technical course of study if they are occupational requirements or part of a two- or four-year degree program.

Building is Taylor made



A law effective April 13 approved the construction of the Taylor Center, a privately-funded building at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

The Legislature was required to approve construction because the building will be on a campus of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, which is a state entity.

Formerly known as Mankato State University, the school raised \$16.5 million in private donations to pay for the center. It is named in honor of alumnus Glen Taylor, chief executive officer and chair of the Taylor Corporation and owner of the Minnesota Timberwolves professional basketball team.

Taylor donated \$9.2 million toward the project, which consists of a 5,000-seat arena, athletic programs and facilities, and a student

welcome center. Construction was expected to begin this spring.

Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure.

HF492*/SF518/CH34



HOUSING

Real estate scam

A bill that seeks to address the real estate scam known as mortgage flipping is on its way to the governor.

The bill won final passage in the House on May 15. The vote was 133-0.

Mortgage flipping is a scheme to defraud homebuyers and lending institutions based on a fraudulent appraisal of a house's value.

In one scheme, a buyer purchases a house at market value and has an appraiser file a fraudulent appraisal that sets the value of the house higher than the market value.

The owner then resells the house at the inflated price, making a huge profit, and the appraiser gets a kickback.

The victim is then stuck with payments on a home much higher than the actual value. And if the victim defaults on the mortgage, the bank cannot recoup the inflated mortgage by re-selling the house.

Bill sponsor Rep. Gregory Gray (DFL-Mpls) said his district in north Minneapolis has been one of the areas hardest hit by the scam and officials say it's becoming more common elsewhere.

The bill (HF743/SF171*) would address the problem by going after the appraiser. It would make the intentional violation of the laws governing appraisers a gross misdemeanor, and would subject violators to up to one year in jail and up to \$3,000 in fines.

Under current law, real estate brokers and agents can be charged with a crime for intentionally violating the terms of their licenses. But appraisers are only subject to license revocation, not criminal prosecution.

Gray's bill also would set aside \$100,000 for an education program aimed at informing consumers and stopping the fraudulent practice.

Under the bill, the Department of Commerce would administer the program and would seek additional funding from private organizations also affected by flipping, such as banks, mortgage companies, and economic development groups.

Reports on renters

A bill that would provide landlords in Hennepin and Ramsey counties more information on prospective tenants while giving tenants additional protections awaits action by the governor.

The House passed the final bill May 15 after a conference committee made some minor changes to the measure. The vote was 131-0.

Current law prohibits tenant screening services in these two counties from including information on eviction actions taken against prospective tenants in reports provided to landlords, unless the reports include the outcome of the cases.

The bill (HF1195), sponsored by Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth), would repeal that requirement and allow the services to include eviction actions that have not yet been resolved.

Van Dellen said cities and neighborhood groups are holding landlords more accountable for the actions of their tenants and it is important that they get the best information on prospective tenants as soon as possible.

The bill also would allow courts to expunge — or remove any evidence from the public record — any files of the eviction proceedings if the landlord's case has no basis in fact or law or if the judge feels that sealing the case is in the best interest of justice.

And the bill would require that tenant screening services delete all information related to those cases once the service finds out that the case has been expunged.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), who backed these provisions, said the bill would allow tenants to remove unjustified blemishes from their rental records.

Last day visit



Three-year-old Elizabeth Krinkie visits with her father, Rep. Phil Krinkie, on the last day of session. The Legislature adjourned minutes before its constitutional deadline of midnight on May 17.

Fees for nothing



A new law targets landlords who aren't upfront with prospective tenants about application fees. The new law, effective Aug. 1, will prohibit landlords from taking a screening fee when the landlord knows or should know that there are no units available.

Many landlords require that prospective tenants pay a screening fee to be used for background checks when the tenant applies for an apartment.

Rep. Julie Storm (R-St. Peter), sponsor of the measure in the House, said that while most landlords treat prospective tenants fairly, some are taking advantage of the housing shortage and charging prospective tenants when they know that they don't have any properties available. Those landlords then pocket the money.

Storm said that the new law "sends a message to unscrupulous landlords."

"It protects prospective tenants," she said. "It also gives a message to landlords that they cannot do this anymore."

The measure also will require that landlords return any screening fees collected if they don't actually do the background check, and will provide methods for returning the payment. It will require landlords to tell prospective tenants which screening service will be used.

The new law will provide penalties for violators, including a \$100 civil penalty to be paid along with any court costs and the return of the original screening fee to the would-be tenant.

Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF1613/SF1471*/CH150

New regulations for deposits



State law will specify how pre-lease deposit agreements can be made between landlords and tenants. A pre-lease deposit is money put down on an apartment by a prospective tenant to help secure the apartment. The pre-lease deposit doesn't include money provided to the landlord for credit or criminal background checks.

The new measure, effective Aug. 1, will stipulate that tenants and landlords must have the terms of the pre-lease deposit in writing, including how the deposit will be returned if the tenant isn't accepted by the landlord. The law also will require the deposit to be returned within seven days as specified in the agreement.

If a landlord accepts the tenant, the law will

require the pre-lease deposit to go toward either the damage deposit or the rent. And the new law will provide legal remedies if the terms for pre-lease deposits are violated.

Proponents of the measure argued that it is necessary to regulate such deposits because there is a shortage of affordable housing and the practice of requiring pre-lease deposits has become more common. They said the new law will provide protection for both landlords and tenants who make such agreements.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) and Sen. Steven Novak (DFL-New Brighton) sponsored the measure.

HF1178*/SF1253/CH97



HUMAN SERVICES

Omnibus spending bill

A health and human services omnibus funding bill, now on its way to the governor, may be remembered as much for what it doesn't include as for what it does.

The \$6.4 billion bill (HF2412/SF2225*) calls for funding endowments with tobacco settlement money, increasing spending for nursing home and personal care workers, significantly boosting funding for programs for the developmentally disabled, and a bunch of policy changes and appropriations designed to make life better for the state's children, poor, and elderly.

Missing from the House-Senate conference committee report are all of the abortion-related provisions supported by the House. An earlier House version of the bill would have forbidden certain late-term abortions and required a 24-hour waiting period before a woman could undergo an abortion. The House plan also would have cut off state dollars to clinics that provide abortions.

That omission nearly sank the bill when it came up for a final vote in the House on May 17, just more than an hour before the session was scheduled to adjourn. But the bill passed on a vote of 76-57.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) sponsored the omnibus spending plan. Here are some highlights of the legislation.

Tobacco-funded endowments

How to handle the \$968 million in one-time money coming to the state as a result of the court battle against tobacco companies was declared by several lawmakers to be the defining issue of the 1999 session.

House Republicans had fought nearly the entire session to use the money to eliminate the "sick tax," a medical service provider tax

implemented to help fund a state health care program for the uninsured.

But a last-minute pact between leaders in the House and Senate and governor produced agreement on a plan to create endowments with the money.

Early on the last day of the session, the conference committee came to an agreement to create three endowments.

The largest would set aside \$388 million for a statewide tobacco-prevention endowment, administered by the Department of Health. That money is expected to earn \$19 million a year in interest, which will go into advertising and other anti-tobacco efforts.

The bill would also create a \$377 million medical education endowment, aimed at helping fill the gap as federal money for training doctors evaporates. The nearly \$19 million earned per year would be divided among 16 clinical training sites around the state, including the Mayo Clinic and the University of Minnesota.

The remaining \$200 million would be socked away for a public health endowment. Half the proceeds, expected to be about \$10 million, would be dedicated to community-based anti-smoking efforts and the remainder to fight health risks experienced by the state's young people.

Raises for workers

Seeking to end the days of low pay for the state's nursing home workers and those who provide in-home services to senior citizens and people with disabilities, the omnibus bill includes a provision to boost the provider rate for agencies that pay those workers.

Providers would see a 4-percent increase in 2000 and 3 percent the following year. Of that money, 80 percent would have to be used on wage-enhancement packages.

Throughout the session, witness after witness told both House and Senate committees that they could earn more working at a fast-food counter than they could caring for the elderly or disabled.

More than \$100 million in state funding would be pledged to the cost of living increases, under the bill.

Improving pay is also designed to entice more people into the health care field to alleviate a statewide shortage of workers.

In 1998, lawmakers passed a measure that provided \$20 million to improve the pay for workers at long-term care facilities, which mainly serve senior citizens and the developmentally disabled.

More labor help

In another move aimed at alleviating the health care worker shortage, the bill would create a health care and human services worker training and retention program, to be run by the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Program.

The \$1.5 million two-year program would aim to assist small nursing homes, rural hospitals, and other entities that cannot develop employee programs on their own. The help would come in the form of grants to locally formed consortiums on a 50 percent state and local match formula.

The money could be used for a marketing and outreach program to recruit employees, pay salaries during training periods, encourage shared staff, and provide scholarships, basic computer skills, and English as a second language instruction.

Aid to developmentally disabled

Nearly \$6.5 million over the next biennium would go to increase the availability of home- and community-based services for persons with mental retardation or related conditions.

Throughout the session, lawmakers heard from parents and guardians of developmentally disabled adults who said their resources for providing care were nearly exhausted and their options were few.

The proposed spending would allow group homes in the state to serve a total of 100 additional people.

Money would also be set aside for semi-independent living services and for family support grants to further assist the developmentally disabled.

Nursing home regulation

Disputes spurred by 1998 fines on nursing homes because of side rail use on patients' beds prompted several provisions in the omnibus bill.

Under the bill, the Department of Health would be required to hold orientation sessions on any new regulatory guidelines and to release to nursing homes copies of reports and letters pertaining to the evaluation of the homes.

The bill would change the conditions under which a nursing home could be fined for placing patients in what is called "immediate jeopardy," and it would offer an informal dispute resolution process. Federal law prohibits practices that place patients in immediate jeopardy, and that law was often cited by the state health department when it assessed fines on facilities that were using bed rails.

Legislative diet



String cheese, carrots, candy, and pop provided a well-balanced meal for lawmakers during the final, marathon session May 17.

Encouraging abstinence

The bill would require AIDS prevention programs that are targeted toward children exclusively to promote abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage.

And it would amend the goals of the state's Education Now and Babies Later program to include "promoting abstinence until marriage."

Work incentives

A statewide shortage of workers prompted a provision calling for a change in how and when state benefits for the disabled are computed. The bill would allow certain disabled individuals to work and still receive medical assistance coverage.

Under existing law, disabled individuals who work lose their eligibility for assistance but often do not qualify for employer-offered health care plans because of the nature of their illnesses.

The measure would also extend the senior drug program to include disabled individuals who are under 65 and would remove an existing spending cap on the program.

Special case autopsies

The pleas of a Minneapolis family whose Jewish faith prohibits autopsies were answered with a \$20,000 appropriation for a grant to conduct case studies and develop guidelines for autopsy practice in special cases.

Initially, a separate bill sponsored by Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park), called for an

exemption from autopsy requirements in cases where religious beliefs would be compromised. But after concerns were expressed that the exemption could be used to conceal illegal behavior, the plan was altered to include the study and development of guidelines included in the omnibus bill.

More job counselors

The state's overworked job counselors, hired when welfare reform was enacted, would have their ranks increased under the bill, which provides \$24 million for salaries.

In committee hearings earlier this session, counselors testified that they often had workloads of more than 100 clients each, making it almost impossible to provide adequate service.

Medical Assistance broadened

Minnesota residents on Medical Assistance would be able to enjoy specialized maintenance therapy provided by physical and occupational therapists and speech language pathologists, under a provision in the bill.

Those services were not previously included in the list of options available under the program, designed for those who cannot receive or are not eligible for employee-provided health care coverage.

The program would also be allowed to cover the cost of anorectics — weight loss drugs — under very specific instances, including the treatment of "Pickwickian Syndrome," a condition in which a patient's obesity prevents sufficient oxygen from entering the lungs.

High-tech medicine

The bill would expand medical assistance to cover telemedicine consultations via two-way, interactive video or store-and-forward technology.

The provision is aimed at providing more comprehensive services to patients in Greater Minnesota, where specialty services are sometimes difficult to find.

Under the bill, doctors could electronically transfer an X-ray or similar digital scan, for instance, to a specialist at a far-away location for reading and interpretation.

A report on whether telemedicine resulted in a cost saving or other benefit to the health care system would also be prepared by the health department.

Wading pools defined

Those small brightly-colored wading pools found on so many lawns across the state throughout the summer months would no longer be considered public pools and would thus be much less stringently regulated.

The bill specifies they must be less than 24 inches deep and able to be emptied manually to qualify.

In-home day care operators across the state had complained to the Legislature that the health department's interpretation that the pools were "public" had meant either a costly registration and training process or eliminating them altogether.

Under the measure, the department would provide material for distribution to all child care facilities related to the use of portable wading pools, including the risk of disease transmission as well as other health risks.

See your dentist

Community dental clinics would get a \$600,000 boost in 2000 under the bill. The commissioner of health would provide matching start-up grants to establish community dental clinics.

The bill would also appropriate \$75,000 to expand the work of Apple Tree Dental in Clay and surrounding counties in northwest Minnesota.

The clinic operates an innovative mobile dental unit that serves children to senior citizens who can't afford a regular dentist or who don't have access to transportation to reach a dentist.

Brain injury study

A provision in the bill calls for a study and report to the Legislature by Jan. 15, 2000, on the status of persons with brain injuries residing in public and private institutions.

The state is hoping to gather information to

help determine what support services are needed to allow these persons to return to their communities.

The state would also apply for federal funds to carry out a demonstration project to transition disabled persons out of nursing homes.

A similar program adopted several years ago provided for the transition of the developmentally disabled in the state from large institutions to group home settings in communities around the state.

Rural doctors plan

A proposal to spend an additional \$300,000 on a grant to the city of Duluth for a family practice residency program is included in the bill.

The program has for years been the sole source of doctors for the Iron Range and much of northern rural Minnesota. Doctors are trained at the University of Minnesota-Duluth and then begin their practices in rural clinics.

Veterans' homes improvements

Five of the state's homes for veterans would be allowed to make improvements to their facilities using donated money, under a provision of the bill.

The Minneapolis home would receive a picnic pavilion, walking trails would be added at Hastings and Silver Bay facilities, an entrance canopy would be constructed in Fergus Falls, and a suspended wooden dining deck built at Luverne.

Receiving and using donated money for such projects requires legislative approval.

Seniors at home

The bill would provide an additional \$120,000 each year of the biennium to create six more Living at Home/Block Nurse Programs in the state.

The program organizes neighborhoods to provide assistance to help older people continue to live at home and to link them with support services and professionals when necessary.

There are currently 25 programs in the state — 13 in urban neighborhoods in St. Paul and Minneapolis and 12 in Greater Minnesota.

Another \$160,000 for the biennium would be made available to the Minnesota Senior Service Corps, a program that provides similar services.

Adolescent gambling

The bill would use \$150,000 of lottery prize fund money each year of the biennium to increase support for Minnesota Council on Compulsive Gambling.

The Duluth-based organization is devoted

to dealing with young gamblers, who run twice as high a risk of developing a gambling problem than do adults.

The organization hopes to take its message to two-thirds of the state's middle school students over the next two years with the funding.

Prompt payment for care



A new law will require health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and nonprofit health service plans to promptly pay claims for home care services.

Effective July 1, a valid claim will have to be paid within 30 days of receipt by the health plan or interest can be requested by the organization submitting the claim.

Prompt payment language was adopted by the Legislature in 1997 for claims filed on state-operated funding programs, reducing the average wait to 14 days.

In the private sector, home care agencies reported it is not uncommon to wait 60 to 90 days for payment, and sometimes as long as 120 days. That slices into their cash flow and makes it difficult to pay workers on time.

Most of the services are physician-ordered and pre-authorized. For claims to qualify for rapid processing under the new law, they must be submitted in a complete fashion.

The language of the new law reflects a compromise between the Minnesota Home Care Association and insurers Blue Cross-Blue Shield and Allina Health System.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) and Sen. Sheila Kiscaden (R-Rochester) sponsored the measure.

HF1658/SF1268*/CH146

Services for hard-of-hearing



A new law will help make life easier for the state's deaf community.

Effective Aug. 1, the process for obtaining deaf interpreter services will be amended and outdated provisions dealing with the way the

Department of Human Services purchases communication devices for the state-run Equipment Distribution Program will be repealed.

Also, the state Department of Health will be added as a fourth member of the interagency management team for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Service Division.

Through feedback from forums held around the state, the division learned that there continues to be a shortage of quality interpreter services across Minnesota. The new law will

add “interpreting” services to the division’s purview to enable it to explore alternatives for getting interpreting services to consumers in those areas of the state where there are no freelance interpreters.

The new law will also repeal the requirement to contract out for referral services in the metro area, making it optional to accommodate the changing nature of services in the area.

For many years, there was only one sign language interpreter referral service available in the Twin Cities area — the service receiving state support. In recent years, competition in the referral marketplace has developed because of increasing demands for interpreting services.

As a result, it is expected over time that the metro area’s need for state-supported referral services will diminish. The new law will give flexibility to allow that to happen.

All of the revisions came about as a result of periodic review of legislation that impacts the division’s programs.

Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) and Sen. Charles Wiger (DFL-North St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF1414*/SF1584/CH149

Law expands eligibility



A new state law will make it easier for people with developmental disabilities to access the Consumer Support Program operated by the Department of Human Services.

Effective March 16, the new law eliminates an income cap for participation in the program.

Under previous law, people were ineligible for the program if their income was equal to or more than the level at which they would be required to pay a parental fee for medical assistance services and county social services. (That would translate to an income level that is the lesser of 150 percent of the federal poverty guidelines or \$30,000 annually.)

The program is generally used to pay for in-home support services received by qualifying individuals.

Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings) and Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the new measure.

HF356/SF73*/CH10

Seeking service solutions



A task force to develop a new rate structure for state reimbursement for certain services offered to the developmentally disabled will be established under a new law effective May 14.

The task force is required to report to the Legislature by Jan. 15, 2000, and must operate under the umbrella of the commissioner of human services.

Although the method of providing services to the developmentally disabled in the state has shifted focus from large institutions to individual needs, the system of reimbursements for those services hasn’t kept pace.

Also, the current payment procedure provides a higher reimbursement rate for new agencies entering the market than for existing operations.

The new law instructs the task force to develop a plan “that reflects individual consumer needs and demands for services” that is flexible, simple, and equitable.

The Minnesota Habilitation Coalition and Minnesota Day Activities Center Association supported creation of the task force. The task force will include officials from a variety of parties interested in reimbursements for services, including the counties.

Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) and Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the measure.

HF1933/SF1615*/CH152

Mental health council



A law effective Aug. 1 will modify membership and reporting requirements for the State Advisory Council on Mental Health.

The new law will add a representative from the Mental Health Consumer/Survivor Network of Minnesota to the council. It also will require one or more of the council members to be a person of color.

Finally, the law will require the council to report on its activities to the Legislature, in addition to the executive branch.

The 30-member panel is charged with providing input on policy, programs, and services affecting people with mental illness.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) and Sen. Sheila Kiscaden (R-Rochester) sponsored the bill.

HF640*/SF488/CH39

Making reform official



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law May 13 that will rid state statute of references to one welfare program — the former federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) — and update references to the state’s reform initiative — the former Minnesota Family Investment Program—Statewide (MFIP-S).

AFDC officially ended with the adoption by the U. S. Congress of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. That legislation required states to develop welfare-to-work programs and specified a host of other changes.

Minnesota began implementing those changes in 1996 with a pilot Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) in eight counties. Later, to differentiate between the pilot program and the statewide version, lawmakers put an S behind MFIP in statute.

Now that the pilot program has ended completely, it was determined the “S” was no longer necessary.

Effective Aug. 1, the new law will eliminate obsolete references to both programs.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) and Sen. Dan Stevens (R-Mora) sponsored the measure.

HF1393/SF1585*/CH159



INDUSTRY

Port authority name change



A new law will change the name of a Duluth port authority.

The Seaway Port Authority of Duluth will be known after Aug. 1 as the Duluth Seaway Port Authority.

The name change was requested to make it easier for people to find the organization in directories. Because most port authorities contain the location in the first part of their names, many people look up the “Duluth Port Authority” and do not find a listing.

Rep. Mike Jaros (DFL-Duluth) and Sen. Sam Solon (DFL-Duluth) sponsored the measure.

HF1809/SF1554*/CH68

Keep the change



A new law will let port authorities keep excess money earned on lease or management contracts paid for with state bonding funds.

Under current law, extra money not needed for operating costs or debt service payments that is earned from a bond sale financed by the state must be paid to the state.

Effective Aug. 1, the new law will allow Minnesota's five port authorities to use those profits to reinvest in improvements to their terminals. Proponents of the measure say it will let the port authorities better manage the money earned by their projects.

Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings) and Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the measure.

HF1161/SF480*/CH114



INSURANCE

Cap on benefits raised



A new law effective May 8 increases the maximum limit of lifetime health benefits under the Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association (MCHA) insurance program.

MCHA provides insurance to Minnesotans who are unable to obtain health insurance through the private market because of pre-existing conditions. Participants pay higher premiums than they would for private plans.

The law raises the lifetime cap on health benefits to \$2.8 million from \$2 million. Proponents of the measure said MCHA participants often have high health-care costs and would benefit from the increased limit.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City), who was the House sponsor of the measure, said he originally wanted to remove the cap entirely. He said an 8-year-old boy in Red Wing who requires constant supervision and a special ventilator to breathe would benefit from the raised cap, because his medical needs cost about \$30,000 per month.

The measure became law without Gov. Jesse Ventura's signature.

Ventura said raising the benefit limit will further increase MCHA's deficit. The state subsidizes the association because of the high claim costs, and Ventura said he is wary of supporting a program that continues to suffer losses.

"I greatly appreciate the importance of assisting individuals who are in danger of exhausting health care benefits under (MCHA),"

he stated in a letter explaining why he didn't sign the new law. "However, I am becoming increasingly concerned about the growing unfairness of the financing mechanism that supports MCHA."

Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF270*/SF470/CH130

Health coverage alternatives



The governor on May 19 signed a new law aimed at increasing competition in the state's health care insurance market.

The new law will provide options for less expensive and less comprehensive employee health policies for small businesses, many of them in rural areas.

Effective Aug. 1, it will permit insurance companies that do not already have a major presence in the state — those that have less than 3 percent market share — to offer plans that don't include all of the state's currently mandated coverage.

Under existing state law, insurers and health maintenance organizations may offer small employers — those with fewer than 50 employees — the same benefit sets they offer to large companies or they may sell two alternative plans with lower costs and lower benefits. The law will provide another option to those small firms.

The new law will allow policies with different co-payments and deductibles, as well as those that would pay on a basis other than medical expenses incurred, such as a flat dollar amount per day in the hospital or a flat dollar amount upon a diagnosis of cancer.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) and Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park) sponsored the measure.

HF870/SF841*/CH181

AIDS study volunteers



People who participate in AIDS vaccine research will be protected from being unfairly denied insurance, under a new law.

AIDS vaccine clinical tests involve injecting candidates with a synthetic substance designed to cause the immune system to develop antibodies against the HIV virus. The vaccine itself doesn't contain the virus.

However, people who participate in the trials may develop antibodies to the HIV virus. And when insurance companies test applicants for life, disability, and other types of insurance, they often test for the presence of

HIV antibodies as a method of determining whether a person is HIV positive.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, requires insurers to look more carefully before denying coverage. When informed that a client has participated in a vaccine test, an insurer must obtain a confidential certificate from the sponsor of the trial verifying the person's HIV status.

If it can be proven that the person's HIV antibodies are a result of exposure to the vaccine and that the person was HIV negative prior to the injection, the insurer cannot refuse to issue a policy.

The legislation was requested by the Minnesota AIDS Project, which is coordinating four test sites in the state involving about 200 volunteers.

The National Institutes of Health has evaluated over 20 vaccine possibilities, which are undergoing nationwide trials to determine the safety of the vaccines and their impact in stopping the disease.

Rep. Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland) and Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) sponsored the measure.

HF1106*/SF1075/CH121

Coverage for translation



State law now requires no-fault automobile insurance to cover the cost of sign language interpreting and language translators as part of medical benefits.

The state's no-fault automobile insurance law is designed to ensure prompt payments by insurance companies for medical and other benefits to victims of car accidents. It was created to relieve the financial burden of uncompensated victims who might have costly medical or repair bills as a result of an accident.

In order to communicate their illness or injury, people who don't speak English often need a family member or professional interpreter to accompany them to the doctor's office.

Effective May 8, a new law directs insurance companies to pay for translators as necessary medical expenses, but the services will only be covered if they relate to medical care associated with an accident and will not apply if a family member serves as the translator.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), the House sponsor of the measure, said he discovered many insurance companies were not covering translating services as part of necessary medical expenses.

Sen. Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF684/SF521*/CH134

All's FAIR in insurance



A new law will make several changes in the way the state's Fair Access to Insurance Requirements (FAIR) plan operates.

FAIR is a high-risk pool for homeowner's insurance and business property insurance designed to provide coverage when it is not available through the normal private market.

Effective Aug. 1, FAIR will have to issue a policy if the property meets preliminary underwriting requirements; however, the coverage may be rescinded in the next 59 days if further analysis shows the policy should not have been issued.

The new law also will require a standard form to be used in all dealings with FAIR and will broaden the FAIR plan's exemption from liability to include criminal liability.

The changes were requested by the board that oversees operation of the plan.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) and Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park) sponsored the measure.

HF1708*/SF1675/CH120

Covering funeral costs



A new law will update the state statute regarding insurance for funeral or burial expenses.

The law, effective Aug. 1, will allow funeral home owners, directors, and employees to receive commissions from the sale of insurance contracts totaling \$20,000 or less. However, the commissions could only apply to "pre-need" contracts, or those purchased before the services are needed.

In addition, the law will clarify the definition of who can make decisions regarding a person's funeral arrangements. Current law allows such decisions to be made only by family, next of kin, or another representative. The new law will simply state that such decisions can be made by one who has the legal authority to act on behalf of the deceased.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Arlene Lesewski (R-Marshall) sponsored the measure.

HF1150/SF1182*/CH100

Selling settlement funds

The practice of buying a person's rights to structured settlement payments from an insurance company would be regulated under a bill approved by the House May 15. The vote was 128-5.

Under the bill, companies that pay upfront for a person's rights to future payments would have to disclose detailed financial information about the transaction, known as a factoring transaction.

The people who are selling the rights to the payments are generally claimants in personal injury or workers' compensation cases, and some are not used to making decisions on such complex financial information. Some people have squandered the cash they received in a factoring transaction and are unable to pay their bills when they stop receiving the scheduled payments.

Court approval would be required for factoring transactions that occur after Aug. 1, under the bill. The transaction would be allowed only if the court determines it is necessary for the claimant to avoid an "imminent financial hardship" and that the lack of future payments would not cause undue hardship.

Also, the person who is selling the rights to the payments would receive legal and financial advice before completing the transaction. The advice would include how the present value of the cash that is being offered compares to the money the claimant is scheduled to receive over time, tax implications of the proposed transaction, and explanations of other possible consequences of the transaction.

The bill also would require more disclosure of that type of information in the initial negotiations of structured settlement claims.

An earlier Senate version of the bill had contained a provision that would have allowed transactions to continue to be unregulated if the settlement amount was less than \$5,000. But that provision was removed in a House-Senate conference committee.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), House sponsor of the measure, said he opposed the \$5,000 limit because it would allow factoring companies to get a "foot in the door" by buying several small portions of a larger settlement amount. Haas argued that the regulations should apply to settlements of any amount.

Sen. Edward Oliver (R-Deephaven) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

The bill (HF478) now goes to the governor's desk.

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 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.



LAW

Ventura veto overridden

In the first successful override of a governor's veto in 17 years, lawmakers passed into law a measure dealing with seat belt liability. The move came during the last hours of the 1999 session.

The new law changes the so-called seat belt gag rule to allow defective seat belt claims to move forward in court.

The House re-passed the measure May 17 by a vote of 109-19. The Senate voted 59-1 to override the veto April 28. A two-thirds vote was necessary in both houses to override Gov. Jesse Ventura's veto.

The last successful veto override happened in 1982 when the DFL-controlled Legislature passed two bills into law that Republican Gov. Al Quie had vetoed.

The seat belt gag rule law states that whether a person was wearing a seat belt cannot be considered by the courts when deciding personal injury or property damage claims resulting from a car crash.

In a 1997 case, the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that the gag rule law, as it was written, also applied to cases in which the claim is filed against the auto manufacturer for a defective seat belt.

If plaintiffs can't establish that they were actually wearing a seat belt, they can't prove that the seat belt caused or failed to prevent an injury, and the cases cannot move forward.

The new measure simply exempts claims of defective or malfunctioning seat belts from the gag rule law.

The new law is effective May 18 and applies to any legal action pending or begun on or after that date.

It will specifically allow Jodi-Michaele Carlson, of Bemidji, to go ahead with a lawsuit against a car manufacturer. Carlson was partially paralyzed in a 1995 accident involving an allegedly malfunctioning seat belt.

In his April 27 veto message, Ventura argued that the bill didn't go far enough and that the entire gag rule should be repealed.

The governor also expressed concern that the bill would have affected cases currently before the courts and that the bill favors one party over another in these cases.

"By partially repealing the seat belt gag rule an unfair advantage will be given to one party in the courtroom," Ventura wrote. "Juries should hear all of the arguments and facts in a case before rendering a decision."

The House tacked an amendment containing the vetoed bill to a transportation department housekeeping bill May 13. That provision



Accident victim Jodi-Michaelle Carlson, *right*, will be able to sue her car manufacturer for damages, under a change in the state's seat belt gag rule. The Legislature voted to override a veto by Gov. Jesse Ventura, and the new law will allow evidence of defective or malfunctioning seat belts in court cases.

was stripped from the bill (SF1762*/HF1551) by the conference committee.

"We need to override this veto if we want this provision to become law," Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) told members of the House before the vote. McGuire sponsored both the original measure and the amendment to the other bill.

Sen. Leo Foley (DFL-Coon Rapids) sponsored the exception to the seat belt gag rule in the Senate.

HF462/SF303*/CH106

Malpractice limit extended



A new law will give more victims of medical malpractice their day in court.

Current law requires that lawsuits dealing with medical malpractice must be initiated within two years of the alleged occurrence of the malpractice. The new law will allow up to four years to take legal action.

Bill sponsor Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth) said that some cases of malpractice do not become evident within the two-year period and when the victims discover the problem, it is too late to take action.

Van Dellen said his bill will not change the standard for malpractice, it will just allow these cases to move forward.

The new law is effective Aug. 1 and will apply to legal actions commenced on or following that date.

Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF56*/SF90/CH23

Court reporters on contract

The House passed a bill May 15 that would require freelance court reporters to disclose contracts or agreements they may have with litigants. The vote was 132-0.

The measure comes in response to a growing use of contracted court reporters. These contracted employees are often used by large companies, such as insurance companies, that frequently need the services of court reporters for depositions and other legal proceedings.

Under such deals, the company agrees to use the court reporter exclusively and the court reporter provides services at a reduced rate. The practice is used as a way to reduce overall litigation costs.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), would require that court reporters disclose any contracts or agreements both in writing and orally before the beginning of any legal proceeding.

The bill also outlines procedures for cases where attorneys object to the use of contracted reporters, and would provide legal remedies for litigants who aren't given the information before the proceeding.

Earlier versions of the bill would have simply outlawed such contracts altogether and court reporters would have been required to work only on a case-by-case basis.

Critics of the agreements say that reporters need to provide services that are neutral and fair, and that the contracts give the impression the court reporter is biased toward one side in the legal dispute.

The bill (HF346*/SF278) now goes to the governor.

Better pay for jurors



A new law will ask the state's highest court to issue an opinion on the subject of jury pay.

The measure, effective Aug. 1, will request that the Minnesota Supreme Court study the several issues involving juror compensation, including a study of daily pay rates, reimbursements for child care and travel, and special considerations for longer civil trials.

The law also will require the court to examine ways to balance these concerns with a desire to have juries represent a cross-section of society. The report is due back to the Legislature in December.

The measure came as a result of the hardships reported by jury members serving during the lengthy trial in Minnesota's lawsuit against Big Tobacco in 1998. The trial lasted for weeks before it ended in a settlement.

Minnesota courts currently pay jurors a \$30 stipend per day for expenses related to jury duty.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Randy Kelly (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the measure.

HF1153/SF973*/CH71

Cover for 911 dispatchers



Emergency dispatchers can give over-the-phone medical instructions to callers without fear of legal troubles, under a new law effective April 28.

The measure exempts dispatchers from civil liability when in the course of an emergency call they provide medical information before emergency responders arrive on the scene.

Some municipalities had advised dispatchers not to give medical information over the phone because the local unit of government could possibly be held liable in a lawsuit.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), House sponsor of the new measure, said the law will give emergency dispatchers the ability to do their job "without fear of superfluous litigation."

Sen. Leo Foley (R-Coon Rapids) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF541/SF436*/CH108

Divorce law correction



An error made in the state's marriage dissolution law has been corrected.

In 1991, the Legislature created a simplified process for couples

without children and with limited property to file for divorce.

Then in 1997, the Legislature amended the summary process but unintentionally failed to remove a provision that discontinued the program in the summer of that year.

The new measure, retroactively effective July 1, 1997, restores the summary process and makes it permanent.

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Leo Foley (DFL-Coon Rapids) sponsored the new law.

HF1258*/SF487/CH37

Real estate rewrite



A new measure will make several technical changes to the state's real estate laws.

Among other things, the measure eliminates the requirement that owners of registered land have an owner's duplicate certificate of title in order sell the land.

The law also makes several minor changes to the Common Interest Ownership Act governing housing cooperatives and condominiums. Most provisions of the new law are effective Aug. 1.

The changes were recommended by the real property section of the Minnesota State Bar Association.

Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury) and Sen. David Knutson (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure.

HF382/SF343*/CH11



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Residency rules repealed



Minneapolis and St. Paul can no longer require city employees to live within city limits, under a law effective March 5.

The measure repealed laws that allowed those cities to make residency a condition for employment.

Proponents of the proposal, sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), argued that residency requirements make it more difficult for those cities to hire and retain qualified employees.

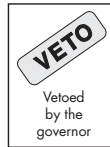
Stanek, who works as a Minneapolis police officer, said residency requirements also violate people's basic right to choose where they live. The Legislature passed measures allowing residency requirements for Minneapolis in 1993 and for St. Paul in 1994. People hired since the requirements took effect have been required to live in the city where they are

employed (after a grace period to allow time to find housing).

The Senate bill was sponsored by Sen. Steven Novak (DFL-New Brighton).

HF133*/SF107/CH260

Public purchasing bill vetoed



A bill that sought to give cities more flexibility in awarding contracts for purchases was vetoed by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Current law requires cities to solicit sealed bids for purchases if the estimated cost is more than \$25,000. The bill would have raised the threshold to \$50,000.

For purchases between \$10,000 and \$50,000, the bill would have allowed cities to seek price quotes from at least two vendors or to solicit sealed bids.

Proponents of the bill said the formal bidding process is unnecessary in purchasing items in that price range.

The bill also would have allowed cities to purchase supplies, materials, or equipment through a national municipal association or a cooperative.

In a letter accompanying the veto message, Ventura wrote that the proposal could have increased unethical conduct in purchasing decisions.

"The municipal contracting statute was enacted, in part, to ensure that municipal contracts are awarded on the basis of the best value at the best price, rather than being awarded on the basis of favoritism," Ventura wrote.

"I believe that contracts should be awarded on the basis of what you know, not who you know. Competitive bidding is essential to ensure that this type of favoritism does not negatively affect a community's interest to the benefit of a contractor who happens to be in favor with the city manager, mayor, or city council."

Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) and Sen. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins) sponsored the measure.

HF1097/SF1188*/CH82

Second buying bill vetoed



Gov. Jesse Ventura has vetoed a second bill this session dealing with the way cities and counties make purchases.

The most recent measure would have exempted governmental units from having to have an agreement to act jointly or cooperatively for purchases under \$25,000 if the purchases were made through the National Association of Counties. That

organization has amassed a large purchasing consortium in the past few years and a number of Minnesota counties were poised to use it, hoping to save taxpayer dollars.

Ventura, however, saw it another way.

"Providing a mechanism for municipalities to evade the procurement policy objectives established by the Legislature will adversely affect the state's cooperative purchasing program and state mandates for environmentally responsible purchasing," Ventura wrote in a May 17 letter accompanying his veto message. "Economically disadvantaged small businesses and minority business owners will also be affected negatively by this bill."

He also faulted the legislation for negatively impacting MINNCOR, a program developed by the Department of Corrections to employ inmates and sell their handiwork to cities and counties.

"While MINNCOR is on track to meet its legislative mandate to achieve self-sufficiency by 2003, this bill would hinder the department's progress and threaten the continuation of the entire program," the governor wrote.

Ventura said the program's prosperity is critical to the state prison system and he would not allow it to be jeopardized "in the name of streamlining government."

Ventura earlier vetoed a separate bill (HF1709/SF1188*/CH82) that sought to raise the dollar level above which cities are required to solicit sealed bids for purchase.

That bill also would have allowed cities to purchase supplies, materials, or equipment through a national municipal association or cooperative.

In that veto message, Ventura said changing the laws regarding purchases would make "who you know" more important than "what you know" and said he aimed to encourage competitive bidding.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Charles Wiger (DFL-North St. Paul) sponsored the most recent measure.

HF1544/SF1609*/CH167

Amortization prohibition



A new law prohibits cities and counties from setting a deadline for property owners to cease operations that do not conform to zoning ordinances — a maneuver sometimes used to force out undesirable businesses or halt unpopular practices.

The practice is known as amortization and the law, effective April 24, prohibits it except in cases where it is used to close strip clubs and other "adult" businesses.

Cities and counties can change zoning

ordinances to reflect changing land uses, such as a growing business or industrial district. But if an existing section of property becomes a nonconforming use due to a change in zoning, state law allows the owner of that property to continue that use under certain conditions.

The city or county can also condemn the nonconforming property, but the property owner must be paid fair market value.

Opponents of amortization call it a loophole in the law, because it effectively makes a property worthless. If the local government sets a deadline for a business owner to conform to a new zoning ordinance or to move, a potential buyer would have no incentive to buy the property until after the deadline, when the value would plummet.

Rep. Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland) and Sen. Keith Langseth (DFL-Glyndon) sponsored the measure.

HF896/SF854*/CH96

Fees for pinball machines



A new law will require Minnesota cities that issue permits for amusement machines such as pinball or video games to charge only as much as it costs them to issue the permit or \$15 per site and \$15 per machine, whichever is lower.

The new law was supported by the Minnesota Operators of Music and Amusements, a trade association for the coin and currency activated amusement industry, which expressed concern that some cities are using fees to control personal and business activity and to generate revenue.

The association claimed some cities charged as much as \$150 per location plus \$60 per machine.

Cities are not required to license amusement machines; however, if they do, they are limited to charging only the cost of issuing and administering the license. The new law, effective Aug. 1, will clarify that provision of statute for the machine owners.

Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy) sponsored the measure.

HF1140/SF1329*/CH179

Legislative history can be researched in printed materials at the Legislative Reference Library or, for the years since 1995, on the Internet. Find directions at:
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/leghist/histstep.htm>

Employees' legal fees



A new law allows townships to reimburse certain legal costs to employees.

Under existing law, cities and counties can reimburse legal costs of employees charged with committing crimes while performing their official duties. The law requires that the payment must be approved by the district court.

The new law, effective April 2, simply gives the same authority to Minnesota's 1,793 townships.

The measure came as a result of a case in New Scandia Township in Washington County. In 1994, prosecutors charged the township's former chief of police with misconduct by a public employee while serving as chief.

Although the case was dismissed by a judge in 1995, the former employee incurred \$4,500 in legal fees. And because she worked for a township and not a city or county, the employee could not seek reimbursement from the local government.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Springs) and Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy) sponsored the measure.

HF475*/SF517/CH30

Mandated minimums



County recorders will be able to require a minimum deposit in accounts to assure payment of charges, under a new law.

County recorders are responsible for keeping track of property records. Under current law, companies may post a security deposit with county recorders to pay for fees when records are filed. This allows the county to deduct the fees from the company's account and does not require company couriers to carry money with them when they deliver documents to the county recorder.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, allows county recorders to require a minimum balance in company accounts to guarantee the payment of fees. It applies to all counties in the state.

The measure stems from a state auditor's report that found Ramsey County requiring the minimum deposit without the legal authority to do so.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the legislation.

HF908/SF465*/CH69

Funding historical projects



Most Minnesota cities will be able to make unlimited donations to historical projects, under a new law.

A \$500 cap on what cities can spend on historical projects was enacted in 1957 and later raised to \$2,000 in 1977.

The proposal to eliminate that cap was supported by the Minnesota Historical Society as a way of encouraging additional historical investment by cities.

The new law, effective Aug. 1, will also clarify state law regarding contributions to senior and youth centers. That provision was requested by the city of Paynesville, where officials discovered that while the city could operate a transit program, it couldn't legally give financial support to an existing service operated by someone else.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) and Sen. Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville) sponsored the measure.

HF371*/SF461/CH155

Covering expenses



A new law effective Aug. 1 will increase per diem rates for board members of some Minnesota sanitary districts.

A per diem rate is paid to a person much like an allowance to cover travel, dining, or other expenses associated with that person's duties as an employee or elected official.

Board members who serve the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District will see their per diem rates rise from \$35 to \$50.

Per diem rates for board meetings of the Moose Lake-Windemere Sanitary Sewer District will also increase from \$35 to \$50, but the annual maximum of \$1,000 will not change. In addition, the per diem for the board's chair will rise from \$45 to \$50. For events other than meetings, that district's per diem for its board members will increase from \$35 to \$50.

Both sanitary districts were established in the 1970s, and their rates have not changed since they were created.

Rep. Willard Munger (DFL-Duluth) and Sen. Sam Solon (DFL-Duluth) sponsored the measure.

HF258/SF376*/CH145

Hospital district addition



A new law effective May 12 authorizes the Paynesville area hospital district to add the city of Richmond to its domain.

Under state law, only cities that lie geographically next to hospital districts, which may levy taxes, can become part of the districts without approval from the Legislature.

In this case, Richmond is separated from the hospital district by a township. The hospital is building a new clinic in Richmond and wanted the city to be part of the district in the event that it might have to impose a tax in the future.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) said the request needed legislative approval because of the hospital district's taxing authority, in addition to granting the geographic exception.

Stang and Sen. Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville) sponsored the legislation.

HF174*/SF156/CH147

More liquor licenses

Some cities would be allowed to increase their number of on-sale liquor licenses under a bill approved May 14 by the House. The vote was 122-4.

The number of licenses that can be issued by a city is based on population. As cities grow they can seek legislative approval for more licenses. The number of licenses issued in a city also is subject to the approval of the local city council.

Under the bill (HF1079), seven cities would be able to increase the number of liquor licenses that they could issue. It would allow Eden Prairie to issue five additional licenses, Marshall to issue four additional licenses, Stillwater to issue two additional licenses, and Bemidji, Detroit Lakes, and Proctor to each issue one additional license. The city of Minneapolis would be able to issue a license to a restaurant at 1931 Nicollet Ave. S.

The bill would also allow temporary licenses for events, such as alumni programs at Macalester College and the University of Minnesota, and for the Twin Cities Marathon, which would only be allowed to serve beer that is brewed in Minnesota.

Special licenses would also be allowed for the Brave New Workshop, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, and the Fitzgerald Theatre to serve wine and malt liquor during intermissions of performances.

The bill now goes to the governor's desk.



MILITARY

Armory board eligibility



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a law that will broaden eligibility for National Guard members to serve on armory boards. The new law takes effect Aug. 1.

Current law limits eligibility for such positions to officers. The new law will extend it to enlisted personnel and warrant officers, who already perform duties of managers of armories. The measure also will allow retired National Guard members to serve as recruiters and to handle other temporary duties. It is designed to give the Department of Military Affairs more flexibility in hiring qualified people for those temporary duties.

Rep. Bruce Anderson (R-Buffalo Township) and Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan) sponsored the legislation.

HF1565*/SF1677/CH46



SPORTS

Reprieve for stud users



An approaching statewide ban on metal traction devices — or studs — for snowmobiles was repealed this year.

Stud use remains illegal on paved trails. Damage to those trails caused by illegal use of studs prompted the 1998 law banning studs on all public lands as of July 1, 1999.



Lawmakers repealed a 1998 ban on snowmobile metal traction devices, or studs, for use on public land.

But the new law, effective March 5, repeals that law, which also included a requirement that snowmobilers buy a \$50 sticker to use studs until the ban was to take place.

Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), sponsor of the bill, said the special fee and pending ban have caused parts of the state to suffer from lost tourism revenue. And he said the repeal will help bring some tourism dollars back to the state.

Sen. LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF6*/SF40/CH4

No stickers on antique boats



Owners of antique boats will have more leeway in displaying their boat licenses, under a measure signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The new law will allow owners of restored historic boats to affix the license number and decals to a detachable device on the boat instead of to the boat itself. It will affect boats that were built before July 1, 1959, and that are used solely as collector's items. The law takes effect Aug. 1.

Rep. Jim Rostberg (R-Isanti), House sponsor of the measure, said it will allow owners of those boats to participate in parades or events without having to deface the valuable crafts with license stickers.

In a letter filed with the bill, Ventura wrote that he believes the law should apply to all watercraft.

"It is my expectation that the Legislature will revisit this issue in a future legislative session and pass a bill exempting all watercraft

from the license display requirement during any exhibit, regatta, or boat parade held in Minnesota,” he wrote.

Sen. Doug Johnson (DFL-Tower) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF137*/SF463/CH22



TAXES

Tax cuts and rebates

A significant cut in income taxes and a \$1.3 billion sales tax rebate were passed by the lawmakers May 17, and the plan awaits action by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

“Today is the day we redeem our campaign promises,” said Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the House Taxes Committee and sponsor of the bill (HF2420). “Today we have before us the largest tax cut in the history of Minnesota.

The tax cuts in the proposal total \$1.3 billion for the first year of the coming biennium and \$1.2 for the second year. The House vote on the bill was 119-13.

The plan would reduce income tax rates for married individuals filing joint returns from 6 to 5.5 percent on the first \$25,200 in taxable net income, from 8 to 7.25 percent for income from \$25,200 to \$100,200, and from 8.5 to 8 percent on all income over \$100,200.

Minnesota taxpayers would likely notice the reductions in July when state officials would reissue withholding tables. Officials expect the decreases to average about 9 percent.

While the tax cut was among the most popular provisions of the bill, it was also one of the most criticized. Specifically, the cut in the top bracket drew opposition from some legislators.

“This bill widens the gap between the rich and poor in Minnesota,” said Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul).

He noted that personal income in the state has risen four-fold in 20 years, but only the wealthiest 20 percent have shared in the good times.

Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) said 40 percent of the tax cut benefits would accrue to the wealthiest 6 percent of earners.

Abrams contended the bill was fair and contained something for everyone.

He pointed out that nearly all Minnesotans would benefit from the rebates, which would be mailed sometime in August. Most residents would receive the rebate automatically without having to file a form.

Although the rebate amount was approved at \$1.25 billion, Abrams said that could easily rise to \$1.3 billion before the end of the fiscal



Most Minnesotans will be checking their mailboxes in August, when the state will likely mail an estimated \$1.25 billion in sales-tax rebate checks. The total rebate, which would be based on 1997 income tax records, could jump to \$1.3 billion if further budget surpluses are found when the state balances its books June 30.

year, given the continued strength of the state’s economy.

The average household would receive about \$600. Rebates would be determined by taking the total from Line 4 of the M-1 Form filed in 1998 for income earned in 1997 and applying it to one of two tax tables — one for single people or married couples filing separately and another for joint filers or people filing as a head of household.

The bill would also eliminate the so-called “marriage penalty,” a hitch in state law that forces married couples filing jointly to pay more taxes than single filers with the same income.

Under the plan, couples would be given a credit ranging from \$9 to \$261, based on income level. The original House bill contained a more expensive proposal to simply expand the width of the “married” bracket to encompass two “single” brackets.

But the compromise plan, proponents said, would result in fewer “marriage bonuses” — instances in which certain couples would be rewarded for filing jointly.

Here are other highlights of the omnibus tax package.

Charity for all

More Minnesotans making contributions to charitable organizations would be rewarded with a deduction, under the measure.

Current law only allows deductions for charitable giving if a taxpayer itemizes his or her return. Those who don’t itemize would be allowed to deduct 50 percent of their contributions over \$500, under the bill.

The aim is to boost the stock of nonprofits in the state as a way of providing needed

services without having to spend more tax dollars.

Sick tax doctored

The state’s medical services provider tax — often called the “sick tax” — would remain in place, under the bill. The House had originally proposed a two- or three-year phase out, a move that would have cost the state just over \$292 million.

The gap in revenue would have been filled with a portion of the state’s tobacco settlement money. But once an agreement was reached to spend that money on health-related endowments, the provider tax was left in place. However, a scheduled increase in the rate for the coming year was eliminated.

During debate on the conference committee report, members on both sides of the aisle pledged to renew their quest to eliminate the tax next year.

This year’s bill also includes exemptions for certain services doctors provide without charge, such as providing treatment for employees as part of a company-provided health care program.

Sales tax changes

Among the proposed sales tax changes are exemptions for those filming television commercials in the state, counties purchasing equipment and supplies for road maintenance, vehicles given as gifts by individuals, and prizes for games of skill or chance at carnivals and fairs.

The exemption for those filming commercials was requested by Gov. Jesse Ventura as a way to spur business activity in the state. The exemption would likely cost the state more than \$2 million during the biennium.

Taxpayer savings

(Including a \$1.6 billion permanent tax cut and
\$1.3 billion one-time rebate)

Permanent tax cut

Married couple,
2 dependents

1997 taxable income	New tax	Annual savings
\$10,000	\$840 credit	\$76
\$25,000	\$151 credit	\$67
\$50,000	\$1,427	\$309
\$75,000	\$2,840	\$455
\$100,000	\$4,254	\$601
\$250,000	\$16,668	\$1,581

One-time sales tax rebate

Married couple or
head of household

Income range	Average rebate
\$15,000-\$24,999	\$623
\$25,000-\$34,999	\$726
\$35,000-\$44,999	\$847
\$45,000-\$59,999	\$945
\$60,000-\$79,999	\$1,117
\$80,000-\$99,999	\$1,346

Single filer, no dependents

\$10,000	\$160	\$15
\$25,000	\$1,000	\$92
\$50,000	\$2,326	\$229
\$75,000	\$3,740	\$375
\$100,000	\$5,293	\$475
\$250,000	\$17,835	\$1,259
\$500,000	\$37,513	\$2,489

Single filer, no dependents

\$15,000-\$19,999	\$464
\$20,000-\$24,999	\$496
\$25,000-\$29,999	\$515
\$30,000-\$39,999	\$570
\$40,000-\$49,999	\$649
\$50,000-\$69,999	\$776
\$70,000-\$99,999	\$958

Sources: House Research and Minnesota Department of Revenue

County and city officials had sought a complete exemption from paying sales tax on all goods and services purchased, but they received only the exemption for road maintenance purposes in the bill.

Caring for the poor

Two large hospitals in the Twin Cities metro area — one in Hennepin County and one in Ramsey County — would be reimbursed for providing medical care to low-income Minnesotans who do not reside in either of those counties.

Under the bill, \$10 million would be available, based on each hospital's share of the county's charity care.

Representatives from Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis and Regions Hospital in St. Paul appeared before several House committees, pleading for help with the ever-growing costs of admitting patients who can't pay and who don't live in the county.

Reimbursement recipients would have to

file a report describing how the aid was spent.

Steel plant boost

The bill contains a \$20 million commitment from the state to a plan for building a cutting-edge steel-making facility near Nashwauk in northern Minnesota.

The provision was part of the Senate's omnibus tax plan but was not in the original House measure. House conference committee members originally were cool to the idea, but later approved the plan, which would be added to \$30 million already committed to the project by the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board.

Banks and taxes

The bill would allow the state's small bank owners to elected "S corporation" status and avoid the state's corporate franchise tax.

The move is expected to cost the state \$23 million in revenue over the biennium.

"S corporation" status allows profits to flow

through a corporation without taxes being assessed to the individual shareholders. Congress enacted Subchapter S of the Internal Revenue Code in 1958 to allow some businesses to be treated as partnerships for tax purposes.

The Legislature in 1997 moved to conform to federal laws but didn't include banks. Under provisions of the current bill, banks would not be given the status at parity with other companies, but would be credited for 80 percent of the benefit.

Multi-state businesses

Changes in how Minnesota's large multi-state corporations pay their taxes are included in the compromise tax bill.

Under existing law, most corporations are required to use a three-factor formula, based on property, payroll, and sales. The tax is weighted most heavily on sales, which means companies that are based in other states but have significant sales here pay the most tax.

Companies that own and operate plants here pay less in corporate taxes.

The new law would add additional weight to the "sales" category and lower the amounts paid based on property and payroll. The net effect is intended to attract more manufacturing businesses and high-paying jobs to the state.

The change would result in an estimated \$23.4 million less in tax revenue flowing into state coffers in the second year of the biennium.

Economic development

Three business ventures in the state would be granted exemptions from various state taxes, under the omnibus plan.

Owners of a beef-slaughtering house near Windom would be exempt from sales tax for materials, supplies, and equipment used in the expansion and improvement of their facility. To qualify, the project must be completed by Dec. 31, 2001, exceed \$15 million in costs, and create at least 150 new jobs.

Another exemption from sales tax for materials and supplies used in construction of an electrical generating facility at an unnamed location is also included. The facility would have to use wood waste and by-products exclusively for generating electricity.

Finally, an electric utility peaking facility in Martin County would be exempted from property taxes. An out-of-state company is proposing to build a facility that would generate electricity for area power companies on an "as needed" basis. The plant is to be located at a spot where a 42-inch natural gas pipeline and a 345-kilovolt high-voltage electric transmission line converge.

Airport help takes off

Community leaders from Richfield appeared en masse to support a provision in the bill that would help provide relief for their community once the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport expands.

The measure would designate an airport impact zone in Richfield and direct the Metropolitan Airports Commission to issue \$30 million in bonds to pay for land acquisition, relocation, redevelopment, and public improvements in the zone.

Commission revenues, specifically funds from higher landing fees, would have to secure the bonds.

All in the family

Two provisions in the bill are aimed directly at Minnesota families.

An expanded eligibility for the working family credit for taxpayers with children would cost the state about \$25 million over the coming biennium. The bill would increase the credit by 10 percent in the lowest income bracket.

And the measure would expand eligibility for education tax credits. Under the bill, parents could claim a credit for fees for certain lessons taught by members of Minnesota Music Teachers Association. Under current law, piano teachers must have a bachelor's degree in order for their services to be fit under the education tax credit.

The bill would also expand the definition of those who qualify for the education credit to include non-custodial parents who provide financial support for their children's education.

Property tax cuts

Nearly every rate for every class of property tax would be trimmed slightly under the bill.

Farmers would likely see the largest decreases under a plan to move away from the traditional system of taxing farmland based on acreage and toward a value-based system instead.

Another plan to use \$40 million in general fund revenue to provide property tax relief to farmers and assure school districts don't lose money because of the changes is also included.

And the concept of limited market value would be continued in the bill. Under that provision, the increase in the assessed value of a home would be limited to 8.5 percent of the preceding year's assessment or no more than 15 percent of the difference between the current assessment and the preceding assessment, whichever is higher.

Business subsidies

State and local government units would have new regulations on how, when, and why they provide subsidies to attract new businesses.

Under a Senate-sponsored provision, government agencies awarding business subsidies would have to establish a specific public purpose for the subsidy and enter specific subsidy agreements. The agreements would have to include an obligation to repay part or all of the subsidy if the recipient does not meet its obligations.

The new rules would generally apply to subsidy amounts of more than \$25,000.

The provisions were in response to public concern that too much money is being "given away" to attract businesses by cities, counties, and some state entities with little to show for it.

Border cities aid

Four communities along Minnesota's western border would divvy up \$1.5 million, to be used for city enterprise zone credits. The credits are designed to help Breckenridge, Dilworth, East Grand Forks, and Moorhead compete for businesses and jobs with neighbors in North Dakota and South Dakota.

The money could be used to provide exemptions for sales tax on building materials and equipment, income tax credits of up to \$3,000 for each additional employee hired, debt financing for constructing or expanding facilities, or as a state-paid property tax credit.

The bill would also provide an exemption from the limits on state funding for border city development zones in those four cities and Ortonville.

Tiff over TIF

Spending tax-increment finance (TIF) dollars to construct or renovate facilities for social, recreational, or conference facilities or for public parks would be prohibited under the omnibus bill. Cities and counties would no longer be permitted to build ice rinks, community centers, or other similar facilities with TIF money.

Further, the bill would prohibit TIF funds from being spent on improvements, equipment, and other items whose primary purpose is decorative or aesthetic.

Entities that violate state law regarding TIF could lose their right to form TIF districts for up to five years.

Many communities have come to rely on TIF districts to create economic development. Using TIF, a local government can create a specific district in which property tax values are frozen.

As a developer proceeds with a project, the taxes generated by the increase in property

value over the frozen amount, known as the increment, are captured to finance economic development, usually improvements directly beneficial to the project.

Special provisions requiring legislative authority for nine TIF districts already in existence are included in the bill.

Bug farm gets break

The Gordon Vadis farm near Ham Lake would be deemed agricultural property for property tax purposes under a section of the omnibus bill.

Vadis appeared before the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee in February to complain that the Anoka County assessor said he didn't qualify for the agricultural classification. Vadis raises crickets for animal consumption, and he was denied agricultural classification because he wasn't raising food for human consumption.

The provision would add "insects primarily bred to be used as food for animals" to the definition of agricultural property.

Also included in the bill is a provision to allow Christmas tree farmers to enjoy agricultural status under the tax code.

Offers-in-compromise

The compromise bill proposes specific guidelines for when farmers and others seek arrangements to settle their tax liability.

Under a measure offered originally by Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester), the commissioner of revenue would have to establish guidelines to determine whether an offer-in-compromise or an offer to make installment payments is adequate and should be accepted.

The guidelines would have to include a stipulation that the department will not reject an offer-in-compromise from a low-income taxpayer solely on the basis of the amount of the offer.

The bill would also provide an appeal process, should the taxpayer not agree with the department's determination.

Without guidelines, offers-in-compromise are considered on a case-by-case basis, and critics have said that leads to frustrations and misunderstandings.

Taconite tales

The measure would freeze the taconite production tax at the 1998 level of \$2.141 per gross ton for the coming year. The tax had been scheduled to increase by a specific percentage each year in perpetuity.

The bill would also give \$20 million to the Minnesota Minerals 21st Century Fund for loans and investments aimed at iron production facilities experiencing downturns.

The fund was created with the stipulation

that all funds be matched with contributions from the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board.

ZIP is out

Consumers who have items delivered to their homes may find themselves paying more sales tax than is legal. Many companies use ZIP codes to determine whether a sale is subject to local sales tax, rather than city boundaries.

Under a provision in the bill, that practice would be prohibited unless the ZIP code is entirely contained in the political subdivision that imposes the local tax.

The onus would be on the consumer to inform the company that he or she doesn't live in a community that has an enhanced sales tax.

Lawful gambling tax relief

The bill contains good news for the operators of lawful gambling operations in the state.

The tax on paddlewheels, raffles, and bingo would be reduced from 9.5 percent of gross profit (gross receipts minus prizes) to 9 percent. The tax on pull-tabs and tipboards would be lowered from 1.9 percent of ideal gross (gross receipts if all pull-tabs or tipboards in a package are sold) to 1.8 percent.

Finally, the combined receipts tax (gross receipts from pull-tabs and tipboards received by an organization with more than \$500,000 in gross receipts from these sources in a year) would also be decreased in three steps.

The bill would also delay the time those taxes are due from the 20th of each month to the last business day of the month.

Sprayer payers

The bill would set the annual registration fee for "agricultural aircraft" at \$500. Under current law, the fee is 1 percent of the aircraft's value.

The plane must be of one-passenger design and used only for agricultural purposes.

Other key provisions

Other notable portions of the bill include a provision that would exempt Holocaust survivors who receive a financial settlement from having to pay state income tax on the money.

The bill also would extend levy limits for cities and counties for another year, and would give New Ulm and Proctor permission to levy a local sales tax under specific conditions and for specific projects.

Tax exemptions would be provided for purchases of a certain type of kerosene and racing fuel, and for property purchased to be used as prizes for games of skill or chance at carnivals, festivals, and fairs.

Finally, an appropriation of \$50,000 for each year of the biennium would go to non-profit organizations that offer taxpayer assistance services to low-income Minnesotans.

Tax collection streamlined



Minnesota's district courts have been removed from the loop when the Department of Revenue pursues collection of certain back taxes, under a new law.

The revenue commissioner is now allowed to serve a summons and complaint by certified mail to the taxpayer's last known address.

Under prior law, the department was required to file with the court administrator showing the taxes due. The court administrator then began the collection process.

The association that represents the court administrators requested the change. The procedure applies primarily to collection of taxes from people who have left the state.

The new law, effective May 12, represents a streamlining of tax collection procedures in the state.

Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights) and Sen. Jane Ranum (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the measure.

HF1131/SF1115*/CH143

Mortgage registry update



A new law will update mortgage registry and deed taxes, removing outdated and archaic language and reorganizing the statute involved. The changes take effect July 1.

The measure was requested by the Department of Revenue, which wanted to update the law to ease the administration process for both counties and states, and to make statute easier for taxpayers to read.

Substantive changes include reducing a civil penalty provision, providing procedures for administrative appeals, providing a clear statute of limitations, and giving authority to assess personal liability for deed tax.

The law also contains technical changes that will eliminate outdated language, add definitions, and move provisions into a more logical order.

Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina) and Sen. Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul) sponsored the bill.

HF379*/SF381/CH31



TOURISM

The Wilder way



A road named after one of Minnesota's most famous authors is changing its route, under a new law.

Effective March 19, the Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Highway near Rochester is rerouted from a U.S. highway to a county highway.

Previously, the specially designated route ran through a mostly commercial area on heavily traveled U.S. highways 14 and 52. After the reroute, it is using a county road and now passes by the Olmsted County Historical Society, which is expected to develop exhibits about the famed pioneer author.

The historical center has a log cabin that resembles one in which the Ingalls family lived. Plans for a prairie restoration project are under way, and the historical society wants to name the prairie in the author's honor.

The Ingalls family did not live in the Rochester area, but Pa Ingalls once worked in Olmsted County. And Laura Ingalls Wilder is known to have traveled through the city many times on her trips to neighboring states.

Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) and Sen. Kenric Scheevel (R-Preston) sponsored the measure.

HF157*/SF379/CH16



TRANSPORTATION

Transportation finance bill

Lawmakers in the House and Senate approved a \$3.3 billion omnibus transportation finance bill May 17. The House vote was 89-42. The measure awaits action by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The bill (HF2387) includes spending provisions for road construction, transit, public safety, airports, and railroads. Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) and Sen. Janet Johnson (DFL-North Branch) are sponsoring the measure.

Of the spending total, about \$166.2 million would come from the state's general fund. The remaining dollars would come from the constitutionally dedicated funds for state and local highways.

The omnibus plan does not include \$60 million for the planned light-rail transit line in Minneapolis. That provision, originally in the Senate's omnibus transportation bill, was added to the bonding bill (HF2205).

Here's a look at the transportation measure's major spending provisions.

Highways, runways, waterways

The Minnesota Department of Transportation would receive \$38.7 million for aeronautics projects, such as airport construction and maintenance funds.

Greater Minnesota Transit, a service that aids rural areas in providing bus service, would receive \$30.8 million, and \$3.2 million would go toward railroads and waterways. A sum of \$100,000 would help fund a railroad corridor improvement plan in southern Minnesota.

The bill would provide \$1 billion for state road construction funds and \$6 million for hiring additional transportation workers. Another \$9.3 million would cover pavement striping, traffic safety and freeway operations technology, and other maintenance projects. The bill also includes \$50,000 to purchase equipment for the new 800-megahertz metropolitan radio system.

The legislation would allow for one more year the transfer of an extra 0.25 percent of gas tax revenue generated by snowmobiles to be allocated to the snowmobile trails and enforcement account. Because of a trial period under current law, that figure is 1 percent, and is slated to revert to 0.75 in fiscal year 2000. The money is used for upkeep and safety of snowmobile trails.

The transportation department would receive a total of about \$3 billion from the bill.

Bus money

The Metropolitan Council would receive an increase in funding to preserve and expand its transit service.

Council officials initially asked lawmakers for a \$14.9 million increase over two years. However, the bill allots an additional \$11.2 million, bringing the state appropriation for Metro Transit — the city bus system — to \$109.9 million for the biennium.

Patrols and plates

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety would receive \$220.8 million for its transportation-related programs.

About half of the money would go to the Minnesota State Patrol, with nearly \$1.4 million to replace radios in patrol vehicles. The bill would also fund the replacement of a helicopter and provide \$735,000 for the state trooper training academy.

Funding in the amount of \$492,000 would support the protection of elected officials, but those funds would be allocated to Capitol Security. Gov. Jesse Ventura had originally asked for funding for additional state troopers to provide executive protection, but the bill does not grant his request.

The department's Driver and Vehicle Services Division would see more money to re-

place equipment, hire more driver's license testing examiners, and make more license plates, which are currently in short supply.

About \$1.9 million in the bill would beef up driver's license testing sites by hiring 19 new examiners. And \$309,000 would enable the division to begin registering vehicles over the Internet in fiscal year 2001.

The measure also would repeal a tax credit for disabled license plates, which would help pay for an initiative to crack down on illegal use of handicapped parking permits.

In other provisions, a \$12.50 fee for state identification cards would be lowered to 50 cents for individuals who suffer from mental illness, and the department would be allowed to solicit paid advertising for Minnesota driver's license manuals.

Title transfers

The omnibus bill would create a detachable postcard people could mail to the state transportation department after they sell a motor vehicle.

The form, which would be attached to a vehicle's title, would help to decrease registration fraud.

The seller would send in the form to notify the state of the sale, which could put more pressure on the buyer to make sure he or she completes the registration of the vehicle. Under the plan, penalties would be stepped up for not registering a vehicle after a purchase. The provision comes from a separate bill (HF1985/SF394*) sponsored by Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan) and Sen. Dave Kleis (R-St. Cloud).

Other changes

The bill does not include state funding for two projects — a children's information line and an elderly safety program — within the Minnesota Safety Council, a non-profit agency that educates citizens. However, the council would receive \$134,000 over the biennium.

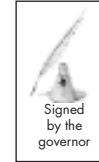
And the transportation department would begin a conversion back to the English system for construction project measurements, under a plan sponsored by Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake) that was included in the omnibus bill. The department started converting to the metric system in 1992 in a move to comply with federal intentions to convert. But implementation has been slow, and Congress has made conversion optional for the highway industry. The change back to the English system would make it easier for local governments and private contractors to do business with the state.

Vehicles owned by commercial driving schools would be exempt from registration taxes, under the bill. And home schools would be allowed to teach driver's education classes.

The legislation also would require several

studies by the transportation department, including a report on regional taxi regulation and another on beginning Amtrak service between the Twin Cities and the Iron Range.

Emissions testing to end



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law May 18 that will eliminate the state's motor vehicle inspection program no later than March 1, 2000.

The measure allows the state to terminate the inspections next spring, pending air quality approval by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

But if the EPA deems air quality in the Twin Cities area has met federal air quality standards before the March deadline, the law allows for the 8-year-old program to end earlier. Officials from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency say they believe the EPA will approve the area's carbon monoxide level, which is monitored on a routine basis.

If the state were to halt the emissions testing program before getting the nod from the federal government, the EPA could withhold highway funding. Concerns over that possibility led state lawmakers to make ending the inspection program contingent upon meeting federal air quality standards.

Since going into effect in 1991, the vehicle emissions testing program has met opposition from citizens and lawmakers alike. An attempt to repeal the program in 1995 failed, but it resulted in exempting cars less than five years old from the testing requirement.

Proponents of the new law say the program has done the job of improving air quality in the Twin Cities and is no longer needed. But its opponents, including officials from the company that conducts the vehicle inspections, argue that the program is effective and should continue.

Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View) and Sen. James Metzen (DFL-South St. Paul) sponsored the legislation.

HF7*/SF142/CH178

No cut in tab fees

While Gov. Jesse Ventura succeeded in his push to secure funding for light-rail transit, his proposal to cut license tab fees did not fare as well this session.

In his biennial budget recommendations, Ventura urged instituting a flat, \$75 rate for the motor vehicle registration tax, commonly known as the license tab fee.

Some lawmakers were concerned that Ventura's proposal would take too much

money away from highway and road repair funds, prompting various other proposals to restructure transportation funding.

Many lawmakers, including Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) and Rep. Bernie Lieder (DFL-Crookston), introduced bills that would change the rate and schedule of the motor vehicle registration tax and constitutionally guarantee enough money for transportation needs.

Kuisle's bill (HF446) made it out of the House Transportation Finance Committee, but stalled in the House Taxes Committee. The Senate also had a similar plan, which likewise did not make it to a floor vote.

In the end, a reduction in the state income tax won out over lowering the motor vehicle registration tax. Citizens hoping for a cut in tab fees will have to stay tuned until next year.

Slowdown on town roads



A new law effective Aug. 1 will reduce speed limits in residential areas of rural townships.

The law will set a speed limit of 30 miles per hour on town roads that run through residential developments.

Under existing law, many of those roads have limits of 55 miles per hour. The roads currently do not qualify for a lower speed limit because they do not pass through areas that meet the state's current definition of an urban district.

In an urban district, the speed limit is 30 miles per hour where buildings are within 100 feet of each other.

The new law, sponsored by Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) and Sen. Janet Johnson (DFL-North Branch), creates a separate definition for rural residential districts, allowing the reduced speed limit when houses are within 300 feet of each other for a distance of at least one quarter of a mile.

HF1265/SF1150*/CH44

Blue lights on bikes



A new law effective April 13 allows motorcycles to display blue rear brake lights.

Previously, only emergency vehicles, snowplows, and road maintenance vehicles could display a blue light.

Proponents of the new law said the blue lights would improve safety for motorcycle riders by increasing the visibility of their vehicles on the road.

Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights) and Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the measure.

HF766*/SF739/CH35

Easing plate application



A new law effective Aug. 1 will reduce the steps required to obtain disability license plates.

The law will affect anyone who applies for a set of disability license plates for a vehicle that has been modified for permanent use by a person with a disability.

It will do away with a requirement that people must provide additional proof of their disability by a physician's statement or other means to obtain the special license plates.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) and Sen. Michelle Fischbach (R-Paynesville) sponsored the legislation.

HF165/SF460*/CH25

Commuter rail study

A bill passed May 15 by the House would make several changes to laws governing the operations of the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

The measure would put into law a planning process for a commuter rail system, if lawmakers decide to go forward with such a project. The bill (HF1551/SF1762*), sponsored by Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), awaits action by the governor.

Under the bill, the commissioner of transportation would be required to adopt a plan for commuter rail, a system that uses passenger cars on existing freight railroad lines. The transportation department has been studying how the system would work in the Twin Cities area for the past two years at the direction of the Legislature.

A master plan for the region's transit system would be required by the Metropolitan Council. The bill calls for that plan to be completed by Feb. 1, 2000, when the Legislature reconvenes.

The bill also would update many provisions of current state law, such as allowing 18-year-olds to drive 3,500-gallon petroleum tankers.

It also would raise to \$150,000 from \$75,000 the amount above which the department must go through the competitive bidding process for construction projects. That provision would allow the department to act quickly on emergency road repairs because time is saved by not having to go through the bidding process.

Lawmakers briefly used the bill as a vehicle for a proposal to modify the seat belt gag rule, a measure that says evidence regarding seat belt use is not admissible in court. A provision concerning the admissibility of motorcycle helmet use in court cases was also once part of the bill. However, both of those proposals

were taken out by a House-Senate conference committee.

Gov. Jesse Ventura had vetoed a separate bill earlier in the session that would have allowed evidence of seat belt use in cases where an equipment failure was alleged. That veto was eventually overridden by the Legislature.

New deadline for banks



A new law will close a legal loophole that can cause car dealerships to break the law.

The law will decrease the amount of time banks are allowed to release a title after a car is paid off. Under current law, banks have 15 days to do so. The new provision, effective Aug. 1, reduces that to seven days when the cars are sold by most types of auto dealerships.

Under the present system, car dealers have only 10 days to transfer titles to buyers after a vehicle is sold. This can be a problem when dealers need to obtain titles from a bank. If the bank takes longer than 10 days, the dealer's deadline has not been met and they break the law. Rep. Bill Kuisle (R-Rochester) is sponsoring the measure, which would require banks to release a title within seven days for new and used auto dealerships and leasing companies.

The law also includes a change in state law regarding the mounting of television screens in motor vehicles. That provision, effective May 8, allows television screens in any place except where visible by the driver of an automobile.

Under the new law, Minnesota dealers will now be able to sell the Oldsmobile Silhouette minivan. The van's television screen previously did not fit state law, which restricted screen mounting to a space specifically behind the driver.

Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF790/SF778*/CH131

Exception for milk trucks



A new law eases restrictions on milk haulers. Until 2003, vehicles carrying milk will be exempt from seasonal road restrictions and the state's 5-ton per axle weight limit.

The seasonal weight restrictions, in effect statewide from March 20 to May 15 each year, are designed to prevent costly wear and tear on roads that can be caused by heavy vehicles. But the springtime restrictions often put milk transporters in positions where they are breaking the law.

The law exempts milk carriers from the weight restrictions from one point of

production to the first processing point. Subsequent trips are not covered under the measure, which in turn prevents haulers from carrying many farmers' loads at one time.

The law allows carriers to exceed restrictions by 2 tons per axle on roads with restrictions of 5 tons per axle. Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar) and Sen. Dean Johnson (R-Willmar) sponsored the legislation.

HF1641/SF1645*/CH154

Trucking regulations ditched



A new law will eliminate a registration requirement for two types of vehicles.

Effective Aug. 1, drivers of trucks whose taxes are based on their weight listed on license applications and trucks traveling through the state that need one-way permits will no longer have to apply in writing to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

Alice Gonzalo, assistant director of the department's Driver and Vehicle Services Division, said the two categories are the only ones left that require written applications. She said the requirements will be lifted to make it easier for the department to implement electronic registration, such as by fax or the Internet.

Rep. Rod Skoe (DFL-Clearbrook) and Sen. Carol Flynn (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the measure.

HF1507/SF1600*/CH70

Penalties for trucking violations



A new law effective April 1, 2000, will increase penalties for drivers who use trucks that have been ordered out of service.

An out-of-service order means that a truck is damaged or defective and cannot be driven until repairs are made. Under current law, penalties for driving such a vehicle involve fines for drivers and their employers.

The impetus for the new law was a potential loss of some federal highway dollars if the state did not step up its penalties.

Under the law, drivers will be disqualified from driving commercial motor vehicles for 90 days after the first offense. A second offense in five years will disqualify drivers for one to five years, and a third offense within five years will result in three to five years' disqualification.

In addition, the Minnesota Department of Transportation will be required to impose

fines of at least \$1,000 for drivers and up to \$10,000 for employers who knowingly violate out-of-service orders.

Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) and Sen. Charles Wiger (DFL-North St. Paul) sponsored the legislation.

HF1046/SF1324*/CH93

Steel storage tanks



Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a law that will change fuel storage tank specifications for the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Effective Aug. 1, the measure will require the department's specifications to allow for steel storage tanks, in addition to the fiberglass tanks already used by the agency, to store fuel underground.

Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake) sponsored the bill on behalf of some steel tank manufacturers who said the department's specifications were shutting them out of the bidding process.

Under the new law, the steel tanks would have to meet standards set by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency before the department could use them.

Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the legislation in the Senate.

HF528*/SF1259/CH88



VETERANS

Drive to honor veterans



A new law will honor veterans in Otter Tail County.

The law, effective Aug. 1, designates a portion of Minnesota Highway 59 running through the county as "Otter Tail Veterans Memorial

Drive."

Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls) and Sen. Cal Larson (R-Fergus Falls) sponsored the legislation.

HF1986/SF1888*/CH42

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

175 State Office Building
(651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* newsmagazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

Legislative lunger



Rep. Bill Haas threw out a line in the House chamber to mark the state's May 15 opening of the fishing season, and he got a nibble from Rep. Chris Gerlach as lawmakers continued to work toward adjournment.

Mattress tags were no joke to 1920s investigators

There are many tired gags about those tags that come attached to mattresses and the threat of criminal penalties for people who dare to remove them.

And it's a stretch to imagine a line about "The Mattress Police" getting even a polite chuckle.

But 75 years ago, enforcement of the state's so-called "mattress law" was no laughing matter. A 1925 report to the Legislature detailed efforts by the Industrial Commission of Minnesota to investigate reported violations of laws related to the manufacture and sale of mattresses.

At that time, the law included several provisions related to mattresses. The law said that anyone who manufactured, delivered, or sold a mattress that was not "properly branded or labeled" was guilty of a misdemeanor. Violators faced a maximum penalty of a \$500 fine and six months in jail.

The same penalty awaited anybody who removed, concealed, or defaced a label on a mattress they intended to offer for sale.

The law also protected against the manufacture of mattresses including cotton or any other material that was recycled from bedding used in a hospital or in any way exposed to a person with an infectious disease.



Inspections conducted 75 years ago helped state officials discover thousands of violations of state laws related to mattresses. State law continues to require tags to be attached to any mattress to be offered for sale.

Cloth tags were required to contain "in plain print in the English language, a statement of the material used in the manufacture of such mattresses, whether such materials

are, in whole or in part, new or second-hand, and the quality of the materials used." And such tags were required to be "securely attached" to each mattress.

In 1923 and 1924, the state inspected thousands of mattresses, according to the report. More than 3,000 mattresses were found to be incorrectly labeled as to the materials they contained. The report also noted that "other defects" were discovered and that inspections should continue to protect the public against "the questionable practices of some unscrupulous manufacturers and dealers."

State law still includes mattress-related provisions designed to protect consumers. In fact, there are several such sections in statute that fall under the heading of "bedding."

Current law prohibits hospitals from selling second-hand mattresses and includes language nearly identical to that which 75 years ago prohibited the re-use of materials from hospital bedding or bedding otherwise exposed to any person with a contagious disease.

State law today includes other provisions that dictate how bedding materials can be reconditioned to ensure consumer safety.

And, yes, current state law mandates that no person can make or sell any "article of bedding," unless the product is properly labeled.

Continued from page 4

minor's decision to have an abortion without parental consent.

All three provisions were removed by the conference committee. That didn't sit well with some House members who attempted unsuccessfully in the last few hours of session to send the bill back to conference committee.

The much talked-about proposals to lower the motor vehicle registration tax, or license tab fee, also did not move forward this session. The governor had tab-fee reduction as a key element of the tax reduction plan in his budget recommendations. After the first year, the rate would have been capped at \$75 — effectively providing \$200 in tax relief annually, according to the governor.

Although similar plans passed through House and Senate transportation committees, a reduction in the state income tax won the war of priorities in both bodies.

Lawmakers also failed to reach an agreement of a wolf management plan. The gray wolf, or timberwolf, is scheduled to be removed from the federal endangered species list next year.

The House approved a management plan that would have allowed trapping and hunting of wolves the first January after the animal is removed from the list. The Senate couldn't come to an agreement. And the bill will have to wait until next year.

Federal wildlife officials have said the lack of a state plan could delay the removal of the animal from the list. The issue may eventually be forced into the courts. 🐾

Continued from page 4

nature of the painting, which has become something of a final statement after leaving office, O'Sullivan said.

In 1991, Gov. Rudy Perpich's request for a second portrait prompted the state to reconsider some of its policies regarding official gubernatorial portraits in the Capitol building.

Perpich had asked that a photograph of him and his wife Lola touched up with oil paint be hung in the Capitol, in addition to a portrait already hanging. Perpich argued that since he

served non-consecutive terms (1976-78, 1983-90), he should be allowed two separate portraits.

The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, in conjunction with the Minnesota Historical Society, recommended that gubernatorial portraits contain only one subject and that only one per governor would be allowed.

However, the 1998 Legislature relented and granted the Perpich family another portrait, on the condition that it be paid for with private funds. The new portrait, an oil painting of both Rudy and Lola Perpich, will replace the current one depicting Perpich standing in front of a background of an open-pit mine in Minnesota's Iron Range, also symbolizing the late governor's hometown.

O'Sullivan said a long-range plan of the historical society is to possibly move the portraits around the Capitol, locating them on all floors. And the lamp posts could be moved back to their original spots, where Gilbert had placed them. 🏛️

Governor's Desk

CH1-CH250

Now it's up to the governor

Exactly 4,760 bills were introduced by the Legislature during the regular session — 2,475 by the House and 2,285 by the Senate. Of those, 250 bills (and three resolutions) were passed by both bodies during the 1999 session and sent to the governor.

So what happened to the other 4,507? Some were duplicates, some were folded into other bills, but most are in limbo, awaiting legislative action when the next regular session begins on Feb. 1, 2000.

And what happened to the 250 bills (and three resolutions) that have been sent to the governor? Most were signed into law, some were vetoed, and some are awaiting the governor's attention. Here's a quick review of the governor's veto authority during the first year of the biennium.

Once a bill has passed both the House and the Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor has several options when considering a bill. The governor 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, in the first year of the biennium, results in the bill becoming law.

The timing of these actions is as important as the actions themselves.

But the important thing to remember in the first year of the biennium is this: the governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill.

If the governor doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

(For bills passed in the Special Session, however, the governor has 14 days from "presentment" to veto them — the same rules that apply in the second year of a biennium. If the governor takes no action on a bill during this time, the bill is vetoed in what is commonly referred to as a "pocket 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/she objects. As with all vetoes, the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

A two-thirds vote of the members in each house is needed to override a veto. So the Legislature, either next year or when it is called into special session before then, could vote to override the governor's veto.

The governor's veto authority is outlined in the Minnesota Constitution (Art. IV, Sec. 23).

So what happens to the bills that weren't approved by the Legislature this year?

Bills that were awaiting floor action on the General Register now return to the last committee they were acted upon, where they will stay unless acted upon by the 2000 Legislature. This rule also applies to any bill up for consideration on the Consent Calendar, Calendar For The Day, or Fiscal Calendar.

For appointed conference committees that have not submitted a report upon adjournment, the bill returns to the body it originally came from and is laid on the table. The conference committee is then disbanded.

Bills that are passed by one body and not the other remain alive for the second year of the biennium. The house that approved the bill in the first year need not repass the bill in the second.

Bills pending before the Rules and Legislative Administration Committee from either body return to the standing committee to which the bill was previously referred.

Bills vetoed by the governor are returned to the body where the bill originated and laid on the table.

Bills remaining in standing committees can be taken up in the second year of the biennium in the committee to which they were last referred.

After each session, a comprehensive summary of all bills that were signed into law or vetoed is published. You can get a copy of *New Laws 1999* by calling or writing the House Public Information Office, 175 State Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155-1298; (651) 296-2146, or 1-800-657-3550.

Editor's note: The following chart includes the 250 bills (and three resolutions) that passed both the House and the Senate and have been, or will be, sent on to the governor for consideration. Final action is as yet incomplete on 67 of the bills. The bills are, for the most part, sorted according to the committee of origin.

Here are definitions of some of the terms used in the chart.

Governor's Options

- enactment

The date the governor signed the bill into law.

- line-item veto (liv)

The power or action of the governor to reject individual items within an appropriations bill while approving the rest of the bill.

- Veto

The governor did not approve the bill.

- *An asterisk marks the version of the bill the House and Senate approved and sent on to the governor.

Effective Dates

Each act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day it becomes effective, unless the act specifies a different time. Examples:

- Aug. 1, 1999

Each act the governor signs into law, except those that make appropriations, take effect on Aug. 1 following its final enactment, unless the act specifies a different date.

- Upon local approval

A special law requiring approval from the local government unit it affects becomes effective the day after the local government unit's governing body files a certificate with the secretary of state, unless the act specifies a later date.

- July 1, 1999

An appropriations act, or an act spending money, takes effect at the beginning of the first day of July following its final enactment, unless the act specifies a different date.

- Day after enactment

The act becomes effective on the day after the governor signs it.

- Various

Different parts of the act have different effective dates.

- with exceptions (we)

Act includes other effective dates.

- with qualifications (wq)

Act adds conditions to the effective date.

- retroactive (retro.)

Act goes into effect as of a specified date in the past.

1999 MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE FINAL ACTION (as of May 20, 1999)					CH	Governor's signature	Governor's veto	Awaiting governor's action	Effective date
HF—House File			we—with exceptions	liv—line item veto					
SF—Senate File			wq—with qualifications	◆—veto overridden by Legislature					
R—Resolution			*—bill sent to governor						
CH—Chapter			†—approved without governor's signature						
HF	Author	SF	Author	Bill Title	CH	Governor's signature	Governor's veto	Awaiting governor's action	Effective date
				Agriculture Policy					
370	Harder	424*	Vickerman	Nonregistered pesticide distribution permitted for certain uses outside the state.	6	3/8			1/1 (retro.)
414*	Gunther	428	Hanson	Pseudorabies control program continuation appropriation and vaccine reimbursement requirement.	45	4/12	liv		4/13
384	Anderson, B.	836*	Ourada	Food handlers licensing period and fee modifications for state operators.	59	4/15			4/16
1052	Molnau	451*	Vickerman	Uniform Commercial Code agricultural crops financing modifications.	105	4/27			8/1
893	Dorman	1041*	Hanson	Warehouse operators regulations modified.	110	4/27			8/1
1235*	Swenson	692	Dille	Animal feedlots ambient air quality standard exemption provided.	204			x	
				Capital Investment					
26*	Solberg	29	Lessard	Mississippi education center previous grantee changed to city of Grand Rapids.	2	2/17			8/1 wq
434	Opatz	593*	Kleis	St. Cloud Paramount Arts District regional arts center grant recipient change.	20	3/25			3/26
438	Swenson	407*	Johnson, D.E.	McLeod West School District #2887; secondary educational facility grant.	26	3/29			3/30
726*	Knoblauch	157	Cohen	Local government units capital improvement projects state assistance standards.	192			x	
2205*	Knoblauch	1058	Langseth	Omnibus bonding bill.	240			x	
				Civil Law					
382	Seifert, J.	343*	Knutson	Real estate provisions modifications.	11	3/15			7/1 (Art. IV)
183*	Buesgens	144	Robling	Minors voluntary admission and treatment parental consent modified.	32	4/12			8/1
1258*	Entenza	487	Foley	Marriage dissolution summary process revival.	37	4/12			7/1/97 (and by statute)
1132*	Broecker	1116	Ranum	Delinquent real estate taxes duplicate publication copies filing requirement.	60	4/16			8/1
643*	Bishop	676	Betzold	All persons under civil commitment status provided the same legal rights.	61	4/16			4/17
1153	Paymar	973*	Kelly, R.C.	Juror compensation system study.	71	4/20			8/1
53	Biernat	129*	Knutson	Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act modifications.	74	4/20			1/1/00
836*	Goodno	833	Junge	Business corporations regulation provisions modifications.	85	4/22			various
1037*	Holberg	950	Betzold	Revisor's bill.	86	4/22			4/23
1035	Larsen, P.	1017*	Kiscaden	Marriage dissolution summonses alternative dispute resolution requirements.	104	4/27			8/1
462	McGuire	303*	Foley	Seat belt use evidence admissibility clarification.	106		4/27 ◆		5/18
451	Stang	436*	Foley	Emergency telephone service (911) dispatchers liability immunity.	108	4/27			4/28
489	Carruthers	283*	Betzold	Civil commitment procedures modified.	118	5/4			8/1
863	Tingelstad	834*	Knutson	Putative fathers adoption registry modified.	122	5/4			8/1
92*	Carruthers	397	Betzold	DWI implied consent law modified.	124	5/6			5/7
1131	Broecker	1115*	Ranum	Delinquent taxes collection legal actions process modified.	143	5/11			5/12
578	Skoglund	84*	Cohen	Nonconsensual common law liens regulation for public officials and employees protection purposes.	170	5/17			8/1
989	Mullery	1094*	Betzold	Uniform probate code and guardian and conservator nomination provisions modifications.	171	5/17			8/1
160	Bishop	233*	Ten Eyck	Public service corporations private property easements description requirements.	184			x	
1122	Leighton	1093*	Hottinger	Civil mediation proceedings settlement agreements effect modification.	190			x	
510	Biernat	23*	Foley	Child and medical support order administrative process repealed.	196			x	
963	Knoblauch	486*	Junge	Firefighter previous employment background investigations authorized.	197			x	
2425*	Smith	2232	Higgins	Landlord and tenant law recodified.	199			x	
1494*	Olson	None	Kelly, R.C.	Prohibited inmate actions to include challenging employee assignments.	208			x	
346*	Smith	278	Hottinger	Court reporting freelance services regulated.	215			x	
817	Wagenius	346*	Ranum	Relative ex parte temporary child custody provisions expanded.	219			x	
2058	Carruthers	653*	Betzold	Government data classification and dissemination provisions clarified.	227			x	
1195*	Van Dellen	2029	Kelly, R.C.	Tenant screening report requirements modified.	229			x	
2337	Larsen, P.	1262*	Limmer	Year 2000 consumer protection act.	234			x	
				Commerce					
248*	Hasskamp	324	Ten Eyck	Crooked Lake detached banking facility.	7	3/15			upon local approval
812	Wolf	914*	Novak	Legislative Electric Energy Task Force membership modification.	19	3/25			3/26
48	Wolf	50*	Novak	Public utilities performance based natural gas purchasing plans sunset repeal.	21	3/25			8/1
1336	Seifert, J.	727*	Kelley, S.P.	Contracts continuity under European currency.	40	4/12			4/13
1184	Knoblauch	794*	Kleis	One call excavation notice system requirements modifications.	43	4/12			8/1
583*	Gunther	735	Hottinger	Township mutual insurance companies authorized investments expansion.	52	4/15			8/1
1066*	Seifert, M.	1190	Hottinger	Township mutual insurance companies territories of operation regulation modifications.	53	4/15			8/1
793*	Seifert, J.	1497	Kleis	Rental motor vehicle lien and right of retainer.	78	4/20			8/1
1968*	Davids	1827	Oliver	Medicare supplemental insurance regulation provisions modifications.	90	4/23			4/24
1150	Davids	1182*	Lesewski	Funeral or burial insurance sales restrictions eliminated.	100	4/26			8/1
661	Haas	832*	Betzold	Small company securities offering registration modifications.	103	4/27			4/28
1622	Gerlach	1368*	Knutson	Certain professions payment requirements exemption.	116	5/3			8/1
1708*	Seifert, J.	1675	Scheid	FAIR plan modifications.	120	5/4			8/1

1999 MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE FINAL ACTION (as of May 20, 1999)					CH	Governor's signature	Governor's veto	Awaiting governor's action	Effective date
HF—House File SF—Senate File R—Resolution CH—Chapter									
we—with exceptions wq—with qualifications *—bill sent to governor †—approved without governor's signature									
liv—line item veto ◆—veto overridden by Legislature									
HF	Author	SF	Author	Bill Title	CH	Governor's signature	Governor's veto	Awaiting governor's action	Effective date
1106*	Larsen, P.	1075	Hottinger	Insurers restricted from using HIV vaccine information.	121	5/4			8/1
359*	Wolf	684	Novak	Public Utilities Commission powers expansion.	125	5/6†			5/7
270*	Osskopp	470	Murphy	Increasing maximum benefits for Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association.	130	5/7†			5/8
684	Dawkins	521*	Pappas	Certain no-fault insurance benefits to cover translation services.	134	5/7			8/1
1564	Entenza	1715*	Oliver	Department of Commerce enforcement bill.	137	5/10			various
1384	Wolf	1357*	Novak	Public Utilities energy conservation improvement program modified.	140	5/11			5/12 (Sec. 2,3); 8/1
1175	Haas	1330*	Solon	Department of Commerce banking bill.	151	5/13			various
1008	Huntley	1047*	Solon	Garnishment, attachment, or levy of execution exemption for Roth IRAs.	160	5/13			5/14
2010	Paulsen	2038*	Runbeck	Workers compensation commercial self insurance group provisions modifications.	168	5/17			5/18
837*	Davids	1205	Wiener	Various technical and policy changes relating to insurance.	177	5/18			various
870	Haas	841*	Scheid	Small employers alternative health benefit plans.	181	5/19			8/1
1940	Jennings	1792*	Novak	Renewable energy development funding requirements modified.	200			x	
1079*	Paulsen	1331	Solon	Omnibus liquor bill	202			x	
1289*	Entenza	1109	Junge	Providing alcohol to underage persons provided increased penalties.	207			x	
743	Gray	171*	Higgins	Mortgage flipping educational campaign provided money.	209			x	
478	Haas	148*	Oliver	Structured insurance settlement payment rights and agreements protected.	212			x	
1728	Seifert, J.	1485*	Scheid	Architecture, engineering, and other professional design board provisions modified.	213			x	
358	Wolf	685*	Kelley, S.P.	Coin-operated telephones deregulated.	224			x	
1778*	Gunther	1785	Ourada	State government telecommunications pricing plan provided.	228			x	
1932*	Jennings	1607	Scheid	Rental vehicle insurance coverage regulated.	236			x	
1303	Goodno	1219*	Berglin	Health plan companies uniform complaint resolution processes modified.	239			x	
				Crime Prevention					
536	Broecker	464*	Kelly, R.C.	Carisoprodol classification as controlled substance effective date delay.	9	3/15			8/1
193	Paymar	255*	Ranum	Emergency telephone (911) calls interference crime expansion.	24	3/29			3/30
732	Osskopp	99*	Knutson	Criminal offenders costs payment for failure to appear after release.	28	4/1			8/1
733	Osskopp	117*	Knutson	Criminal offenders restitution challenge hearing requests time limit.	38	4/12			8/1
240*	Smith	236	Johnson, D.H.	DWI investigations county sheriff contingent funds use.	49	4/15			8/1
216*	Stanek	237	Johnson, D.H.	County prisoners transfer authority clarification.	50	4/15			8/1
735*	Osskopp	495	Knutson	Crime of adulteration scope expansion and penalty increases.	64	4/20			8/1
197	Pawlenty	198*	Kelly, R.C.	Criminal trials closing arguments rebuttal limits elimination.	72	4/20			8/1
868*	Hackbarth	866	Hanson	Crime of theft expansion to personal property rental.	76	4/20			8/1
67*	Luther	32	Johnson, D.H.	Killing or injuring a search and rescue dog provided felony penalties.	77	4/20			8/1
1171	Holberg	98*	Knutson	Crime victims' and witnesses' birthdates confidentiality.	79	4/20			8/1
142*	Pawlenty	1634	Knutson	Subsequent controlled substance conviction definition expanded.	98	4/26			8/1
1125*	McGuire	1087	Spear	Local correctional fees imposition responsibility transferred.	111	4/27			8/1
1169	Holberg	496*	Knutson	Financial institution search warrants extension.	117	5/3			8/1
1553*	McGuire	2078	Kleis	Department of Corrections conditional release and other provisions modified.	126	5/6			8/1
1707*	Haake	1602	Limmer	Sex offender registration plea negotiation modified.	127	5/6			7/1
1359*	Mahoney	1023	Cohen	Crime victims unclaimed restitution payments requirements.	136	5/10			8/1
1310	Goodno	184*	Ranum	Juvenile delinquency and child protection provisions recodified.	139	5/11			8/1
263	Gerlach	411*	Johnson, D.H.	Crime of counterfeited intellectual property.	142	5/11			8/1
70*	Daggett	197	Pariseau	Law enforcement agencies forfeited firearms sale and use authority.	148	5/11			8/1
1255	Skoglund	2120*	Johnson, D.H.	Gamma hydroxybutyrate as controlled substance.	163	5/13			8/1
1112	Biernat	1180*	Pappas	Juvenile court habitual truants jurisdiction extension.	164	5/13			5/14
1607*	Smith	1674	Moe	Tribal peace officers law enforcement authority.	175	5/18			5/19
621*	Fuller	584	Novak	Arson provisions expansion.	176	5/18			8/1
1890	Mahoney	1639*	Kelly, R.C.	Criminal offenders rehabilitation law exemption for taxicab drivers.	191			x	
1848	Goodno	1382*	Spear	DWI enhanced gross misdemeanor provisions repealed.	194			x	
2404	Broecker	2221*	Kelly, R.C.	Omnibus crime prevention and judiciary finance bill.	216			x	
1081	Skoglund	1404*	Johnson, D.H.	Pornographic work depicting minors provided criminal penalties.	217			x	
624	Stanek	441*	Spear	Dishonored check pretrial diversion program authorized.	218			x	
2016	Dawkins	1831*	Anderson	Criminal forfeiture provisions modified.	225			x	
228	Bishop	174*	Ranum	Sex offender registration and community notification laws expanded.	233			x	
112	Bishop	333*	Kelly, R.C.	Fraudulent use of another's identity provided felony penalties.	244			x	
				Education Policy					
101	Seifert, M.	1527*	Frederickson	Convicted sexual offenders prohibited from school board candidacy.	101	4/26			8/1
483	Tuma	296*	Robertson	Special education provisions modified.	123	5/4			various

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liv—line item veto ◆—veto overridden by Legislature									
HF	Author	SF	Author	Bill Title	CH				
14*	Fuller	574	Neuville	Persons convicted of criminal sexual conduct ineligible to become teachers.	201			x	
				Environment and Natural Resources Finance					
2388	Holsten	2226*	Krentz	Omnibus environment, natural resources, and agriculture appropriations bill.	231			x	
				Environment and Natural Resources Policy					
544*	Anderson, I.	638	Stumpf	Resolution for Minnesota/Ontario border lakes trade agreements violation resolution.	Res. 1	3/26			n/a
426*	Rukavina	534	Johnson, D.H.	Resolution for Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness management facilitation.	Res. 3	4/23			n/a
6*	Hackbarth	40	Stumpf	Snowmobile metal traction device use restrictions modified.	4	3/4			3/4
137*	Rostberg	463	Johnson, J.B.	Collector watercraft license numbers and display requirements exemption.	22	3/26			8/1
564	Ozment	609*	Price	Landscape irrigation systems rain check installation requirement.	27		4/1		
1403	Buesgens	1173*	Robling	Scott County Blue Lake wastewater treatment plant water use permit approval.	56	4/15			4/16
1109	Munger	803*	Solon	St. Louis River estuary fishing guide license requirement.	57	4/15			8/1
841	Opatz	881*	Kleis	Stearns, Benton, and Sherburne counties regional parks and trails plan.	65	4/20			8/1
645*	Tingelstad	651	Robertson	Water and wastewater treatment system modifications.	66	4/20			8/1
1151	Howes	1176*	Johnson, J. B.	Waste Management Act technical modification.	73	4/20			8/1
1404	Swenson	972*	Frederickson	Migratory waterfowl refuge designation.	81	4/20			8/1
1248	Howes	1528*	Price	Harmful exotic species provisions modifications.	92	4/23			4/25
1944	Wenzel	1470*	Samuelson	Paul Bunyan State Trail route modification.	95	4/23			8/1
2021	Bishop	1539*	Stumpf	Vertical heat exchanger contractors licensing and regulation.	153	5/13			various
1301	Vandever	1449*	Price	State park additions, deletions, and name changes provided.	157	5/13			8/1
1477	Rostberg	1541*	Price	Environmental improvement pilot program modified and made permanent.	158	5/13			8/1
502	Osskopp	626*	Murphy	Wabasha county tax-forfeited land sale.	161	5/13			various
1430	Tuma	1572*	Frederickson	Leased lakeshore lot exchange or sale provisions modified.	180	5/19			7/1 (Sec. 1); 8/1 (Sec. 2, 3)
1621*	Osskopp	1734	Higgins	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency judicial review provisions modified.	235			x	
				Family and Early Childhood Education Finance					
1467*	Sykora	2222	Piper	Omnibus family and early childhood education bill.	205			x	
960	Seagren	829*	Belanger	Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority surplus state land purchase.	80	4/20			4/21
1975	Wolf	1920*	Price	State archaeologist position appointment process modification.	91	4/23			4/24 (Sec. 3); 8/1 (Sec. 1, 2)
1905*	Seifert, M.	1993	Hottinger	Governor veto authority over state agency rules.	129	5/6			7/1
1168	Gerlach	1144*	Scheid	Elections provisions modified.	132	5/7			8/1
1183	Seifert, J.	1060*	Knutson	Secretary of state records provisions modified.	133	5/7			8/1
1568*	Boudreau	1209	Wiener	State building and energy code provisions modified.	135	5/10			7/1
2023	Krinkie	1746*	Wiener	Occupational regulation legislation supporting documentation requirement.	144	5/11			8/1
1825*	Osskopp	1619	Vickerman	Omnibus gambling bill.	206			x	
861	Rhodes	145*	Marty	Election campaign finance and ethics provisions modified.	220			x	
1877	Molnau	1721	Flynn	Public employees labor agreements and compensation plans ratified.	221			x	
				Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy					
139*	Rhodes	88	Marty	Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board member qualifications specified.	1	2/17			2/18
2024	Seifert, J.	1660*	Wiger	Government Innovation and Cooperation Board rules exemptions.	41	4/12			8/1
1565*	Anderson, B.	1677	Wiener	Eligibility expanded for certain state military service.	46	4/15			8/1
1556*	Clark, K.	2043	Wiger	Extending the civil service pilot project in the Housing Finance Agency.	47	4/15			8/1
1003*	McElroy	840	Wiener	Legislative Audit Commission modifications.	99	4/26			4/27
1173	Pelowski	1605*	Kelley, S.P.	Firefighters arbitration procedure.	166	5/17			8/1
1693	Mares	2017*	Runbeck	Public employment provisions modifications.	182	5/19			5/20
853	Rostberg	1204*	Johnson, D.H.	State building code fire safety enforcement authority.	185			x	
686	Dehler	2044*	Vickerman	Dice games in licensed liquor establishments.	187			x	
1077	Mares	319*	Pogemiller	Statewide and local pension plans modified.	222			x	
937	Tunheim	709*	Stumpf	State economically disadvantaged area business pref. award increase.	232			x	
132*	Ness	1138	Dille	Nursing home bingo game regulation modified.	128	5/6			8/1
				Health and Human Services Finance					
2412	Goodno	2225*	Samuelson	Omnibus health and human services appropriations bill.	245			x	
				Health and Human Services Policy					
719	Seifert, J.	757*	Junge	Resolution to prohibit federal recoupment of state tobacco settlement recoveries.	Res. 2	3/29			n/a
171	Mulder	121*	Ten Eyck	Health-related licensing board licensees infection control.	5	3/8			3/9
214*	Goodno	241	Sams	Emergency medical services volunteer ambulance attendant definition.	8	3/15			3/16
356	Dempsey	73*	Murphy	Program for persons with functional limitations financial criteria modification.	10	3/15			3/16
74	Luther	301*	Lourey	Health care directive form modification.	14	3/16			8/1
454*	Seifert, M.	564	Lesewski	Nursing home administrators sharing authority expansion.	17	3/18			3/19

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HF	Author	SF	Author	Bill Title	CH	Governor's signature	Governor's veto	Awaiting governor's action	Effective date
610	Tingelstad	649*	Robertson	Safe drinking water act public water supply definition modification.	18	3/25			8/1
56*	Van Dellen	90	Betzold	Health care provider actions statute of limitations modification.	23	3/26			8/1
413*	Mulder	418	Hottinger	Physicians, acupuncturists, and athletic trainers licensing and registration requirements modifications.	33	4/12			8/1
1126*	Abeler	862	Robling	Family day care licensure child age groupings definitions.	36	4/12			4/14
640*	Bradley	488	Kiscaden	Mental Health State Advisory Council membership requirements modification.	39	4/12			8/1
614*	Dauids	913	Hottinger	Community integrated service networks net worth reserve corridor increase and utilization review.	51	4/15			8/1
1660*	Bradley	1650	Hottinger	Nonprofit organizations human diseases research personnel unlawful practice of medicine exemption.	54	4/15			8/1
1216*	Abeler	1391	Piper	Chiropractors licensed in other states practical examination requirement modification.	55	4/15			8/1
982	Mulder	984*	Kelley, S.P.	Psychological test results release regulation.	58	4/15			8/1
408*	Goodno	170	Hottinger	Pharmacy practice definition modification.	62	4/16			8/1
1714*	Goodno	1693	Ten Eyck	Pharmacists to pharmacy technicians ratio requirements waiver.	63	4/16			8/1
1421*	Wilkin	1239	Terwilliger	Podiatry temporary permits extension	67	4/20			4/21
40*	Bradley	25	Samuelson	Nursing home residents allowed to request the use of restraints.	83	4/22			4/23
463*	Dauids	578	Lourey	Ambulance services and first responders health care review.	84	4/22			4/23
566	Reuter	673*	Ten Eyck	Health plans network shadow contracting restriction.	94	4/23			8/1
1309	Bradley	1273*	Sams	Nursing home administrators licensing and examiners board modifications.	102	4/26			4/27
984	Mulder	983*	Kelley, S.P.	Psychologists licensing and regulation provisions.	109	4/27			8/1
1658	Goodno	1268*	Kiscaden	Health maintenance organizations home care providers prompt payment.	146	5/11			7/1
1414*	Boudreau	1584	Wiger	Deaf and hard-of-hearing services division provisions modified.	149	5/13			8/1
1933	Boudreau	1615*	Sams	Mental retardation day training payment rate structure task force.	152	5/13			5/14
60*	Haas	591	Betzold	Medical assistance reimbursement for spousal private duty nursing.	156	5/13			8/1
1393	Jennings	1585*	Stevens	Human services technical changes.	159	5/13			8/1
949	Abeler	383*	Pappas	Midwifery practice regulation.	162	†5/13			7/1
718*	Ozment	225	Moe	Advanced practice registered nursing regulation.	172	5/17			7/1 (Sec. 1-17); 8/1 (Sec. 18, 19)
1119	Osskopp	1099*	Kiscaden	Nursing assistants educational requirements modified.	210			x	
598	McCollum	369*	Piper	Physician assistants disaster care authority.	226			x	
1426*	Tingelstad	1651	Kiscaden	Health department provisions modified.	247			x	
302*	Dauids	579	Vickerman	Ambulance services shared service purchasing.	13	3/16			8/1
				Higher Education Finance					
492*	Dom	518	Hottinger	Minnesota State University, Mankato authorized to construct the Taylor Center multipurpose facility.	34	4/12			4/13
2380*	Leppik	0	Stumpf	Omnibus higher education finance bill.	214			x	
				Jobs and Economic Development Finance					
2390*	McElroy	2227	Janezich	Omnibus economic development appropriations bill.	223			x	
				Jobs and Economic Development Policy					
1809	Jaros	1554*	Solon	Duluth Seaway Port Authority new name.	68	4/20			8/1
872*	Holsten	682	Novak	Construction contracts environmental liability modifications.	87	4/23			4/24
1178*	McElroy	1253	Novak	Landlords' prelease deposits acceptance regulation.	97	4/26			8/1
877	Wolf	1218*	Scheevel	Re-employment insurance housekeeping changes.	107	4/27			various
585*	Erickson	595	Stevens	Isle School District grant modification.	119	5/4			5/5
1051*	Gunther	971	Kelly, R.C.	Employment and training programs information collection and report.	138	5/10			8/1
1613	Storm	1471*	Murphy	Tenant screening fee limits.	150	5/13			8/1
595*	Holsten	365	Novak	Above ground storage tank reimbursements authorized.	203			x	
1910	Gunther	1821*	Higgins	Housing program provisions modified.	211			x	
420*	Haas	321	Scheid	Brooklyn Park housing improvement area authority modified.	246			x	
				K-12 Education Finance					
2333*	Seagren	2242	Pogemiller	Omnibus K-12 education policy and appropriations bill.	241			x	
				Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs					
133*	Stanek	107	Novak	Minneapolis and St. Paul residency requirements repealed.	3	3/4			3/5
49*	Ozment	162	Kelly, R.C.	Peace officers or firefighters killed in line of duty spouse health insurance coverage.	12	3/16			3/17
453*	Haake	416	Higgins	Minneapolis skilled workers and apprentices deferred compensation plan participation.	15	3/18			3/19
525*	Westerberg	404	Runbeck	Anoka County dangerous dog registration system administration responsibility.	48	4/15			upon local compliance
908	Dawkins	465*	Pappas	County recorders minimum security deposits requirement authority.	69	4/20			8/1
182	Buesgens	257*	Robling	Statutory cities special elections to fill office vacancies.	75	4/20			8/1
1097	Kuisle	1188*	Kelley, S.P.	Uniform municipal contracting law dollar limit increases.	82		4/22		
627*	Larsen, P.	616	Price	Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority commissioners term modification.	89	4/23			upon local compliance
896	Larsen, P.	854*	Langseth	Counties, cities, or towns lawful land uses termination prohibition.	96	4/23			4/24
1538	Vandever	1463*	Krentz	Towns capital reserve funds.	113	5/3			8/1

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HF	Author	SF	Author	Bill Title					
673	Solberg	1012*	Lessard	Itasca County road and bridge money authority.	115	5/3			upon local approval
258	Munger	376*	Solon	Certain sanitary districts' board members per diems increased.	145	5/11			8/1
371*	Stang	461	Fischbach	Senior center, youth center, and historical work appropriations approval requirements.	155	5/13			8/1
66	Johnson	9*	Betzold	Police civil service commissions abolishment by city council vote.	165	5/13			5/14
751	Trimble	768*	Pappas	Ramsey County personnel process modification.	173	5/17			8/1
526	Mullery	615*	Higgins	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board employees provisions modified.	174	5/18			upon local compliance (Sec. 1);
									5/19 (Sec. 2)
1140	Leighton	1329*	Vickerman	Cities amusement machines license fee limit; violent video games display restrictions.	179	5/19			8/1
805	Leighton	556*	Piper	Municipal power agencies liability provisions modifications.	183	5/19			8/1
777	Rest	851*	Vickerman	Local government units corporations expiration date elimination.	186			x	
1348	Holberg	891*	Hottinger	Local government units snow and ice accumulations tort liability exemption clarification.	188			x	
879	Knobloch	1636*	Stumpf	Local units of government regulatory relief provided.	193			x	
625	Solberg	746*	Lessard	Grand Rapids Township authorized to hold November elections.	195			x	
1286	Kahn	1976*	Higgins	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board authorized to distribute and sell electric power.	198			x	
1015*	Abrams	1064	Pogemiller	Election redistricting provided.	237			x	
475*	Stang	517	Vickerman	Town officers or employees criminal charges defense costs reimbursement.	30	4/1			4/2
174*	Stang	156	Fischbach	Paynesville area hospital district Richmond annexation authority.	147	5/11			5/12
1544	Hausman	1609*	Wiger	Local goverment units joint contracts joint powers agreement requirements exemption.	167		5/17		
				Rules and Legislative Administration					
2441	Seifert, J.	2224*	Ranum	Revisor's bill.	249			x	
				State Government Finance					
2386	Krinkie	2223*	Price	Omnibus state departments appropriations bill.	242			x	
878*	Bishop	1464	Cohen	Omnibus state departments appropriations bill.	250			x	
				Taxes					
379*	Erhardt	381	Pappas	Mortgage registry and deed taxes technical corrections and administrative changes.	31	4/1			7/1
1*	Abrams	106	Johnson, D.J.	Agricultural assistance and tax relief.	112	4/21†			4/24
1024*	Abrams	1424	Pogemiller	Bonding authority allocation provisions modifications.	189			x	
2420*	Abrams	1276	Johnson, D.J.	Omnibus tax bill.	243			x	
2127	Abrams	1876*	Pogemiller	Public debt use limitations and conditions modified.	248			x	
				Transportation Finance					
2387*	Molnau	2217	Johnson, J.B.	Omnibus transportation appropriations bill.	238			x	
157*	Kuisle	379	Scheevel	Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Highway route modification.	16	3/18			3/19
165	Stang	460*	Fischbach	Special disability license plates for modified motor vehicles.	25	3/29			8/1
1305*	Svigum	1280	Day	Kenyon Trunk Highway #56 relocation easements transfer.	29	4/1			upon local approval
766*	Broecker	739	Murphy	Motorcycle blue lights display.	35	4/12			4/13
1986	Nornes	1888*	Larson	Otter Tail veterans memorial drive designation.	42	4/12			8/1
1265	Workman	1150*	Johnson, J.B.	Rural residential districts speed limit.	44	4/12			8/1
1507	Skoe	1600*	Flynn	Motor vehicle registration requirements modified.	70	4/20			8/1
528*	Westrom	1259	Murphy	Underground fuel storage tanks specifications requirements.	88	4/23			8/1
1046	Workman	1324*	Wiger	Commercial motor vehicle disqualification and violations modifications.	93	4/23			4/1
1161	Dempsey	480*	Murphy	Port authorities revenue retention.	114	5/3			8/1
790	Kuisle	778*	Sams	Vehicles' security interests release time reduced.	131	5/7			5/8 (Sec. 2); 8/1 (Sec. 1)
1641	Juhnke	1645*	Johnson, D.E.	Milk transporters seasonal highway weight restrictions exenmption.	154	5/13			5/14 (Sec. 2, 3); 8/1 (Sec. 1, 4)
7*	Haake	142	Metzen	Metropolitan area motor vehicle emission control inspection program termination.	178	5/18			3/1/00 (Sec. 10);various
1551	Workman	1762*	Flynn	Transportation and highway provisions modified.	230			x	
				Ways and Means					
None	Bishop	2234*	Cohen	State departments deficiency appropriations.	141	5/11			5/12
2221	Ozment	2052*	Kelly, R.C.	Payment of claims against the state: Lake Willis elevation control determination.	169	5/17			5/18

Minnesota House of Representatives 1999 Members

District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-	District/Member/Party			Phone (651) 296-
		Room*				Room*	
49A	Abeler, Jim (R)	581	1729	33A	Lindner, Arlon (R)	417	7806
45A	Abrams, Ron (R)	585	9934	47A	Luther, Darlene (DFL)	371	3751
19B	Anderson, Bruce (R)	411	5063	67A	Mahoney, Tim (DFL)	223	4277
3A	Anderson, Irv (DFL)	343	4936	55A	Mares, Harry (R)	401	5363
6A	Bakk, Thomas (Tom) (DFL)	345	2190	65B	Mariani, Carlos (DFL)	209	9714
59A	Biernat, Len (DFL)	303	4219	57B	Marko, Sharon (DFL)	221	3135
30B	Bishop, Dave (R)	453	0573	55B	McCollum, Betty (DFL)	239	1188
25B	Boudreau, Lynda (R)	473	8237	36B	McElroy, Dan (R)	437	4212
30A	Bradley, Fran (R)	559	9249	54A	McGuire, Mary Jo (DFL)	259	4342
53B	Broecker, Sherry (R)	533	7153	39B	Milbert, Bob (DFL)	243	4192
35B	Buesgens, Mark (R)	415	1072	35A	Molnau, Carol L. (R)	443	8872
46B	Carlson, Lyndon R. (DFL)	279	4255	21B	Mulder, Richard (R)	515	4336
47B	Carruthers, Phil (DFL)	217	3709	58A	Mullery, Joe (DFL)	387	4262
10B	Cassell, George (R)	421	4317	7A	Munger, Willard (DFL)	283	4282
52A	Chaudhary, Satveer (DFL)	311	4331	8A	Murphy, Mary (DFL)	357	2676
23A	Clark, James T. (R)	583	9303	20A	Ness, Robert "Bob" (R)	509	4344
61A	Clark, Karen (DFL)	307	0294	10A	Nornes, Bud (R)	471	4946
11A	Daggett, Roxann (R)	439	4293	19A	Olson, Mark (R)	501	4237
31B	Davids, Gregory M. (R)	367	9278	16A	Opatz, Joe (DFL)	281	6612
65A	Dawkins, Andy (DFL)	215	5158	60B	Orfield, Myron (DFL)	377	9281
14A	Dehler, Steve (R)	491	7808	29B	Osskopp, Mike (R)	449	9236
29A	Dempsey, Jerry (R)	549	8635	66A	Osthoff, Tom (DFL)	273	4224
27A	Dorman, Dan (R)	579	8216	11B	Otremba, Mary Ellen (DFL)	393	3201
24A	Dorn, John (DFL)	201	3248	37A	Ozment, Dennis (R)	479	4306
64A	Entenza, Matt (DFL)	213	8799	42B	Paulsen, Erik (R)	445	7449
42A	Erhardt, Ron (R)	591	4363	38B	Pawlenty, Tim (R)	459	4128
17A	Erickson, Sondra (R)	407	6746	64B	Paymar, Michael (DFL)	331	4199
1B	Finseth, Tim (R)	517	9918	32A	Pelowski Jr., Gene (DFL)	295	8637
44A	Folliard, Betty (DFL)	211	3964	13B	Peterson, Doug (DFL)	287	4228
4A	Fuller, Doug (R)	525	5516	39A	Pugh, Thomas W. (DFL)	267	6828
36A	Gerlach, Chris (R)	531	5506	46A	Rest, Ann H. (DFL)	277	4176
63B	Gleason, Mark S. (DFL)	313	5375	28A	Reuter, Doug (R)	507	5368
9A	Goodno, Kevin (R)	563	5515	44B	Rhodes, Jim (R)	409	9889
58B	Gray, Gregory (DFL)	229	8659	32B	Rifenberg, Michelle (R)	423	1069
62A	Greenfield, Lee (DFL)	207	0173	18A	Rostberg, Jim (R)	545	5364
54B	Greiling, Mindy (DFL)	253	5387	5A	Rukavina, Tom (DFL)	375	0170
26A	Gunther, Bob (R)	379	3240	17B	Schumacher, Leslie J. (DFL)	327	5377
52B	Haake, Barb (R)	429	0141	41A	Seagren, Alice (R)	477	7803
48A	Haas, Bill (R)	569	5513	57A	Seifert, Jim (R)	577	7807
50A	Hackbarth, Tom (R)	575	2439	21A	Seifert, Marty (R)	593	5374
22B	Harder, Elaine (R)	487	5373	2B	Skoe, Rod (DFL)	321	4265
12A	Hasskamp, Kris (DFL)	353	4333	62B	Skoglund, Wes (DFL)	251	4330
66B	Hausman, Alice (DFL)	245	3824	34A	Smith, Steve (R)	503	9188
8B	Hilty, Bill (DFL)	241	4308	3B	Solberg, Loren A. (DFL)	309	2365
37B	Holberg, Mary Liz (R)	433	6926	33B	Stanek, Rich (R)	543	5502
56A	Holsten, Mark William (R)	381	3018	14B	Stang, Doug (R)	597	4373
4B	Howes, Larry (R)	431	2451	24B	Storm, Julie (R)	527	7065
6B	Huntley, Thomas (DFL)	351	2228	28B	Sviggum, Steve (R)	463	2273
7B	Jaros, Mike (DFL)	291	4246	23B	Swenson, Howard (R)	539	8634
18B	Jennings, Loren Geo (DFL)	237	0518	43B	Sykora, Barb (R)	403	4315
48B	Johnson, Alice M. (DFL)	349	5510	50B	Tingelstad, Kathy (R)	567	5369
15A	Juhnke, Al (DFL)	329	6206	5B	Tomassoni, David J. (DFL)	233	0172
59B	Kahn, Phyllis (DFL)	255	4257	67B	Trimble, Steve (DFL)	289	4201
26B	Kalis, Henry J. (DFL)	317	4240	25A	Tuma, John (R)	369	4229
60A	Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (DFL)	231	0171	1A	Tunheim, Jim (DFL)	335	9635
20B	Kielkucki, Tony (R)	521	1534	34B	Van Dellen, Henry Todd (R)	571	5511
16B	Knobloch, Jim (R)	451	6316	51B	Vandever, Ray (R)	529	4124
49B	Koskinen, Luanne (DFL)	301	4231	63A	Wagenius, Jean (DFL)	227	4200
53A	Krinkie, Philip (R)	365	2907	61B	Wejcman, Linda (DFL)	203	7152
15B	Kubly, Gary W. (DFL)	315	4346	12B	Wenzel, Stephen G. (DFL)	389	4247
31A	Kuisle, William (R)	565	4378	51A	Westerberg, Andrew (R)	523	4226
56B	Larsen, Peg (R)	551	4244	9B	Westfall, Robert L. (Bob) (R)	553	6829
40A	Larson, Dan (DFL)	225	7158	13A	Westrom, Torrey (R)	557	4929
27B	Leighton, Rob (DFL)	261	4193	38A	Wilkin, Tim (R)	413	3533
40B	Lenczewski, Ann (DFL)	337	4218	22A	Winter, Ted (DFL)	247	5505
45B	Leppik, Peggy (R)	485	7026	41B	Wolf, Ken (R)	359	5185
2A	Lieder, Bernie L. (DFL)	323	5091	43A	Workman, Tom (R)	537	5066

Note: Room numbers are subject to change.

List as of April 15, 1999

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

Minnesota Senate 1999 Members

District/Member/Party	Room*	Phone (651) 296-	District/Member/Party	Room*	Phone (651) 296-
66 Anderson, Ellen (R). (DFL)	G-24 Cap.	5537	8 Lourey, Becky (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	0293
41 Belanger Jr., William V. (R)	113 SOB	5975	54 Marty, John (DFL)	326 Cap.	5645
13 Berg, Charles A. (IND.)	G-51 SOB	5094	39 Metzen, James P. (DFL)	303 Cap.	4370
61 Berglin, Linda (DFL)	309 Cap.	4261	2 Moe, Roger D. (DFL)	208 Cap.	2577
48 Betzold, Don (DFL)	306 Cap.	2556	29 Murphy, Steve (DFL)	301 Cap.	4264
64 Cohen, Richard J. (DFL)	317 Cap.	5931	25 Neuville, Thomas M. (R)	123 SOB	1279
28 Day, Dick (R)	147 SOB	9457	52 Novak, Steven G. (DFL)	322 Cap.	4334
20 Dille, Steve (R)	103 SOB	4131	43 Oliver, Edward C. (R)	121 SOB	4837
14 Fischbach, Michelle L. (R)	15 SOB	2084	34 Olson, Gen (R)	119 SOB	1282
62 Flynn, Carol (DFL)	120 Cap.	4274	19 Ourada, Mark (R)	145 SOB	5981
49 Foley, Leo (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	4154	65 Pappas, Sandra L. (DFL)	120 Cap.	1802
23 Frederickson, Dennis (R). (R)	139 SOB	8138	37 Pariseau, Pat (R)	109 SOB	5252
50 Hanson, Paula E. (DFL)	328 Cap.	3219	27 Piper, Pat (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	9248
58 Higgins, Linda I. (DFL)	227 Cap.	9246	59 Pogemiller, Lawrence J. (DFL)	235 Cap.	7809
24 Hottinger, John C. (DFL)	120 Cap.	6153	57 Price, Leonard (R). (DFL)	235 Cap.	297-8060
5 Janezich, Jerry (R). (DFL)	328 Cap.	8017	63 Ranum, Jane B. (DFL)	306 Cap.	297-8061
40 Johnson, Dave (DFL)	111 Cap.	9261	45 Robertson, Martha (R). (R)	125 SOB	4314
15 Johnson, Dean E. (R)	117SOB	3826	35 Robling, Claire A. (R)	151 SOB	4123
6 Johnson, Douglas J. (DFL)	205 Cap.	8881	53 Runbeck, Linda (R)	107 SOB	1253
18 Johnson, Janet B. (DFL)	G-9 Cap.	5419	11 Sams, Dallas C. (DFL)	328 Cap.	297-8063
46 Junge, Ember (R). (DFL)	205 Cap.	2889	12 Samuelson, Don (DFL)	124 Cap.	4875
44 Kelley, Steve (DFL)	321 Cap.	297-8065	31 Scheevel, Kenric J. (R)	129 SOB	3903
67 Kelly, Randy C. (DFL)	323 Cap.	5285	47 Scheid, Linda (DFL)	317 Cap.	8869
32 Kierlin, Bob (R)	127 SOB	5649	7 Solon, Sam G. (DFL)	303 Cap.	4188
30 Kiscaden, Sheila M. (R)	135 SOB	4848	60 Spear, Allan H. (DFL)	120 Cap.	4191
16 Kleis, Dave (R)	143 SOB	6455	17 Stevens, Dan (R)	105 SOB	8075
36 Knutson, David L. (R)	133 SOB	4120	1 Stumpf, LeRoy A. (DFL)	G-24 Cap.	8660
51 Krentz, Jane (DFL)	235 Cap.	7061	4 Ten Eyck, David J. (DFL)	G-24F Cap.	4913
56 Laidig, Gary W. (R)	141 SOB	4351	42 Terwilliger, Roy (R)	115 SOB	6238
9 Langseth, Keith (DFL)	122 Cap.	3205	22 Vickerman, Jim (DFL)	226 Cap.	5650
10 Larson, Cal (R)	153 SOB	5655	38 Wiener, Deanna L. (DFL)	303 Cap.	297-8073
21 Lesewski, Arlene J. (R)	131 SOB	4125	55 Wiger, Charles W. (DFL)	325 Cap.	6820
3 Lessard, Bob (DFL)	111 Cap.	4136	26 Ziegler, Don (R)	149 SOB	5713
33 Limmer, Warren (R)	25 SOB	2159			

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

Minnesota House and Senate Membership

1 A • Rep. Jim Tunheim-DFL B • Rep. Tim Finseth-R Sen. LeRoy A. Stumpf-DFL	15 A • Rep. Al Juhnke-DFL B • Rep. Gary W. Kubly-DFL Sen. Dean E. Johnson-R	29 A • Rep. Jerry Dempsey-R B • Rep. Mike Osskopp-R Sen. Steve Murphy-DFL	43 A • Rep. Tom Workman-R B • Rep. Barb Sykora-R Sen. Edward C. Oliver-R	57 A • Rep. Jim Seifert-R B • Rep. Sharon Marko-DFL Sen. Leonard R. Price-DFL
2 A • Rep. Bernie L. Lieder-DFL B • Rep. Rod Skoe-DFL Sen. Roger D. Moe-DFL	16 A • Rep. Joe Opatz-DFL B • Rep. Jim Knoblach-R Sen. Dave Kleis-R	30 A • Rep. Fran Bradley-R B • Rep. Dave Bishop-R Sen. Sheila M. Kiscaden-R	44 A • Rep. Betty Foliard-DFL B • Rep. Jim Rhodes-R Sen. Steve Kelley-DFL	58 A • Rep. Joe Mullery-DFL B • Rep. Gregory Gray-DFL Sen. Linda I. Higgins-DFL
3 A • Rep. Irv Anderson-DFL B • Rep. Loren A. Solberg-DFL Sen. Bob Lessard-DFL	17 A • Rep. Sondra Erickson-R B • Rep. Leslie J. Schumacher-DFL Sen. Dan Stevens-R	31 A • Rep. William Kuisle-R B • Rep. Gregory M. Davids-R Sen. Kenric J. Scheevel-R	45 A • Rep. Ron Abrams-R B • Rep. Peggy Leppik-R Sen. Martha R. Robertson-R	59 A • Rep. Len Biernat-DFL B • Rep. Phyllis Kahn-DFL Sen. Lawrence J. Pogemiller-DFL
4 A • Rep. Doug Fuller-R B • Rep. Larry Howes-R Sen. David J. Ten Eyck-DFL	18 A • Rep. Jim Rostberg-R B • Rep. Loren Geo Jennings-DFL Sen. Janet B. Johnson-DFL	32 A • Rep. Gene Pelowski Jr.-DFL B • Rep. Michelle Rifenberg-R Sen. Bob Kierlin-R	46 A • Rep. Ann H. Rest-DFL B • Rep. Lyndon R. Carlson-DFL Sen. Ember R. Junge-DFL	60 A • Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher-DFL B • Rep. Myron Orfield-DFL Sen. Allan H. Spear-DFL
5 A • Rep. Tom Rukavina-DFL B • Rep. David J. Tomassoni-DFL Sen. Jerry R. Janezich-DFL	19 A • Rep. Mark Olson-R B • Rep. Bruce Anderson-R Sen. Mark Ourada-R	33 A • Rep. Arlon Lindner-R B • Rep. Rich Stanek-R Sen. Warren Limmer-R	47 A • Rep. Darlene Luther-DFL B • Rep. Phil Carruthers-DFL Sen. Linda Scheid-DFL	61 A • Rep. Karen Clark-DFL B • Rep. Linda Wejcman-DFL Sen. Linda Berglin-DFL
6 A • Rep. Thomas (Tom) Balk-DFL B • Rep. Thomas Huntley-DFL Sen. Douglas J. Johnson-DFL	20 A • Rep. Robert "Bob" Ness-R B • Rep. Tony Kielucki-R Sen. Steve Dille-R	34 A • Rep. Steve Smith-R B • Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen-R Sen. Gen Olson-R	48 A • Rep. Bill Haas-R B • Rep. Alice M. Johnson-DFL Sen. Don Betzold-DFL	62 A • Rep. Lee Greenfield-DFL B • Rep. Wes Skoglund-DFL Sen. Carol Flynn-DFL
7 A • Rep. Willard Munger-DFL B • Rep. Mike Jorgensen-DFL Sen. Sam G. Solon-DFL	21 A • Rep. Marty Seifert-R B • Rep. Richard Mulder-R Sen. Arlene J. Lesewski-R	35 A • Rep. Carol L. Molnau-R B • Rep. Mark Buesgens-R Sen. Claire A. Robling-R	49 A • Rep. Jim Abeler-R B • Rep. Luanne Koskinen-DFL Sen. Leo Foley-DFL	63 A • Rep. Jean Wagenius-DFL B • Rep. Mark S. Gleason-DFL Sen. Jane B. Ranum-DFL
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9 A • Rep. Kevin Goodno-R B • Rep. Robert L. (Bob) Westfall-R Sen. Keith Langseth-DFL	23 A • Rep. James T. Clark-R B • Rep. Howard Swenson-R Sen. Dennis R. Frederickson-R	37 A • Rep. Dennis Ozment-R B • Rep. Mary Liz Holberg-R Sen. Pat Pariseau-R	51 A • Rep. Andrew Westberg-R B • Rep. Ray Vandever-R Sen. Jane Krentz-DFL	65 A • Rep. Andy Dawkins-DFL B • Rep. Carlos Mariani-DFL Sen. Sandra L. Pappas-DFL
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13 A • Rep. Torrey Westrom-R B • Rep. Doug Peterson-DFL Sen. Charles A. Berg-IND.	27 A • Rep. Dan Dorman-R B • Rep. Rob Leighton-DFL Sen. Pat Piper-DFL	41 A • Rep. Alice Seagren-R B • Rep. Ken Wolf-R Sen. William V. Belanger Jr.-R	55 A • Rep. Harry Mares-R B • Rep. Betty McCollum-DFL Sen. Charles W. Wiger-DFL	
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Bill Introductions

HF2451-HF2475

Friday, May 14

HF2451—Davids (R) Commerce

Telephone company depreciation range systems established.

HF2452—Pelowski (DFL) Higher Education Finance

Higher Education Services Office abolished; post-secondary student services office established in the Department of Children, Families, and Learning; duties transferred; and money appropriated.

HF2453—Westrom (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Rural economic development provided and urban sprawl contained.

HF2454—Carruthers (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

State deferred compensation plan participants authorized to designate qualified trusts as beneficiaries.

HF2455—Mulder (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Floodwaters; drainage authority project approval restricted.

HF2456—Kahn (DFL) Transportation Policy

Persons under age 10 required to wear helmets when riding or being carried on a bicycle, and penalties imposed for parents who knowingly permit a violation.

HF2457—Haas (R) Higher Education Finance

North Hennepin Community College building remodeling and addition provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2458—Abrams (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Omnibus tax bill passage deadline provided.

HF2459—Kalis (DFL) Transportation Finance

Faribault County transit system assistance provided and money appropriated.

HF2460—Carruthers (DFL) Crime Prevention

Adult court jurisdiction over juvenile nonfelony level traffic offenders provided.

HF2461—Kahn (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy

Tobacco advertisements and promotions prohibited in areas frequented by youth, workplace smoking prohibited, multitenant building smoke-free areas provided, cigarette littering expanded, and penalties imposed.

HF2462—Pelowski (DFL) Transportation Policy

Railroad eminent domain powers limited.

Saturday, May 15

HF2463—Carruthers (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Electronic government services and funding reviewed for the purpose of promoting public access.

HF2464—Olson (R) Commerce

Health care provider discriminatory charges for goods and services prohibited.

HF2465—Hackbarth (R) Civil Law

Educational agencies and institutions required to provide student data to military recruitment officers, and parental and student right to refuse release notice provided.

HF2466—Orfield (DFL) Civil Law

Uniform unclaimed property act of 1995 adopted.

HF2467—Mares (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

High three-year average salary used to compute judges' retirement benefits, member and employer contribution rates increased, early retirement penalties reduced, and increased benefit maximums provided.

HF2468—Harder (R) Taxes

Homestead status provided for trustee-owned qualified property.

Monday, May 17

HF2469—Dawkins (DFL) Civil Law

Uniform status of children of assisted conception act adopted.

**HF2470—Seifert, M. (R)
Rules & Legislative Administration**
Constitutional Convention; Congress memorialized to void all previous applications by the Minnesota legislature to call a convention for the purpose of amending the Constitution.

HF2471—Daggett (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Staggered four-year terms of office provided for representatives and senators, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF2472—Westerberg (R) Transportation Finance

Trunk highway Nos. 10, 65, and I-35W construction, expansion, and improvement provided; and money appropriated.

HF2473—Harder (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Staggered four-year terms of office provided for representatives and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF2474—Anderson, B. (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Community-based planning provisions repealed.

HF2475—Erickson (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

English designated as the official language of the state of Minnesota.

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol
(651) 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.

Order a free copy of *New Laws 1999*

Complete this form to receive your copy of *New Laws 1999*, a publication describing the new laws passed this year. The publication will provide brief, easy-to-read summaries of the bills that were passed by both the House and Senate and signed or vetoed by the governor. *New Laws 1999* will be available a few months after the session ends. Copies will be mailed without charge to those who order them.

Do you want to receive a copy of *New Laws 1999*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please place this form (with the mailing label on the back) in an envelope.

Mail it by June 15, 1999, to:

New Laws 1999, House Public Information Office, 175 State Office Building, 100 Constitution Ave.,
St. Paul, MN 55155-1298.



Readership Survey: 1999 *Session Weekly*



Please take a moment to tell us what you think about the *Session Weekly*. Your opinions will help us plan for next year.

1. Where do you live? (Please check one.)

☐ Minneapolis/St. Paul ☐ Greater Minnesota ☐ Twin Cities Suburbs ☐ Other ☐

2. How often do you read the *Session Weekly*? (Please check one.)

☐ Once a month ☐ Twice a month ☐ Three times a month ☐ Every week

3. Which sections of the *Session Weekly* do you most often read? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ Reflections (page 2)
☐ First Reading (page 3)
☐ It's a Fact (page 4)
☐ Highlights

☐ Features
☐ A Closer Look
☐ Committee Schedule
☐ Member Profiles

☐ Governor's Desk
☐ Bill Introductions
☐ Information (i.e., lists)
☐ Minnesota Index

4. Please rate the following aspects of the *Session Weekly* by checking one answer in each set.

Writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Hard to understand	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat understandable	<input type="checkbox"/> Easy to understand
Story Length	<input type="checkbox"/> Too short	<input type="checkbox"/> Too long	<input type="checkbox"/> Just right
Readability (type size)	<input type="checkbox"/> Too small	<input type="checkbox"/> Too large	<input type="checkbox"/> Just right
Photographs	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent
Layout	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent

5. What do you like about the *Session Weekly*? _____

6. Do you have any suggestions for improving the *Session Weekly*? _____



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

Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

1999 Legislative Session

Number of House files introduced during the 1999 session	2,475
In 1997	2,245
Number of Senate files introduced	2,285
In 1997	2,003
Bills passed by both houses and sent to governor	250
Resolutions sent to governor	3
Bills sent to governor in 1997 regular session	251
Resolutions	4
Laws passed in 1997	235
Bills recalled by Senate	1
Bills signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura, as of May 20	172
Resolutions signed	3
Bills allowed to become law without Ventura's signature, as of May 20	4
Full bills vetoed by Ventura, as of May 20	4
Additional bills with line-item vetoes	1
Full bills vetoed by Gov. Arne Carlson, 1997 regular session	15
Total Carlson vetoes	179
Last year without a veto	1978
Vetoes overridden by Legislature this year	1
Year of last successful veto override	1982
Total successful attempts since 1939	5
Total unsuccessful attempts since 1939	24
Number of legislative days used, 1999	67
In 1997	63
Maximum number of legislative days lawmakers can meet in regular session during a biennium	120
Other states that restrict length of legislative sessions	37
Number of standing House committees, 1999	26
Number of additional finance divisions	1
Number of standing House committees, 1997	19
Number of additional finance divisions	12
Number of states with more standing House committees that year	20

Sources: Chief Clerk's Office; House Public Information Office; Legislative Reference Library; *The Book of the States, 1998-99*, Council of State Governments.

For more information



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(651) 296-2314

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House Index Office
(651) 296-6646

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Committee Hotline
(651) 296-9283

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<http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us>

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