

# SESSION WEEKLY

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# SESSION WEEKLY

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## 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by a Board of Regents, as fixed by an act of the 1851 territorial Legislature, the regents' governance cannot be repealed or amended by elected officials.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

**V**ictims 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.

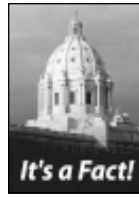
The Crime Prevention Committee approved a bill March 23 that seeks specifically to address the issue of check fraud.

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.

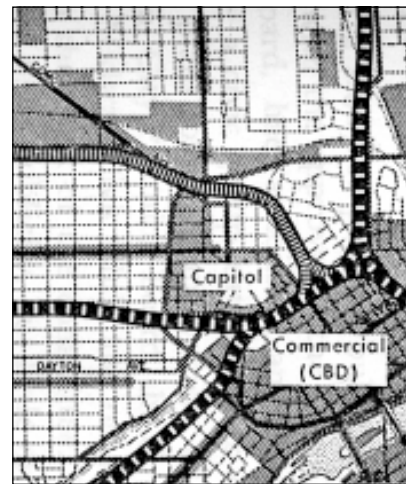
Nonetheless, the city approved the highway department's proposed route in 1947. Herrold retired from his post in 1953, following a 33-year career.

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

(Area code 651)

Administration .....	296-1424
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
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Human Services .....	296-6117
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Transportation .....	296-3000
Veterans Affairs .....	296-2562

**State Information .....** 296-6013

# 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.

**To find out who represents you  
at the Capitol . . .**

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Office at (651) 296-2146**

### 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.

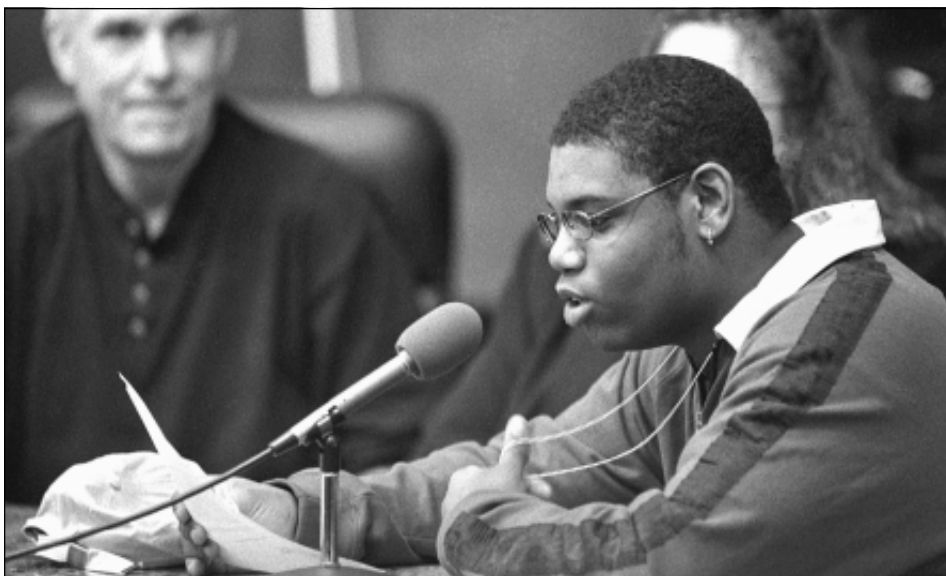
Many of the programs serve men or boys who are fathers of children by teen-age girls, and some also offer education to boys who do not have responsible adult male role models in their lives.

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.

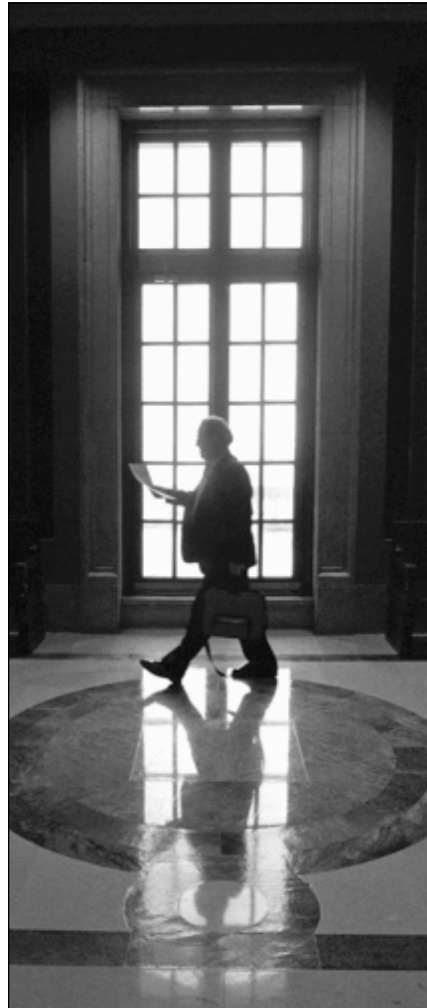
The registry was created by a 1997 law and allows any man who believes he may be the biological father of a child to register with the state Department of Health so he will be notified if his child is put up for adoption.

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."

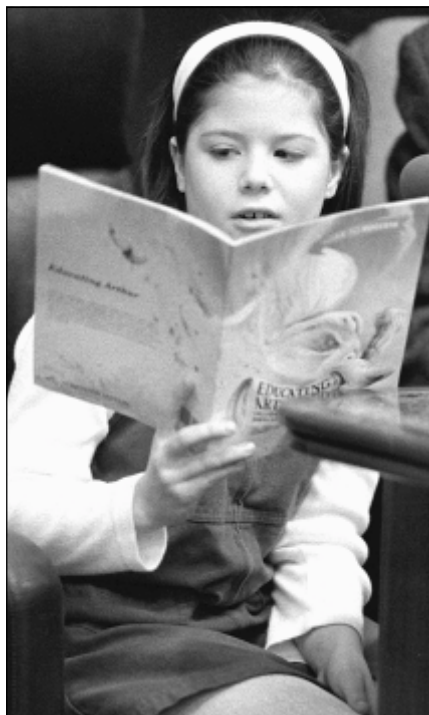
Using a revamped fiscal disparities formula would simply transfer the costs to property-tax payers in other metro counties, added Jim Schug, Washington County Administrator. He suggested the Legislature devise another way to pay uncompensated health care costs.

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.

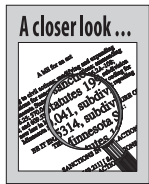
In his 1958 letter, Herrold lamented the disconnect between highway planning and social concerns.

"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.

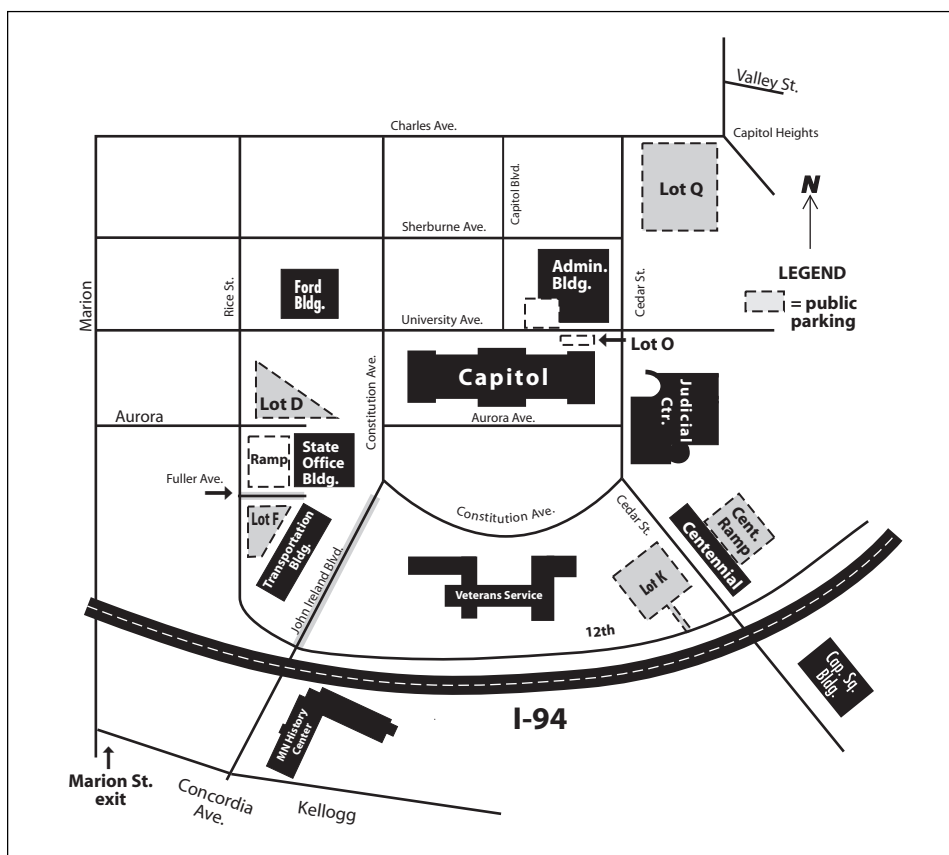
Historical society officials ask that groups of 10 or more call at least two weeks in advance to reserve a tour time.

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:  
(651) 224-6548 v/tty  
To have the daily and weekly schedules  
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[listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us](mailto:listserv@hsched.house.leg.state.mn.us)  
In the body of the message type:  
**subscribe h-schedules**

## 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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### Governor

Jesse Ventura

130 State Capitol

75 Constitution Ave.

St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-3391

### Lieutenant Governor

Mae Schunk

130 State Capitol

75 Constitution Ave.

St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-3391

### Attorney General

Mike Hatch

102 State Capitol

75 Constitution Ave.

St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-6196

### Secretary of State

Mary Kiffmeyer

180 State Office Building

100 Constitution Ave.

St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-2803

### State Auditor

Judith H. Dutcher

Suite 400

525 Park St.

St. Paul 55103 ..... (651) 296-2551

### State Treasurer

Carol Johnson

303 Administration Building

50 Sherburne Ave.

St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-7091

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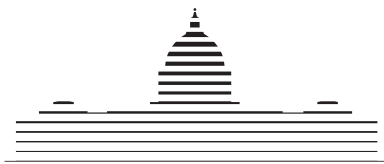
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Speaker of the House: Steve Sviggum  
Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty  
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

## 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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