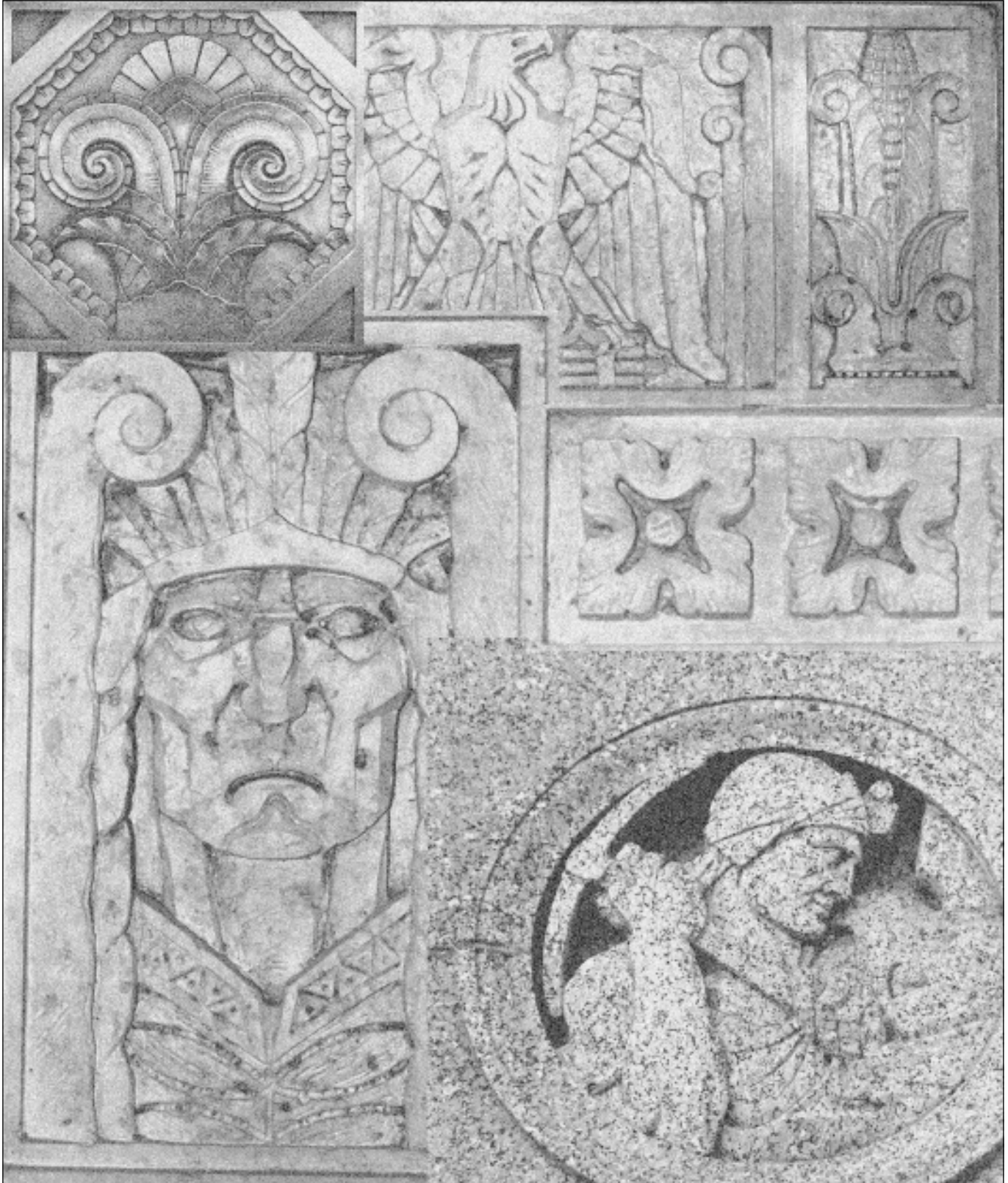


SESSION WEEKLY

A Nonpartisan Publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives ♦ February 19, 1999 ♦ Volume 16, Number 7



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SESSION WEEKLY

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Reflections

Across the street and to the west of the Capitol is the State Office Building. The office building, or S.O.B. as it is fondly called, is home to House members and staff, the Office of the Revisor of Statutes, and the Legislative Reference Library.

It also houses one independent senator, all Republican senators and staff, senate media services, the secretary of state's office, various legislative commissions, a barber shop, and a cafeteria. All in all, some 630 people work in the building on a daily basis.

On a weekly basis, another 700 to 800 lobbyists, interested individuals, committee hearing participants, media, and visiting constituents can be added to the total number who pass through the busy hallways and offices.

The S.O.B. was erected in 1932 and housed state departments and commissions. Construction began under Gov. Theodore Christianson and was completed during Gov. Floyd B. Olson's term. A statue of Olson now keeps a watchful eye on the building from the west lawn of the Capitol.

In 1932 the new building, with its eight Ionic columns and Roman renaissance motif, was designed to match the old Historical Society Building directly across the Capitol lawn. The lobby and hallways were decorated with unique design patterns in the granite, marble, and terrazzo stone. Mostly found above eye-level, they are often overlooked by those who pass through the building.

Like the Capitol, renditions of the state's industry, its agricultural products of wheat and corn, and its first people — the American Indian — are captured here. Outside, two original 12-foot metal lampposts are found at each entrance. Their distinctive design is marked by cascading floral petals, now colored green with age.

When House members moved offices from the Capitol to the S.O.B. in the early 1970s, gaining more space was a major improvement. From 1905 until 1969, the only work space and area for receiving constituents was at members' desks in the House chamber or in small cubicles located throughout the Capitol building.

In 1986, the S.O.B. was remodeled to provide more House offices and space for nonpartisan and other state offices. Designs in the entrances and hallways were preserved, including the brass doors and copper additions throughout the nine floors of the edifice. But gone is the atrium that graced the center of the structure. The former open area has been replaced with new offices and conference rooms.

Also during the renovation, a top floor was added to the building for the revisor of statutes. One floor below, the space above the library reading room is a faint reminder of the indoor open space. Here, some of the original windows have been added.

Overall, the emblems displayed throughout the State Office Building are guideposts. They link Minnesotans to the past as people pass through to connect with state government.

—LeClair Grier Lambert

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On the cover: Emblems carved in stone and etched in metal around the main entrance and lobby of the State Office Building, built in 1932, depict the flora, industry, and first people of Minnesota.

—Photomontage by Tom Olmscheid

First Reading

High-speed pursuit . . .

Lawmakers aim to guard public from dangerous chases

By Grant Martin

In the first morning hours following last Thanksgiving, Steven Winkel, 27, and Jeffrey Carlson, 23, not satisfied by their earlier feasts, were craving White Castle sandwiches. So they decided to take Winkel's Ford pickup to get a late-night snack.

As Winkel drove through a south Minneapolis intersection, two police officers pursuing a possible burglary suspect ran through a stop sign and rammed their squad car into the side of Winkel's truck. The impact of the crash sent both vehicles onto a residential lawn.

Carlson died in the ambulance on the way to the hospital, and Winkel died in the hospital eight days after the crash. Neither officer in the squad car was seriously injured.

The officers, who were trying to catch up to

done to make sure that what happened to her son does not happen to others. She said that officers need to be provided the tools to do their job safely.

"We need them to serve and protect the public, not to maim and kill innocent bystanders," she said.

Bill sponsor Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), a Minneapolis police officer, told the committee that his bill came as a result of collaboration between several law enforcement organizations.

Stanek said that his bill strikes a balance between vigorous law enforcement and ensuring the public's safety by stressing "continuous and effective" training for officers.

Stanek's bill addresses several issues involving police pursuits, including mandating

powerful cars and that they aren't prepared to get behind the wheel of the powerful squad cars.

Tracy Winkel Johnson, Steven Winkel's sister, also testified in support of the bill. She said that her brother's crash demonstrates the need for more training.

"Maybe if this officer was provided training to handle this pursuit, my brother would be alive with us this Easter," she said.

Stanek's bill would also require the POST board to develop a statewide model pursuit policy. This policy would then be used to develop policies for each local law enforcement agency.

Under current law, local agencies are given wide latitude to establish their own procedures for pursuit.

The bill would also provide funding for technologies that would both train officers and, hopefully, end pursuits more quickly. Toward that goal, the bill would provide funding for driving simulators that would be used to provide realistic pursuit scenarios for officers in training.

Dennis Delmont, a spokesman for the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, said that this provision of the bill would provide cost savings for the proposed training.

"We believe that the simulators, while they cannot replace the training on the track, will provide us the opportunity to train more officers more effectively and with less expense," Delmont said.

The bill would also set up a program to dispense tire deflators to local law enforcement agencies. Sometimes called stop sticks, the devices are placed on the road ahead of the fleeing offender and pop the tires when the car passes over them.

Other technologies are being developed to assist officers in police pursuits. One such device, often called a kill switch, would send an electronic beam that would turn off the engine of the offender.

The bill would also expand a current statute regarding prosecutions and convictions for fleeing a police officer.

In some situations, a person cannot be convicted for both fleeing an officer and for the original act that caused the officer to pursue.

Richard Hodsdon, an assistant Washington County attorney, said that sometimes prosecutors have to choose between one charge and the other.



A bill approved Feb. 18, by the House Crime Prevention Committee seeks to address police pursuits. The bill would mandate additional training for officers, create a statewide pursuit policy, and provide funding for new technologies for both training and actual pursuit.

a suspect in a car six blocks away, did not activate their lights or sirens when going through the intersection.

"The result of this officer's decision cost us our son's life and the life of his best friend Steve," said Jim Winkel, who testified Feb. 18 at a House Crime Prevention Committee hearing.

Winkel's family testified in support of a bill (HF381) that seeks to address problems with police pursuits. The bill, approved by the committee, comes in the wake of several recent deaths resulting from high-speed police chases.

Sue Winkel, Steven Winkel's mother, told the committee that something needs to be

additional training time for officers, creating a statewide pursuit policy, providing new technologies for training and pursuit, and strengthening the current laws against fleeing an officer.

Under the bill, the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board would establish a pursuit training course for police officer cadets. The bill would mandate that each cadet receive at least seven hours of training and that all current officers receive at least eight hours of training every two years.

Jim Winkel said that the current training is not sufficient. He said that people going into law enforcement are used to driving smaller, less



Jim Winkel, his wife, Susan, and daughter, Tracy, left to right, listen as members of the House Crime Prevention Committee discuss a bill Feb. 18 that would require law enforcement officers to receive training in high-speed pursuit driving every two years. Winkel testified about the day his son, Jeff, was killed when his pickup truck was hit by a Minneapolis squad car in high-speed pursuit of a burglary suspect.

"That's not a choice we think prosecutors should have to make," he said.

The bill would expand the law to allow offenders to be convicted and sentenced for both charges.

Although statewide data is not yet available for 1998, the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension does have records for 1997. According to the agency, there were 956 police pursuits in Minnesota in that year. Of those pursuits, 44 percent resulted in property damage to the squad car, the offender's vehicle, or other property. A little over half of the pursuits were initiated because of traffic violations. There were two chase-related fatalities in 1997.

Some critics of police pursuits have argued that because the risk to the public is high, pursuits should only be initiated for felony level offenders, or only for offenders who are dangerous to the public.

Although the bill was being heard in a policy committee rather than a finance committee, several members asked Stanek about the fiscal impact, especially funding for training.

As approved, the bill would also provide a yet-to-be decided amount to reimburse local law enforcement agencies for the cost of the additional training.

Reporting from the floor of the House



You won't find many newspaper editors serving in the House these days, but earlier this century, it wasn't all that uncommon.

Editors at small rural weekly papers were often the owners, business managers, ad salesmen, typesetters, photographers, and janitors. And given the trend for newspapers to be voices of one political party, involvement in government came naturally for some.

Gunnar B. Bjornson owned and operated the *Minneota Mascot* from 1900 to 1944. He was elected to the House terms beginning in 1913 and 1915, representing a district in southeastern Minnesota.

It soon became apparent that one benefit of having a newspaper editor as a legislator was the quality of his communication, in both editorials and personal letters. Reams of such Bjornson papers have been catalogued by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Bjornson, a Republican, took moderate to conservative stands on most issues. He supported the creation of a public utilities commission in the state in 1914, noting the need to protect individual citizens, and he warned about concentrating power in the hands of large cities. He also supported requiring public approval for counties to bond for road projects, decrying a state law that allowed bonding through a simple majority vote of the board of commissioners.

But he was an opponent of the nonpartisan primary, adopted by the state in 1913.

"It plays havoc with all party organization," said Bjornson, who was later to serve as the chair of the Republican State Central Committee. He noted that campaigning began in January for elections in June, then

began again and continued well into the fall.

"This makes for a whole year of campaigning, which is by no means desirable either for the public or the man who has to run for office," he wrote.

Bjornson treaded lightly on legislative issues dealing with newspapers. To the chagrin of staunch First Amendment advocates, he supported a bill that would have regulated newspaper activity in political campaigns.

Specifically, the bill would have made it impossible for newspapers to publish anonymous letters "attacking men running for office."

He termed the proposal "quite proper" and expressed hope that it would eliminate "communications of a spurious nature tending to influence elections."

He supported but would not allow his name to be connected to another bill that would have required publication of personal property tax lists, noting that it promised considerable revenue for some newspapers and created a conflict of interest for him.



Gunnar B. Bjornson


Bjornson was known as a stickler for details and despised typographical errors, both as a lawmaker and editor. On one occasion, he printed in the *Mascot* that a certain Ingibjorg Augustine Hurdal had arrived in the community from Winnipeg, Canada. He inadvertently published the incorrect courtesy title, "Mrs."

He apologized profusely in a subsequent edition, and when he later married Miss Hurdal, some said it was to make good on the error.

Bjornson died in 1959. His passing was memorialized by newspapers around the state, which heralded his contribution to both the political scene and the newspaper world.

Some members expressed concerns about the state paying for training that should be handled by the local government.

Given the tone of the questions in the policy committee, this training provision may raise eyebrows when the bill is heard next in the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Delmont said the Legislature should provide some assistance for the statewide initiative. "We are asking the Legislature to require this," he said. "We are also asking the Legislature to pay for it." 

Highlights



BANKING

Banking in Outing

A bank would be allowed to open a branch office in the small community of Outing, located in southern Cass County, under a bill the House passed Feb. 15. The vote was 122-2.

Current state law prohibits banks from operating in townships, and Outing is an unincorporated town in Crooked Lake Township.

Minnesota's "home office protection law" allows banks to establish branch offices in cities with a population less than 10,000 only with consent from all the banks that have their home office in that city. Banks are also prohibited from getting around that law by opening in townships just outside city limits.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), sponsor of the bill, said First National Bank of Crosby had planned to open an office in Outing, assuming it was a city. And because Outing has its own post office and zip code, many people don't realize that it has never been incorporated, she said.

The bill (**HF248**) now moves to the Senate.



CHILDREN

Rules for kiddie pools

When the north wind is stinging your face, it's hard to think of hot summer days, but members of the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee took on a warm-weather issue Feb. 18.

The committee approved a bill (**HF352**) that would exempt wading pools used at home-based day care businesses from rules designed for large public swimming pools.

Bill sponsor Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) appeared before the committee wearing swimming goggles, and his fellow committee members donned sunglasses of their own.

"This is serious business," Mulder assured the committee.

Diving into his testimony, Mulder explained that recent health department rules lump small, stand-alone wading pools in with larger swimming pools. So in order to comply with law, day care providers must attend a week of training in pool management, chlorinate their wading pool, and pay a \$200 fee.

Mulder said he could find no instances of death or illness linked to wading pool use in day care settings.

The bill has wide support from day care providers who believe the existing law is all wet.

"Children must be able to play in a large enough body of water in the summer to do a lot of pouring, sprinkling, measuring, and seeing what sinks and floats," said day care provider Kathy Baumgart of Coon Rapids. "Please inform the board of health that wading pools are not toilets. We can tell the difference, and certainly so can children."

Baumgart said playing in water is important for developing well-rounded children. She said kids would even take to splashing in the bird bath if no other source is available.

Mulder said the bill doesn't have a fiscal impact because to date no day care provider has paid the fee.

The committee sent the bill ahead to see if it floats before the full House.



CRIME

Firearm fingerprints

Like using fingerprints to know where people have been, police officers can use bullets and bullet casings to track where guns have been.

The National Integrated Ballistics Information Network, the program formerly known as Drugfire, is a database of the individual markings left by particular guns on bullets and bullet casings.

A bill (**HF114**), discussed Feb. 16 by the House Judiciary Finance Committee, would provide funding to the city of Minneapolis and to Hennepin and Ramsey counties for training and operating of the FBI program.

The governor's budget request also includes funding that would go to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension for the program.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), sponsor of the bill, said the FBI program is a huge advance for law enforcement.

"I think Drugfire is like fingerprints in the '80s and DNA in the '90s," he said. "It's a great tool for law enforcement."

Gary Jueckstock, a spokesman for the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, told the committee about a case where the FBI system

was used. Police officers investigating an attempted homicide found the bullet casings from a specific gun. The casings were analyzed and the information kept on file.

Later, when a gun was found on two suspects arrested for an unrelated charge, investigators test-fired the gun and matched the information to the attempted homicide. The suspects were arrested and later convicted.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) said that all guns should be test-fired before they are sold and the identifying marks kept on record for crime tracking purposes.

Bureau of Criminal Apprehension official Frank Dolejsi said Skoglund's suggestion was similar to ideas offered when law enforcement agencies began collecting DNA evidence. But like with DNA, gathering information on all guns would be cost prohibitive.

"It's technically feasible," he said. "But we have to focus our resources on what would be most productive."

The bill may be included as an appropriation in the committee's omnibus finance bill.

Paying the bomb squad

A program that assists local law enforcement agencies with bomb disposal costs would be continued, under a bill considered Feb. 16 by the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Currently, local law enforcement agencies must call on one of four police departments in Minnesota with bomb disposal units when dealing with bombs or other hazardous explosives.

Under an existing program, police departments can seek reimbursements from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety for costs incurred by bringing in these bomb disposal specialists.

The bill (**HF113**) would provide \$120,000 a year for the next biennium to continue to fund the program.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Sherry Broecker (R-Vadnais Heights), may be considered for inclusion in the committee's omnibus finance bill.

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EDUCATION

Tracking teachers

A state depository of information on licensed educators would be created under a bill sponsored by Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie). The plan would allow school districts to access extensive employment histories of job applicants.

The bill (**HF586**) calls for a centralized database operated by the Department of Children, Families and Learning and proposes a standard job application form that would be used by school districts statewide. The House Education Policy Committee considered the bill Feb. 16.

Kielkucki's proposal contains recommendations made by the state Board of Teaching, which conducted a study of the issue under a 1998 directive from the Legislature.

Among the recommendations in the board's report were the standard application form and the details of the database, which would include information on teachers, administrators, superintendents, and charter school directors.

The database would require mandatory reporting from school districts whenever a licensed educator leaves a position for any reason.

Kielkucki said he is backing the bill in response to an incident in his legislative district, where a teacher was hired with an invalid teacher's license.

Various lawmakers' concerns over the bill prompted the committee to delay action on the matter. Many said the bill is too far-reaching.

"It just seems to me that this is an octopus going in every direction," said Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel).

The committee is expected to take up the bill again later this session.

No confirmation needed

A bill that would eliminate the Senate confirmation process for appointees to the state Board of Teaching was approved Feb. 16 by the House Education Policy Committee.

The bill (**HF386**) is sponsored by Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), a former member of the board.

Erickson said the policy of having appointees confirmed by the Senate — a stipulation added in the 1998 omnibus education law — only serves to lengthen the appointment process. Prior to 1998, the appointments, made by the governor, did not require Senate confirmation.

Erickson said the Senate already confirms

many appointments, and the teaching board is the only licensing organization among those groups.

The board is made up of 11 members appointed by the governor, six of whom are classroom teachers. It was created in 1973 to regulate teacher licensing.

Erickson said board members often have to take time away from their regular working schedules for meetings and other board-related duties.

"A Senate confirmation would take another day out of the classroom," Erickson said.

Some lawmakers objected to the proposal, saying that the confirmation process is a check against the executive branch's power of appointment.

But others countered that the process just adds more time to an already lengthy search and application process for prospective board members.

HF386 moves to the House floor.

Milaca bill passes

The House passed a bill Feb. 15 that would retroactively authorize the school district in Milaca to begin the 1998-99 academic year earlier than allowed under state law. The vote was 96-28.

Students in Milaca began their school year Aug. 24, 1998, because the school district plans to start a construction project in May, forcing an early end to the school year.

Some lawmakers questioned why the school district should be allowed to technically break the law.

A 1986 state law mandated that schools could not begin classes before Labor Day. However, a 1997 law allowed school districts to begin classes on the Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday before Labor Day in 1998 and 1999. That law came about because Labor Day fell relatively late in September last year and will do so again this year.

That meant Sept. 2, 1998, was the earliest date districts could legally begin the current school year. (Beginning in the 2000-01 school year, districts will be authorized to start as early as Sept. 1, under another law passed in 1998.)

Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), the bill's sponsor, argued that the Milaca district should not be punished because the construction was approved during a special session of the 1998 Legislature, at which time she did not have the opportunity to offer a bill to take care of the issue.

Others argued that passing the bill could set a precedent for other school districts to disregard the law and seek retroactive approval.

Erickson disagreed.

"This is just a one-time thing," she said.

The bill (**HF58**) moves to the Senate.



ENVIRONMENT

Smart sprinklers

A bill that would help prevent lawns and gardens from receiving redundant watering was approved Feb. 16 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Automatic landscape irrigation systems that operate even when it is raining waste millions of gallons of water, said John Mickman of the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association. Those systems can be equipped with sensors that shut off systems when there is sufficient moisture in the soil, and the bill (**HF564**) would require such sensors to be put on all new systems.

"Water is a scarce resource, and we feel it's in the best interest of the state to prevent the waste of this resource," Mickman said.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), committee chair and sponsor of the bill, said the proposal would not require old systems to be retrofitted with sensors. It would apply only to new systems.

Mickman said the sensors cost less than \$40, and they are made by several different manufacturers.

The bill now moves to the House Commerce Committee.



FAMILY

Treatment for teens

Parents of teen-agers with chemical dependency problems often find their hands are tied when dealing with their children, but a bill approved Feb. 15 by the House Civil Law Committee aims to give them aid.

Under current law, children under the age of 16 can be admitted by their parents to a chemical dependency treatment program, provided that an independent evaluator confirms the need for treatment. However, for minors ages 16 and 17, the treatment must be voluntary.

The bill (**HF183**), sponsored by Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), would make 16- and 17-year-olds subject to the same requirements as children under the age of 16.

"It is highly questionable that a 16- or 17-year-old who is chemically dependent can make this choice by themselves," Buesgens

said at a meeting of the civil law panel Feb. 10.

Jordan resident Cindy Nevins testified in support of the bill. She said that following months of problems with her son, she took him to have an evaluation, and the counselor told her that her son needed treatment.

"In the same breath, she told us our son is 16, and if he chooses not to go, there's nothing we can do," she said.

The bill now goes to the House floor.



GOVERNMENT

Ventura signs first law



The first measure signed into law by Gov. Jesse Ventura addresses a procedural wrinkle caused by the fact that he is a third-party head of state.

Effective Feb. 18, the new law changes the process under which members are appointed to the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board. State law outlines the makeup of the board to avoid having too many members from the same political party. The board responds to questions about campaign finance and economic interest disclosure of candidates for state offices.

Under the old law, two board members had to be former legislators — one from the same political party as the governor and one from a different political party than the governor — and no more than three board members could support the same political party.

But the law had no provisions for how to proceed with appointments when there are no former legislators from the governor's political party, as is the case with Ventura's Reform Party.

The new law avoids the reference to the governor's political party, requiring instead that the board include two former legislators who belong to different parties.

Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park) and Sen. John Marty (DFL-Roseville) sponsored the measure.

HF139*/SF88/CH1



HEALTH

Abortion bypass bill advances

A bill that would establish a system for reporting data about certain minors who receive abortions was approved Feb. 16 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

The bill (**HF377**) would require physicians to report information, including age and race,

about minors who receive abortions after obtaining a judge's permission instead of parental consent. The data would become public.

Under current law, doctors are required to notify parents or guardians at least 48 hours before performing an abortion on a minor. But minors can bypass the parental notification by receiving a judge's permission.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), the bill's sponsor, said there is no good documentation to show how so-called "judicial pass through" is working, how often it is used, or what criteria judges use in granting their permission.

Goodno's bill would establish a reporting form that physicians would have to submit annually. The bill also specifies that the data compiled from the reports would be public.

Jackie Schwietz, a spokeswoman for Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, said that assuring parental participation in the decision to terminate a pregnancy is important. She said her group fears judges may not be taking requests for abortions from minors seriously.

Julie Neeum, who also spoke on behalf Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, told the committee she received judicial bypass to have an abortion at age 17. She said it was simple. She had to write a letter to the judge stating she was mature enough to make that decision and appear in court.

"I was a drug addict, abused alcohol, and practiced unprotected sex," Neeum said. "I obviously wasn't mature. The last thing I needed from society was an abortion."

Opponents of the bill said they are concerned that making such data public could expose doctors to the threat of physical harm, and possibly even death.

Patty Franklin, director of health law for the Minnesota Medical Association, said the data required under the bill would serve no public health purpose and that most of the information requested could already be found from other sources.

She said the bill could lead to harassment of doctors who are "engaging in legal activity" and put judges in harm's way, too.

She echoed a concern raised by Rep. Lee Greenfield (DFL-Mpls), who said that in small towns and counties, public reporting of ethnic background or even age could be sufficient information to identify women individually.

Goodno said the intent of the proposal wasn't to "paint a target" on anyone's back and reiterated his belief in the importance of involving the family in a decision to have an abortion.

The bill moves to the House Civil Law Committee.

Parking during pregnancy

Women with high-risk pregnancies would qualify for handicapped parking privileges, under a bill approved Feb. 16 by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

Rep. Joe Opatz (DFL-St. Cloud) is the chief sponsor of the bill (**HF296**).

For some women who have high-risk pregnancies, walking can be a health hazard. Opatz's bill would extend the handicapped parking privileges to women whose physicians certify that walking would endanger the life of the mother or fetus.

Four students from St. Cloud State University brought the proposal to Opatz as part of a social work class.

Jana Cook, a senior at the school, said the idea came from her own personal experience.

While attending the University of Minnesota, Cook was pregnant and considered at risk by her doctor. She considered asking for a special parking permit, but was discouraged when others told her she wouldn't have much of a chance of getting one.

Current law regarding handicapped parking does not include women with at-risk pregnancies as being physically disabled.

The illegal use of handicapped permits also came up during the hearing. Margot Imdieke Cross from the Minnesota Disability Council said that many who park in Minneapolis have the permits but don't really need them. She said the permits are often stolen, borrowed from family members, or copied.

"There is an immense amount of abuse right now," she said.

Opatz said he is planning to introduce a bill this session to address that issue.

HF296 moves to the House floor.

Donor bill advances

A bill clarifying organ donation procedures in the 1998 health care directive law is on its way to the House floor after a brief delay in the House Civil Law Committee.

The bill (**HF74**) seeks to clear up a common misunderstanding about organ donation.

Bill sponsor Rep. Darlene Luther (DFL-Brooklyn Park) said that while most doctors know that human tissue and eyes are organs, the average person considering donating his or her organs upon death may not always consider that fact.

She said that her bill, approved by the committee Feb. 15, would make a technical change to the health directive law to help clarify any misconceptions.

Under the 1998 law, people can use a health care directive to address all aspects of advanced planning for health care by appointing

an agent to make the person's health care decisions or by making statements about how the person's health care should be handled.

The bill would modify the suggested form for the directive by specifically listing human tissues and eyes, along with other organs already listed on the form.

The suggested directive form allows a person to give the health care agent the power to make decisions regarding health care, including whether the person's organs are donated upon death.

The bill was approved Jan. 19 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee. But when it was first heard by the civil law panel Feb. 8, Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) requested it be laid over because she wanted to make sure the change wouldn't substantially change the donor law.

Specifically, Boudreau said she was worried that the change could open up the possibility that a person making decisions for a patient could donate fetal tissue.

Luther laid her bill over so that Boudreau's questions could be addressed.

When the bill came up again Feb. 15, Boudreau said that she was satisfied that the bill made no substantial changes to the law. And the committee approved the bill.



HIGHER EDUCATION

Four regents elected

The Minnesota Legislature appointed four new members to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents on Feb. 18.

In a joint meeting of the House and Senate, lawmakers approved the slates of regent candidates forwarded to them by a Joint House Education and Senate Children, Families and Learning Committee.

William Hogan II, the current board chairman, was re-elected to a second term, representing the 3rd Congressional District. Hogan had become a finalist for the position, but was voted out in his district caucus. On Feb. 16, the joint committee overruled the caucus and chose Hogan as the district's candidate. A businessman from Eden Prairie, Hogan chaired the audit committee for the Board of Regents.

Another incumbent, William Peterson, was also re-elected. Peterson is the chief financial officer for Minnesota AFL-CIO and won an at-large position on the board. Peterson lives in Eagan and is also a board member of Regions Hospital in St. Paul.

From the 2nd Congressional District, Dallas Bohnsack upset incumbent Julie Bleyhl. Bohnsack won support during the interview-

ing process and secured his caucus's nomination.

Bleyhl was nominated twice during the joint meeting by Reps. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) and Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) in a last-minute plea for more female representation on the board. There are now three women on the 12-member board.

Dr. Anthony Baraga won election to the seat representing the 8th Congressional District. Baraga, from Hibbing, is also new to the board. He is a radiologist and a graduate of the U of M Medical School. He replaces Thomas Reagan, who stepped down after serving since 1990.

Every two years, the Legislature is called upon to elect members to the Board of Regents, which is the governing body of the university. Eight members are elected to represent each of the state's congressional districts, and the remaining are chosen on an at-large basis. One of those at-large seats must be filled by a student in the university system.

Candidates for the board must file an application to be considered by the Regent Candidate Advisory Council. The council, which is made up of community members, selects candidates to interview and then votes to narrow the field to two to four candidates per seat.

Then each congressional district holds a caucus to select one candidate to forward to the joint legislative committee. The committee can nominate additional candidates, and it then votes to choose the final candidate to bring to the full Legislature.

A joint convention of the House and Senate holds the final election, in which names can still be added to the ballot. The person who receives a majority of votes for each open seat is elected a regent.

Baraga, Bohnsack, Hogan, and Peterson will begin their terms immediately.

U of M seeks human capital

Last year, the University of Minnesota focused its legislative efforts on funding capital projects — building construction, facility improvements, and so on. This year, there's a request for a different resource.

"Intellectual capital is basically the commodity of the 21st century," University President Mark Yudof told members of the House Higher Education Finance Committee Feb. 15.

Attracting top-notch research faculty and strengthening undergraduate education programs are two ways university officials hope to raise the school's rank as a research institution. Right now, the university is ranked near the bottom in a list of 30 comparable schools; Yudof would like to see it among the top five.

The university is asking for increases over its base budget totaling \$198.8 million.

Officials have divided the requested funds into five goal areas: improving undergraduate education, financing health professional education, connecting the university to the community, providing quality service, and paying faculty and staff competitive salaries.

In 1998, the Legislature granted the U of M the largest capital appropriation in the school's history for several building projects and classroom improvements.

Yudof said this year's request is somewhat of a consequence of what happened last year in that the university must have the right people to use and take care of the resources granted in the capital budget last year.

The largest share of the U of M's request would go toward a 3-percent raise for faculty and staff members and another package to fund competitive salary increases.

Funding for smaller, discussion-oriented freshman seminars is another part of Yudof's mission. He taught a seminar last fall and would like to see more of them created in order to make the freshman experience less focused on large lecture courses.

"We need to make this undergraduate experience better than it's ever been," he said.

Yudof also said he hopes the Twin Cities campus, to which many students commute, can become a "24-hour community."

"If people enjoy being there, it makes the educational mission so much easier," he said.

In his biennial budget proposal, Gov. Jesse Ventura has recommended about 62 percent of the initiatives proposed by the university.

In addition, the governor has also proposed setting up a \$350 million endowment fund to be managed by the Minnesota Medical Foundation that would finance the U of M's Academic Health Center, which houses the medical school and other health professional programs.

The committee took no action on the matter.

Med school seeks funds

Medical education in Minnesota is in jeopardy if new funding sources are not created, according to Dr. Frank Cerra, senior vice president for health sciences at the University of Minnesota.

Cerra detailed the \$37 million funding request of the university's Academic Health Center at a Feb. 17 meeting of the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Funding for medical education has decreased since revenues slipped following the merger of the university's hospital and Fairview Health Systems two years ago. And faculty are

working 20 percent more to try and make up that revenue, which takes away from research time, Cerra said.

Those factors, combined with a 1997 federal cut in graduate medical education, have created a funding crunch for the university's medical education, which turns out two-thirds of the state's medical professionals.

"It's not really about the University of Minnesota; it's about doctors, nurses, and dentists in your neighborhood," Cerra said.

Cerra and his colleagues told lawmakers that without a revamped system of funding, medical research and education will diminish and ultimately hurt the state's economy.

"How does the system work when nobody wants to pay for education?" said U of M President Mark Yudof.

Several lawmakers offered possible fundraising strategies for the medical school, including raising tuition or asking health insurance companies to contribute educational funding.

Five sources make up the majority of the university's budget for medical education — federal and state funding or grants, student tuition, private practice revenue, and private donations. State funds make up about 17 percent of the Academic Health Center's budget.

Although the governor's proposed budget only allocates \$5 million of the center's \$37 million request, it also includes a proposal for a \$350 million endowment for medical education and research that would be managed by the Minnesota Medical Foundation at the university.

The investment income generated from the endowment, about \$39 million for the 2000-01 biennium, would then go to the Academic Health Center. The governor also proposes a 2009 sunset date for the endowment, upon which the program would be reviewed and the money could be returned to the state.

The governor has also earmarked \$100 million for a medical education and research costs trust fund that would provide support to hospitals that employ medical residents and students participating in research fellowships. It would not fund the U of M's medical school programs.

The committee took no action on the matter.



HOUSING

Housing for kids in need

A bill approved Feb. 18 by the House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee would help provide affordable housing for the increasing number of homeless children and families.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), sponsor of the bill (**HF10**), said a 1997 study found that women outnumbered men in homeless shelters for the first time, and that the number of children was higher than the number of men and women combined.

The bill would address what Pawlenty called the "changing face of homelessness," and the correlation between instability in a child's housing and his or her performance in school.

Specifically, the bill would enable organizations to apply for grants through the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program, which was established by the Legislature in 1993. That program provides grants to counties and nonprofit organizations for efforts to prevent homelessness.

Under Pawlenty's plan, a new project aimed at providing stability for homeless children would be added to the existing program. It would target children who live in homeless shelters or move frequently throughout the school year. The amount of funding has not yet been specified, but it is slated to be discussed by the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.

"This is not a new program. It adds an emphasis to an existing program," Pawlenty said.

While the program will not solve all of the problems of homelessness, it is designed to help break the cycle of homelessness by helping at-risk children achieve more success in school, he added.

The bill now moves to the Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.

Homeless shelters lack space

In November 1998, nearly 800 people were turned away from homeless shelters or transitional housing programs, according to a survey by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. And about one half of those people are children, the survey showed.

The quarterly survey reported the highest number of turnaways since May 1996, and the second highest number since the department began its survey in 1985.

Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls) is sponsoring **HF593**, a bill crafted in response to that increasing number of people turned away because housing facilities are short of room. The bill was considered Feb. 15 by the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee.

The bill would appropriate \$7.3 million over two years for transitional housing programs and \$2 million for the emergency services grant program.

Transitional housing programs provide up

to two years of housing for homeless individuals and families. Participants must pay 25 percent of their housing costs, and the rest is covered by local, state, or federal assistance.

Emergency services grants are used to cover shelters and other services for homeless people and are available to local governments or non-profit organizations. The Legislature appropriated \$300,000 in 1998 for the program, a year after it was created.

Gov. Jesse Ventura has not recommended any funding increases for those programs in his biennial budget. Under his recommendations, the transitional housing program would receive base level funding at \$3.3 million over two years, and emergency services would receive no funding.

"What we keep seeing is an increase in people being turned away from facilities," said Sue Watlov Phillips from the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless.

Phillips said the increase stems from a lack of available affordable housing and not enough jobs that pay a living wage. And without a funding boost, she said, more people will continue to be turned away.

"We know that this program works," said Phillips, who works for a transitional program. "I strongly urge you to support this program."

The committee will reconsider the bill later for inclusion in this year's omnibus finance bill.



HUMAN SERVICES

Helping the homeless

The number of homeless youths in Minnesota, particularly in rural areas, is rising faster than spending for programs to help them.

That's the reason Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover) is sponsoring a bill (**HF218**) that would augment funding for grants to groups that provide safe houses, transitional housing, or independent living assistance services to young people.

The bill was discussed Feb. 17 by the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Since 1994, children have comprised the largest portion of people living in homeless shelters in Minnesota, according to statistics offered by Laura LaCroix, policy advocate for Family and Children's Services of Minneapolis.

"Due to the lack of safe housing options, many youth seek shelter in such places as abandoned buildings, under bridges, stairwells, or couch-hopping," she testified.

She said that with additional funding, programs could be expanded into 35 more counties.

Some lawmakers said they want to ensure



RandiSu Tanem, left, talks about living at Evergreen House in Bemidji while she and her mother, Pam Jorstad, right, worked out their problems. The pair testified before the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Feb. 17 in support of a bill that would provide funding for youth housing programs like Evergreen House.

that reunifying families remains a prominent goal of agencies receiving funding.

LaCroix said every effort is made to do that, but when it fails, other “full continuum” programs are available.

That was good news for 19-year-old Shirriner Moore, a participant in the Project Solo program in Minneapolis. After the death of her mother, she had nowhere to turn and was at-risk for being homeless.

Moore told the committee that at Project Solo she learned valuable life skills and was encouraged to finish her education. Eventually, she succeeded in becoming independent to the point where she was able to bring her younger brother and sister to live with her.

She has also testified on the effectiveness of the program before the U.S. Congress.

Debra Moore-Thomas, who works for Project Solo, said the program serves 500 youths and has a waiting list.

The committee also heard from Bemidji resident Pam Jorstad and her daughter, RandiSu Tanem, who testified that a program called Evergreen House — funded through the agencies targeted in Tingelstad’s bill — was crucial in keeping her from being homeless.

Tanem said that she had found it impossible to live with her mother and sister and spent two weeks at the facility. Counseling offered through Evergreen House eventually allowed the family to reunite.

Several legislators said they wanted to be assured that programs funded in the bill weren’t duplicates of existing services. LaCroix said there are some similar programs, but only the ones funded through the Minnesota

Department of Human Services provide a housing component.

She said the average age of those seeking help is 17. Other programs, some funded through Early Childhood Family Education, are directed toward much younger children.

Tingelstad said approving the bill would allow the state to be proactive in dealing with the homeless youth situation, spending a small amount of money now to avoid paying more for more intensive state services in the future.

The bill could be considered later for inclusion in the omnibus health and human services finance bill.



INSURANCE

Insurance deals questioned

Companies that pay cash for a person’s structured settlement payment from an insurance firm would need court approval for any such transaction, under a bill discussed Feb. 16 by the House Commerce Committee.

Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), the bill’s sponsor, said some people who receive structured settlements — periodic payments from an insurance company instead of a lump sum — sell their rights to those payments without having all the information they need to make a good decision. The practice of buying and selling the rights to those payments, known as a “factoring transaction,” is not regulated, Haas said. And that allows companies to take advantage of people who are not accustomed to making complex financial decisions.

“Not all of these companies are bad,” he

said. “We’re just trying to clean it up so people get a fair shake and know their rights.”

Managing money can be especially difficult for people who receive insurance payments after suffering brain injuries, said David Brackett of Capital Planning Inc., who testified in support of the bill. Brackett said he has specialized in structured settlements since 1981, and he has seen many instances where people have sold their rights to future payments without understanding the consequences.

The bill (**HF478**) would require companies to disclose how the present value of the cash they are offering up front compares to the money the claimant is scheduled to receive over time.

That disclosure would include information on how much the claimant would spend on brokers’ commissions and all other costs and fees.

A transaction could be done only if the court determines it is necessary for the claimant to avoid an “imminent financial hardship” and that it would not cause undue hardship in the future because of the lack of payments. The bill also would require the claimant to receive independent professional advice on the transaction’s legal, tax, and financial implications.

Opponents of the bill say they do not object to regulations, but that some of the bill’s provisions are contradictory.

Robin Shapiro, of the National Association of Settlement Purchasers, questioned how a claimant who has an “imminent financial hardship” could afford to pay for professional advice.

Shapiro also said if disclosure is required by the company offering the factoring transaction, it should also be required of the insurance company that arranges the structured settlement.

The committee is expected to take action on the bill Feb. 23.



LAW

Corporate court reporters

A practice whereby freelance court reporters sign exclusive contracts with companies to provide legal depositions damages the appearance of impartiality, according to supporters of a bill that ban such arrangements.

The bill (**HF346**) was approved Feb. 17 by the House Civil Law Committee.

The contracts are used by large companies, such as insurance firms, that frequently need the services of court reporters. Under such deals, the company agrees to use the court reporter exclusively and the court reporter provides services at a reduced rate. The

practice is used as a way to reduce overall litigation costs.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), would make such contracts illegal and would give judges the authority to invalidate illegal depositions done under such contracts. Under the bill, court reporters could only be retained on a case-by-case basis.

Lori Sorenson, a court reporter who testified in support of the bill, said that a litigant would not want his case tried by a judge who is paid by the other litigant. Likewise, she said, court reporters should not be under contract with one of the litigants.

"It seems equally as ludicrous to put the other neutral participant on the payroll," she said.

Mike Sieben, an attorney and former state representative, also testified in support of the bill. He said that the notion of court reporters "cutting side deals" casts doubt on the impartiality of the reporter.

"It's so important in a deposition that we have a court reporter that is completely neutral and fair, and will take down testimony in an impartial way," he said.

But Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) said he feels the bill is inappropriate. He said that a state Supreme Court advisory committee is currently looking at the court rule which governs court reporters, and that the issue should be handled by the courts, not the Legislature.

"I vigorously support the separation of powers," he said.

The bill now goes to the House floor.



SAFETY

Fireworks bill stalls

A bill that would legalize the sale and possession of some fireworks fell one vote short of approval by the House Commerce Committee on Feb. 16. However, some committee members indicated they would support an amended version of the bill (HF233).

Members on both sides of the issue argued that they are after improved safety.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), sponsor of the proposal, said people already use fireworks in Minnesota. They can be purchased in Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Rukavina's bill would allow people age 18 or older to purchase some fireworks in Minnesota during the week of the Fourth of July, and they would receive written safety guidelines with their purchase.

Rukavina said that injuries occur at a higher rate in states where fireworks are banned. More than 40 percent of fireworks-related accidents



A bill that would make some fireworks legal during the first week of July was rejected Feb. 16 by members of the House Commerce Committee, but lawmakers said the proposal may resurface yet this session.

take place in the 10 states that ban all fireworks, but those 10 states account for only 21 percent of the country's population. And fireworks account for only a small percentage of fires compared to faulty electricity, arson, or playing with matches or lighters, Rukavina said.

Opponents of the bill were not convinced.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) said he narrowly missed a serious injury from a firecracker when he was a baby. Someone had thrown the firecracker from a Ferris wheel, and it landed on the side of the carriage he was in and bounced out. If it had bounced the other way and exploded in his face, he would most likely have been blinded, Ozment said.

"We've had limited injuries (from fireworks) because it is illegal, and because most people obey the law," Ozment said.

Dr. Gary Schwartz testified against the bill on behalf of the Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology and the National Association of State Fire Marshals. Those organizations encourage people to attend public fireworks displays instead of using personal fireworks, he said.

Of the 7,000 injuries related to fireworks that occur each year in the United States, 2,000 are eye injuries, he said. One third of those injuries cause permanent eye damage, and almost one in 20 injuries result in blindness or require surgery to remove a person's eye.

Schwartz said bottle rockets are the most dangerous of the common fireworks, but even sparklers, which burn at 1,800 degrees, have caused serious accidents.

Under the bill, bottle rockets, sparklers, and other novelty fireworks could be possessed and used from July 1 to July 7 each year.

The bill would also change the penalties for

violating related laws. Under current state law, the maximum penalty for possessing 35 pounds or more of fireworks is one year in jail and a \$3,000 fine. The maximum penalty for possessing less than 35 pounds of fireworks is 90 days in jail and a \$700 fine.

The bill would not change the penalty for possessing more than 35 pounds of fireworks, but the penalty for possessing less than 35 pounds would be a petty misdemeanor with a maximum fine of \$200.

Rukavina said the ban on personal fireworks also raises a question about personal freedom.

"We celebrate the Fourth of July because we got our freedom from England and from the tyranny of the king of England's heavy hand. How free are we if we can't celebrate our independence like 40 other states?" Rukavina asked.

Committee members voted 13-12 against the measure. The committee then passed a motion to allow it to be brought up again.

Training for firefighters

A bill that would establish statewide education and training for firefighters was approved Feb. 15 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Firefighters throughout the state are trained within individual fire departments. Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), sponsor of the bill, said the different types of training can lead to problems when more than one department responds to a call.

HF465 would establish a 15-member board to make recommendations on ways to

improve education and training for firefighters. The board would also establish qualifications for fire service training instructors and would receive money from the state to reimburse firefighters for the training.

The board's membership would include the state's commissioner of public safety, five members of the Minnesota Fire Department Association (four of whom would be volunteer firefighters), two members of the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association, and two members of Minnesota Professional Fire Fighters, a labor union. The remaining members would represent cities and townships.

Members of those and other groups testified in support of the bill. The makeup of the proposed board has been debated over the past three years, said Nyle Zikmund, fire chief of the Spring Lake Park, Blaine, Mounds View Fire Department. The main challenge has been to balance the interests of large and small fire departments, along with those of other affected groups such as the state fire marshal, Zikmund said.

The bill now moves to the House State Government Finance Committee.



SPORTS

No stickers on antique boats

The House passed a bill Feb. 15 that would give owners of antique boats more leeway in displaying their boat licenses. The vote was 125-0.

The bill (**HF137**) would affect boats that were built before July 1, 1959, and are used solely as collector's items. It would allow owners of restored historic boats to affix the license number and decals to a detachable device on the boat instead of to the boat itself.

Rep. Jim Rostberg (R-Isanti), sponsor of the bill, said it would allow owners of those boats to participate in parades or events without having to place stickers on the front of their boats and defacing the valuable crafts.

The bill now moves to the Senate.



TAXES

Higher bar for tax hikes

Some lawmakers would like to make it more difficult for the Legislature to raise taxes.

A bill (**HF5**) approved by the House Taxes Committee Feb. 12 would give voters the chance to decide if the state should require a three-fifths vote, rather than a simple majority, to pass a tax hike.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Tim Wilkin

Final word



Ramsey County Attorney Susan Gaertner testifies in favor of a bill that would allow prosecutors to have final rebuttal in criminal trials. The House Crime Prevention Committee discussed the bill Feb. 16 and is slated to hear final arguments on the matter Feb. 19.

(R-Eagan), would place on a ballot a constitutional amendment to require a super-majority for the Legislature to increase state sales or income tax, impose a new tax, or raise any property tax levy set by state law.

Wilkin told his colleagues on the taxes panel that the bill is needed for legislators to keep faith with those who elected them. Citizens clearly want less tax burden, he said.

Should the Legislature cut taxes this year, it also should move to assure those rates are not easily raised in the future, Wilkin said. And he pointed out the constitutional amendment would not prohibit enacting new taxes or raising existing taxes, but would only require a greater consensus.

Rep. Myron Orfield (DFL-Mpls) attempted to alter the bill in hopes of avoiding what he called "Californification" of Minnesota politics. After the passage of 1978's Proposition 13 — a wide-reaching tax reform measure that included a super-majority requirement — and other subsequent reforms, California has seen that giving power to "entrenched minorities" is not conducive to good government, Orfield argued.

Orfield's amendments would have protected revenues for schools, the elderly, and the environment.

"To give small groups the power to thwart basic institutions of public policy, I don't think that's a good system," he said. "Let the voters toss us out if they don't like what we're doing."

The bill moves to the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee. If it is eventually approved by the Legislature, the

proposed amendment would be on the ballot in 2000.

Cutting cabin taxes

Owners of cabins valued at more than \$75,000 may be in line for a property tax break.

The Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee on Feb. 15 looked at two proposals to provide such a tax cut.

Under the bills — **HF211**, sponsored by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), and **HF125**, sponsored by Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina) — seasonal residential recreational property not used for commercial purposes would fall one property tax class.

The lower class has a rate of 1.25 percent on the first \$75,000 of market value and 1.7 percent on the market value over \$75,000. That's down from 2.2 percent on excess market value in the higher class.

Abrams said the concept of ending special higher tax treatment for such property isn't new, but is part of an ongoing "a house is a house is a house" discussion in the Legislature.

Dick Wray, head of the Minnesota Seasonal Property Owners Coalition, said that although there have been class rate decreases over the years, the tax capacity for seasonal property has grown from \$84 million to \$110 million since 1994.

"Valuation is going into orbit," he said.

Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), who represents a district with a large number of cabins, was concerned that the proposal may have a negative impact in her district.

Under either bill, \$3.4 million would be added to the state's Homestead and Agricultural Credit Aid program to fill the gaps left by the changes.

The bills could be considered later for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Limiting local levies

Minnesota's cities and counties are loudly protesting a plan to extend general levy limits for two more years.

The limits, which are calculated through a three-part formula, are a ceiling above which local governments cannot levy without approval of voters. They were most recently enacted by the 1997 Legislature to protect voters as the state began considering comprehensive property tax reform.

Those reforms have not been accomplished, according to Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina), who's sponsoring a bill that would renew the caps, intended originally to end next year.

The bill (**HF303**) was debated Feb. 15 by the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee.

The levy limits affect all counties and cities with a population greater than 2,500.

Proponents say the bill is necessary to allow the Legislature time to consider all aspects of reform. Opponents say it's a punitive action designed to restrict local government.

Roseville Mayor Dan Wall said the limits were a legislative attempt to "defend taxpayers from city officials" and he called them bad public policy.

Del Haag, mayor of Buffalo and president of the League of Minnesota Cities, said the limits interfere with local accountability and are redundant. He noted that the Legislature had already enacted a "truth in taxation" policy — mandating public hearings on proposed levies — as a method of fostering taxpayer vigilance, and then added levy limits on top.

Others who testified expressed concern that the levy limits too often are being interpreted as a floor rather than a ceiling, although no one had figures showing how many governments had levied their maximum amount.

Erhardt said cities and counties also play a game of semantics at their annual truth in taxation hearings.

"If the levy goes up, it's the fault of the Legislature," he noted. "If the levy goes down, it's because they did an incredible job of holding down spending."

Penny Steele, a Hennepin County commissioner, was the only elected official to testify in favor of the bill.

While admitting the levy limits are not well understood and are an "imperfect tool," she

Northwest jobs



Ben Hirst, senior vice president of corporate affairs for Northwest Airlines, updates members of the House Transportation Policy Committee Feb. 18 on the effects of the airline's 1994 financing agreement with the state. Hirst said the airline has exceeded the job creation goals included in its deal with the state.

said that not having them would be tantamount to "adding yeast to bread dough."

The bill could be considered later for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Tax headache for retailers

A large number of Minnesota's retailers have grown to hate June.

They've done so since 1981, when the Legislature passed something called "accelerated payments," requiring certain businesses to submit at least 75 percent of their estimated June sales tax payments two business days before June 30. The balance of the June liability is due by Aug. 14. And if businesses don't estimate correctly, they can be penalized.

The practice was adopted in response to a state fiscal crisis. It was designed to allow the state to shift revenues forward from one fiscal year to another. The state fiscal year ends June 30.

But a bill sponsored by Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria) would end the accelerated payments. The bill (**HF355**) was discussed Feb. 16 by the House Taxes Committee.

Supporters said that now that the state is running a large budget surplus, it's time to halt the 18-year-old practice.

Passing the bill would simply be "a settling-up," said Rep. Ann H. Rest (DFL-New Hope).

Cassell said he understands the concept well because he was on the receiving end of another

attempt by the state to shift revenues. He served as a school superintendent when the Legislature enacted its property tax recognition shift, causing some schools cash flow problems and other headaches.

He noted that the Legislature has provided a remedy for schools, and he now hopes the same could be done for retailers.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the taxes panel, said he is in favor of ending the accelerated payments, but that it may be too expensive to slide to a full stop all in one year.

The bulk of the cost to the state would be a one-time hit of \$146 million in the 2000-01 biennium. Although no fewer dollars would be collected, the money would accrue to a different biennium.

Officials from Minnesota Merchants Association and Minnesota Grocers Association also spoke in favor of the repeal.

About 3,400 businesses that collect sales tax would be affected.

Rest noted that a plan to undo the accelerated payments is part of Gov. Jesse Ventura's proposed budget.

The bill could be considered later for inclusion in this year's omnibus tax bill.

Survivor seeks refund

Eden Prairie resident Murray Johnson is fighting to change a provision in tax law that he considers a "death penalty."

Johnson's saga began when his mother died in December 1997 and he was named personal representative for her estate. He filed her tax documents, including the form for a property tax refund due his mother.

But the refund was eventually denied because state law mandates that such payouts can only go to a surviving spouse or dependent.

Johnson said that amounted to a "death penalty, stealing from the dead."

"She was alive 363 days of 1997, and she paid property taxes," Johnson said. "She deserved that refund."

Miffed, Johnson wrote a letter decrying the revenue department's ruling and sent it to several newspapers. His plight drew notice from Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing), who asked Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) to offer a companion bill in the House aimed at changing the law regarding refunds.

Osskopp told the House Taxes Committee Feb. 16 that the law is unfair and should be changed to allow personal representatives to receive a deceased person's property tax refund. He is sponsoring the bill (**HF98**) that would do so.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue estimates that changing the law could cost the state about \$700,000 annually, the result of an estimated 2,000 additional claims — averaging \$350 each — by personal representatives of deceased persons.

But Osskopp said he finds it humorous when state departments use figures in such a manner.

"It's not the state's money in the first place," Osskopp said. "It belongs to the people, yet we treat it as a loss of revenue to the state."

As drafted, Osskopp's bill does not provide for retroactive refunds, so Johnson would not stand to recover any money unless the proposal were amended.

The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.



TRANSPORTATION

Mondale talks transit

Among his priorities as chair of the Metropolitan Council, Ted Mondale said transportation is high on his list.

Mondale, who was appointed to his new job by fellow 1998 gubernatorial candidate Gov. Jesse Ventura, visited the House Transportation Policy Committee Feb. 16.

"Now is the time that we should start making some decisions and implementation," Mondale said. "Transit has to be a larger part of our infrastructure."

His organization oversees planning for land use, water, waste, and transit in the seven-county metropolitan area. The council is in charge of the planning and development of light rail transit, a project that could become reality in 2003 if complete funding is raised.

Although he did not present a specific legislative agenda, Mondale said he is prepared to work with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to begin enhancing transportation options in the Twin Cities.

To lawmakers, he stressed taking action on transit plans. He said there has been hardly any implementation compared to the planning and discussion of light rail transit and other options.

To illustrate his point, he told a story about driving his father, former Vice President Walter Mondale, to the airport and watching him shrink down in his seat as they passed through the Hiawatha corridor in Minneapolis.

When Mondale asked what he was doing, his father said he could remember telling area residents in the 1960s that their homes were being condemned to make way for the expansion of the Hiawatha corridor, a project that didn't actually get underway for 30 years.

"The biggest mistake would be to debate this thing another 10 years," Mondale told committee members.

Lawmakers also drilled him about his positions on urban sprawl issues and his attitude toward rural Minnesota.

Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View) asked Mondale about the council's position regarding urban sprawl and expansion of transit, two issues that she said were in conflict with each other.

"People are going to live where they're going to live and we shouldn't make judgments," Mondale said, adding that his concern with urban sprawl is one of making sure the planning is done well.

Others hinted at a possible geographical expansion of the council's domain.

Mondale said he does not have any plans to add counties to the domain, but he said tensions between the council and outer counties would always be there and can be worked out reasonably.

Emissions bill advances

If the Twin Cities metro area keeps meeting federal air quality standards, the motor vehicle emissions inspection program would be repealed, under a bill approved Feb. 18 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Capitol celebration



Five-year-old Nancy Hoang of Brooklyn Park celebrates Tet, the Vietnamese new year, with her family during a cultural presentation in the Capitol rotunda Feb. 16. The event, sponsored by the Vietnamese Minnesotans Association, kicked off the Vietnamese Year of the Cat.

The bill (HF7) is sponsored by Rep. Barb Haake (R-Mounds View) and has also been approved by the House Transportation Policy Committee.

The proposal originally called for the program to end July 1, 2000, but it was amended to accommodate some lawmakers' concerns about complying with federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) air standards. The EPA has the authority to take away federal highway funding if the emissions program is repealed while carbon monoxide levels are too high.

Under the new provisions of the bill, emissions tests will cease being mandatory on or after July 1, 2000, or when the EPA deems the metro area within its attainment levels.

Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) supported the bill from the beginning and said he was glad to see it win approval. He was part of a similar effort several years ago.

"We heard very similar arguments that we heard in '95," he said. "We just didn't have the votes."

Hackbarth said he is optimistic that the plan would pass on the House floor this year.

The bill now moves to the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

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

The House Public Information Office is a nonpartisan office that provides committee meeting schedules; legislator information; and publications, including the *Session Weekly* news magazine, educational brochures for all ages, and member directories. All information is available at no charge.

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

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 296-2314

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

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

On the road . . .

Outstate legislators hustle to keep up at home and away

By Paul Wahl

Lawmakers who live in metro districts can hop in their cars and drive home when the gavel falls, but it's a different story for legislators who come from Minnesota's more far-flung districts.

For them, day's end often means returning to an apartment or motel room, extended calls home, and, sometimes, a little loneliness. Family, businesses, and friends are hours away. Visits are confined to whirlwind weekends, split between political obligations and family responsibilities.

Long-time and first-term representatives have found a variety of ways to deal with separation issues.

Rep. Henry Kalis (DFL-Walters) remembers well his first trip to the Legislature 25 years ago.

"I brought my wife and three children to St. Paul," he said.

He thought that would be a great way to preserve togetherness. But when he ran for reelection two years later, his family agreed to back his candidacy only if they wouldn't have to move to St. Paul for the session.

Echoing a common theme of male lawmakers, Kalis said his wife took on the bulk of the duties on their farm and raising their children while he was gone. For the first time in 24 years, his wife is living with him near the Capitol.

Sounding another common theme from rural legislators, Kalis' neighbors are helping tend the farm.

First-term Rep. Rod Skoe (DFL-Clearbrook) also gives a lot of credit to his neighbors for helping out on his wild rice and potato farm while he's in St. Paul.

For Skoe, family time means phone calls each evening to his wife, daughter, and son. He also tries to e-mail them regularly.

His weekends at home are often filled with farm duties on Saturday, church on Sunday, and then hitting the road for the trip back to St. Paul.

After one such hectic weekend, Skoe said that his wife said, "Next time, I think I'll come visit you."

Another first-year member, Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) has come up with a plan to ensure quality time with his family. Each Tuesday, his wife and two children pile into the car and come to St. Paul for family day.

Dorman is renting in a building with an indoor swimming pool that the family enjoys throughout the day. Dorman doesn't accept invitations to any receptions or functions on Tuesday evenings.



Rep. Dan Dorman gets ready to toss his 9-year-old son, Christopher, while 7-year-old Matthew waits his turn. Dorman's wife, Mary Jo, and his two sons make the drive from Albert Lea each Tuesday to spend a family day together while Dorman is in St. Paul for the session.

"Actually, we're spending more time together as a family than we did when we were all at home," said Dorman, who operates a small business in Albert Lea. He's hired a full-time manager to take care of the business while he's away.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) also has to hire extra help to cover his medical practice while he's at the Capitol. He and his wife are living in an apartment in St. Paul.

Their journey to their southwestern Minnesota home is a four-hour drive. It's only an hour by air for Mulder, who is a pilot, but the state doesn't reimburse him if he flies his own plane. However, he can fly to Marshall and take a charter flight from there.

Distance issues are equally tough on the female House members, who have one major disadvantage.

"Women legislators don't have wives," said Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson).

And she said that most rural female legislators are at the point in life when children are grown and family responsibilities are fewer.

"That appears to be the stage in which being a legislator fits for them, at least most of them," she said.

She said one of her unique challenges is keeping two sets of everything, including makeup, wardrobe, and even food. On weekends, she drives three hours home and launches into laundry, watering plants, buying groceries, and going to church, in addition to making political appearances.

Harder and her husband of 28 years keep in touch by phone. Sometimes, his work brings him to the Twin Cities, but between their busy schedules, they often only have time to talk on the phone.

"The only difference is it's not long-distance when he's here," Harder said.

For Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown) and Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby), both single, the challenges are similar.

Hasskamp said her mother, who's in her 70s and still lives in her own home, depends on her for help in many ways.

"For instance, when I'm not there to shovel snow, she has to hire it done," Hasskamp said. "It's tough to be away because my mother is precious to me."

Hasskamp said she doesn't have to return to a sterile motel room in the evening because she's renting a bedroom from a friend in a home near the Capitol. She also has two sisters living in the area.

Trips home don't automatically mean opportunities to rest, so she schedules time for her favorite recreation, snowmobiling, and another preference, "sitting and looking out at the lake."

Murphy, who's serving her 23rd year in the House, said her annual excursions to St. Paul are enjoyable, but they don't get any easier.

She said that in her early days in the House, nothing was scheduled on Fridays or before 10 a.m. on Mondays, in order to allow rural legislators time to make the trip home and back comfortably. Once the balance in the House shifted to primarily city and suburban representatives, Murphy said that schedule changed.

She said weekends at home begin with shoveling her sidewalk and are often filled with mundane chores, such as washing clothes, and the obligatory public appearances.

Keeping up with friends is also difficult because "most of them don't care what happened in committee that day."

Murphy said the experience hasn't soured her zest for public service but she said, "It's a challenge. It's hard and sometimes lonely, too."



Holberg seizes opportunity to be part of the solution

By Grant Martin

Rep. Mary Liz Holberg, who operates a tree-trimming business with her husband, knew she was in for a tough summer when the



Rep.
Mary Liz Holberg

second major thunderstorm hit in late May 1998—three days after she was endorsed by Republicans for the House race.

"We received about 500 calls the first two days after that storm, and, of course, we had more wind and hail storms in June,"

said Holberg (R-Lakeville). "It was just wickedly wild trying to keep the business up and running, get a campaign going, and attend to the needs of my family."

Holberg said the breaking point came in June when she got some bad news.

"I got a message on our machine saying that my husband was in the emergency room and that he had sliced the top of his arm with a chain saw," she said. "An hour and a half later, he was back on the job. And this is after a couple of weeks of 14- and 16-hour days."

Holberg said that they couldn't keep pushing themselves at that rate.

"It was at that point that I said, 'I'm out. No more of this. We have to go back to a more normal schedule. Everybody's tired. It's not worth it,'" she said.

From then on, Holberg made sure that her business only took jobs that could be reasonably handled.

Likewise, with her run for the House seat, Holberg said that she wanted to make sure that the campaign and the job of state representative wouldn't interfere with her family.

"Certainly, for me, my family always comes first," she said.

Holberg lives in Lakeville with her husband and two children. She also has a large extended family that lives in the district.

"We love to have family dinners at Grandma's on Sunday," she said.

Holberg's first experience in local government came when she challenged a development project near her home. She later served seven years on the Lakeville Planning Commission, and in 1995 she was elected to the Lakeville City Council.

Holberg said that her parents, who served as foster parents for 175 children over the years, taught her the importance of being active in the community.

"My parents always told us if you weren't a part of the solution, you were a part of the problem," she said. "You can't complain unless you're willing to do something about it. I have always been willing to complain, but I have, in turn, been willing to work to make things better."

In the 1998 campaign, Holberg ran against fellow Lakeville City Councilor Betty Sindt, an 18-year veteran of the council.

Holberg said that she and Sindt had worked closely together while serving on the council and on other local issues.

"She and I had what we called a ladies' agreement that we would stick to the issues in the campaign and not make it personal," she said. "We did that. Both of us received numerous positive comments from people in the community really respecting the fact that we did that."

Holberg said that she will focus on the issues that are important to her district.

"We have an area that is exploding in growth," she said. "And that affects every element of a person's life, from the constant road construction every summer to the overcrowding in the schools to bond referendums. It just goes on and on."

Particularly, she said that transportation funding is very important. It's an issue that she will watch closely, she said, even though she didn't get assigned to the Transportation Finance Committee.

"That's OK," she said. "You know how it is when you're the low person on the totem pole up here."

Holberg said that while she has been amazed at the variety of issues she's already encountered at the Legislature, she finds it somewhat frustrating because it's impossible to "dig into" every topic.

Holberg also said that she is excited about being a part of the new tripartisan government. She said that being a new member has been an advantage as far as that goes.

"I'm coming in with a chance to do things a little differently," she said. "I'm watching some of the more senior members struggle with that. I'm not saying that as a criticism, but there has to be a new way of doing business up here."

District 37B

1995 population: 43,097

Largest city: Lakeville

Counties: Dakota, Scott

Location: south metro

Top concern: "The major concern of my district is ensuring well-managed growth so that its effect on the community's quality of life is not detrimental. That encompasses transportation, building schools, and land-use issues."

— Rep. Mary Liz Holberg

House sets deadlines

The House passed a resolution Feb. 15 to formally adopt committee deadlines for the 1999 Legislative Session.

Each year the House and Senate set deadlines by which most bills must be heard in a committee and forwarded through the process. The deadlines weed out some of the thousands of bills introduced each year.

The first 1999 committee deadline will be **Friday, March 19**. That means to be considered further, a bill must pass out of

all necessary policy committees in its house of origin.

The second committee deadline will be **Wednesday, March 31**. By that date, all bills other than those containing appropriations will have to be passed out of all policy committees in the both the House and Senate. To meet the second deadline, bills will have to be acted upon before 4 p.m. March 31.

The third deadline will be **Friday,**

April 16. All omnibus appropriations bills will have to pass out of a finance committee by that date.

Of course, there are exceptions to the deadlines. The House Ways and Means, Taxes, and Rules and Legislative Administration committees are exempt, as are the Senate Finance, Taxes, and Rules and Administration committees. Also, a bill can be heard after the deadlines if the rules committee in either body allows it.

Lawmaker begins career with popular auto emissions bill

By Paul Wahl

First-term Rep. Barbara Haake (R-Mounds View) ran for a seat in the House for the first time in 1976, shortly after the Watergate scandal and the resignation of Richard Nixon.



Rep. Barbara Haake

The next time she ran, it was Bill Clinton who was under scrutiny for his actions as president.

"I only run in years when presidents are experiencing catastrophic difficulties," Haake joked.

The 58-year-old mother of three entered the race in District 52B after fellow Republican Richard Pellow retired from politics. Pellow and DFLer Geri Evans had traded places in the House seat several times. Pellow won the seat in 1988, 1990, and 1994, but Evans took it away from him in 1992 and 1996.

In 1998, Haake took on the incumbent, Evans, and a Reform Party candidate. Haake won by 800 votes over her nearest competitor.

For her, running for office was a natural progression from a long period of political involvement. Haake's interest in politics can be traced back to her childhood, when she learned on the knee of her grandmother, a devoted Republican Party activist whose political involvement began long before women's suffrage.

In 1970, a chapter of the League of Women Voters was started in Haake's community. Then a stay-at-home mother, Haake jumped at the chance to join. The group offered an opportunity to talk about something other than "baby bottles and diapers," she said.

Later, she joined the park and recreation commission in Mounds View and was then appointed to the city's planning commission. She spent nearly a decade on those two bodies and later served one-half term on the Mounds View City Council.

In 1994, she joined the Rice Creek Watershed District Board of Managers.

Her involvement with her local cable television committee in 1990 led to her debut as a television show host. She began as the host of a monthly production about activities and personalities in Mounds View, "A View from the Mound" and "A Conversation with the Mayor." She also has co-anchored the yearly election night coverage for CTV's entire northern Ramsey County suburban area. In the past two years, she has been co-host of another CTV show, "Car Stuff."

She continues her role in television today, hosting "Barb's Report from the Hill," which is videotaped in the Capitol or State Office Building each week and features a variety of legislative colleagues as guests.

It wasn't her work on "Car Stuff" that led to her first major piece of legislation, but the auto experience probably came in handy. Haake is sponsoring a well-publicized bill that would end the motor vehicle emissions inspection program in the metropolitan area.

"It is fun because it's a popular cause," Haake said.

She believes the House and Senate will pass the bill and Gov. Jesse Ventura will sign it.

Haake is working on several other pieces of legislation as a member of the House Transportation Policy Committee. She also serves on the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs, House Crime Prevention, and House Transportation Finance committees.

She will also chair a subcommittee that will examine issues relating to the Metropolitan Council.

For the past 11 years, Haake has owned her own insurance agency, helping employers provide employee benefits to their workers.

She finds the life of a legislator exciting, but occasionally frustrating. She said that because she's been self-employed or employed in self-directed positions for most of her life, the loss

of autonomy has been the most difficult of the adjustments she's had to make.

"You have no more control of your life," she said. "It's nice to paint a room because you start at one corner and end at another and say, 'I've accomplished something.' I can't get that feeling yet. Maybe it will come later on."

Weeks during the legislative session seem to pass as quickly as days do away from the Capitol, Haake said. She gets home around 10:30 p.m. most weekday evenings and often spends time on weekends catching up. She's often up by 4 a.m. to prepare for the day and usually arrives at her office early.

Although she's finding that keeping in communication with her constituents can be challenging, one of her main goals is to bring people into the equation in state government.

"I get back to my community and that's where the people are," Haake said. "Here you're insulated."

"Agencies and lobbyists have a lot of control over what happens here. It seems almost as if the citizens — my people — are a voice in the wilderness. Sometimes it's tough for them to be heard."

Although she doesn't plan to retire shortly, Haake has a major leisure adventure waiting. She owns a 65-foot boat with 1,800 square-feet of living space. Eventually, she wants to sail down the Mississippi River and travel to Florida each October and return in April.

"That's if I ever retire, which I don't see myself doing," she said.

District 52B

1995 population: 33,290

Largest city: New Brighton

County: Ramsey

Location: northwestern metro

Top concern: "I want to give the people a voice. If I can be a facilitator for my community and my people, then I will have accomplished something."

— Rep. Barb Haake

Frequently called numbers

(All numbers are area code 651.)

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol 296-0271

Voice mail/order bills 296-2343

Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol 296-2314

Index, Senate

110 Capitol 296-2887

Index, House

211 Capitol 296-6646

Information, Senate

231 Capitol 296-0504

Information, House

175 State Office Building 296-2146

TTY*, Senate 296-0250

Toll free 1-888-234-1112

TTY*, House 296-9896

Toll free 1-800-657-3550

Bill Introductions

HF710-HF875

Tuesday, Feb. 16

HF710—Holsten (R)

Agriculture Policy

Farmed cervidae hunting on licensed shooting preserves authorized.

HF711—Clark, K. (DFL)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Coldwater Springs traditional cultural property preservation established in Hennepin County.

HF712—Clark, K. (DFL)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Native Americans; State Historical Society, State Archaeologists, Council of Indian Affairs, and State Historical Preservation Office memorialized to protect and preserve Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota traditional cultural property.

HF713—Clark, K. (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Businesses receiving public assistance requirement provisions expanded to include assistance to businesses for community development.

HF714—Larsen, P. (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Adolescent HIV and sexually transmitted disease infection prevention services grant program established, and money appropriated.

HF715—Peterson (DFL)

Agriculture Policy

Farmed cervidae hunting on licensed shooting preserves authorized.

HF716—Seifert, J. (R)

Commerce

Service and membership contract automatic renewal provisions restricted.

HF717—Seifert, J. (R)

Civil Law

Housing calendar consolidation program extended outside the second and fourth judicial districts.

HF718—Ozment (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Advanced practice registered nursing regulated.

HF719—Seifert, J. (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Tobacco; Congress memorialized to enact legislation prohibiting federal recoupment of state tobacco settlement funds.

HF720—Kielkucki (R)

K-12 Education Finance

School lunch aid and targeted breakfast grants modified; school lunch and food storage aid, school breakfast, and targeted breakfast grants provided; and money appropriated.

HF721—Tomassoni (DFL)

Commerce

Credit scoring; use of credit information for homeowners and auto insurance underwriting purposes prohibited.

HF722—Mares (R)

Education Policy

Employment and reemployment of school board personnel procedures modified to require majority approval.

HF723—McElroy (R)

Taxes

Employer provided transit benefits income tax credit created.

HF724—Gunther (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Extended employment program statewide, hourly reimbursement rates increased, welfare-to-work extended employment partnership program continued, and money appropriated.

HF725—Westerberg (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 12, Centennial, class size project established, and money appropriated.

HF726—Knobloch (R)

Capital Investment

Political subdivision capital project grant standards provided.

HF727—Davids (R)

Commerce

Real property loans, private mortgage insurance (PMI), and lending practices regulated; prepayment penalties prohibited; escrow account interest required; and mortgage originators and servicers net worth requirements repealed.

HF728—Haas (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Brooklyn Park economic development authority urban shopping district established and conditions provided.

HF729—Haas (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Brooklyn Park economic development authority authorized to establish, maintain, and operate a redevelopment account.

HF730—Rukavina (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

County acreage no net loss of private land policy provided.

HF731—Wolf (R)

Education Policy

Three additional days of student instruction mandate repealed.

HF732—Osskopp (R)

Crime Prevention

Offenders convicted of failure to appear after release required to pay incurred costs.

HF733—Osskopp (R)

Crime Prevention

Defendant restitution request challenge time period limited.

HF734—Osskopp (R)

Crime Prevention

Wrongfully obtaining public assistance crime clarified.

HF735—Osskopp (R)

Crime Prevention

Crime of adulteration expanded to include adulterations capable of causing death or bodily harm, and penalties increased.

HF736—Bakk (DFL)

Environment &

Natural Resources Policy

State lifetime park pass study required.

HF737—Munger (DFL)

Environment &

Natural Resources Policy

Northern leopard frog designated as the state amphibian and the Blanding's turtle designated as the state reptile.

HF738—Larsen, P. (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Medical education and research trust fund provisions modified to include psychologists and advisory committee expiration date extended.

HF739—Howes (R)

Transportation Finance

Truck safety public information pilot program grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF740—Gray (DFL)

Education Policy

Full-day kindergarten phase-in provided, first-grade preparedness program expanded, and money appropriated.

HF741—Knobloch (R)

Crime Prevention

Inmate bloodborne pathogen testing procedures created, safeguards provided, and penalties imposed.

HF742—Howes (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Right to practice forestry; local government authority limited and irrebuttal presumption created.

HF743—Gray (DFL)

Commerce

Residential real estate transactions regulated, closing agent county filing requirements provided, and disclosure to prospective purchasers required.

HF744—Haas (R)

Commerce

Motor vehicle retail installment sales regulated and contract uniformity prescribed.

HF745—Molnau (R)

Transportation Policy

Television placement in motor vehicles clarified.

HF746—Stang (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Health maintenance organization mental health provider geographic accessibility requirements modified.

HF747—McElroy (R)

Commerce

Mandatory dram shop liability insurance minimum coverage increased.

HF748—Trimble (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Ramsey County education and dispute resolution services for landlords and tenants pilot program established and evaluated, and money appropriated.

HF749—Biernat (DFL)

Education Policy
 Charter school capital loans authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF750—Knoblach (R)

Crime Prevention
 Prosecutors authorized to treat alleged juvenile misdemeanor offenders as delinquent children.

HF751—Trimble (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Ramsey County personnel process modified related to application and screening.

HF752—Tomassoni (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
 School district supplemental revenue reduction provided.

HF753—Carruthers (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Minnesota Fair Labor Standards Act overtime exemption for truck drivers removed.

HF754—Tomassoni (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
 Range association of municipalities and schools declining enrollment grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF755—Wenzel (DFL)

Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
 Ethanol development fund balance retained and additional loan provided.

HF756—Westfall (R)

Health & Human Services Finance
 Clay County nonprofit dental services grant provided and money appropriated.

HF757—Kalis (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Finance
 Faribault and Blue Earth counties quad lakes restoration project appropriated money.

HF758—Kalis (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Finance
 Blue Earth County; LeSueur River stream bank stabilization within St. Clair city limits provided and money appropriated.

HF759—Dorn (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
 Pupil unit definition modified for the purpose of creating a declining pupil unit aid.

HF760—Dorn (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Small gasoline retailer removal project petroleum tank fund reimbursement extended.

HF761—Abrams (R)

Taxes
 School district number required on state income tax returns.

HF762—Smith (R)

Ways & Means
 State spending increases limited to consumer price index increases and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF763—Smith (R)

Crime Prevention
 Theft crimes to include tenant issuance of dishonored check to landlord for rent.

HF764—Smith (R)

Civil Law
 Grandparent visitation rights expanded, procedures specified, and mediation required.

HF765—Broecker (R)

Transportation Finance
 Motorcycle safety fund expenditures specified.

HF766—Broecker (R)

Transportation Policy
 Motorcycle display of a blue light as part of the rear brake light authorized.

HF767—Westrom (R)

Transportation Policy
 Passenger automobile license plates issued for the life of the vehicle.

HF768—Ness (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 Administrative rule periodic legislative review and repeal provided.

HF769—Ness (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 Various broad delegations of rulemaking authority repealed.

HF770—Abeler (R)

Health & Human Services Policy
 Essential community provider status application deadline removed.

HF771—Seifert, J. (R)

Commerce
 Structured settlement agreements regulated.

HF772—McElroy (R)

Education Policy
 Building space average age threshold reduced relating to school district alternative facilities bonding and levy program qualifications.

HF773—Westfall (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Fire department expense reimbursement provided for costs incurred extinguishing motor vehicle fires within highway or interstate rights-of-way.

HF774—Wenzel (DFL)

State Government Finance
 Camp Ripley Minnesota Military Museum operation, renovation, and maintenance funded; and money appropriated.

HF775—Carruthers (DFL)

Crime Prevention
 Hospitals required to report personnel assaults, hospital violence work group established, and increased penalties provided.

HF776—Kalis (DFL)

Taxes
 State-paid agricultural property tax credit provided.

HF777—Rest (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Political subdivision created corporations expiration delayed and task force established.

HF778—Lindner (R)

Commerce
 Money order defined and unclaimed property dormancy charge authorized.

HF779—Finseth (R)

Agriculture Policy
 Farmer-lender mediation act sunset repealed and mediation program transferred to the Minnesota Extension Service.

HF780—Seagren (R)

Education Policy
 Professional teaching permit created.

HF781—Seagren (R)

K-12 Education Finance
 Staff and student cooperative education program opportunities expanded, and money appropriated.

HF782—Biernat (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
 School district basic skills intervention program funding created and money appropriated.

HF783—Biernat (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
 Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis, technology grant provided, graduation standards implementation revenue funding increased for staff development, and money appropriated.

HF784—Biernat (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
 Charter school students, nonpublic students, and students subject to hazardous conditions transportation funding increased; and money appropriated.

HF785—Biernat (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance
 School district basic skills revenue enhanced, English language learner funding extended, compensatory revenue cap removed, free and reduced price meal eligibility under-reporting adjusted, grant program created, and money appropriated.

HF786—Reuter (R)

K-12 Education Finance
 Independent School District Nos. 829, Waseca, and 2835, Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton, Lake Elysian environmental learning grant program provided; and money appropriated.

HF787—Van Dellen (R)

Taxes
 Medical expenses income tax credit allowed and health insurance deduction for self-employed persons repealed.

HF788—Dawkins (DFL)

Taxes
 City crime reduction aid established based on "Part I crime index."

HF789—Goodno (R)

Health & Human Services Finance
 Annual health care provider rate adjustments provided for the purpose of medical assistance, and inflation index modified.

HF790—Kuisle (R)

Transportation Policy
 Motor vehicle security interest release within five days required.

HF791—Clark, K. (DFL)

Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Tax expenditure statements required prior to legislative committee hearings, local and state business subsidies regulated, study required, and money appropriated.

HF792—Chaudhary (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Rental housing application disclosure requirements and penalties provided, and penalties prescribed for providing false information on rental applications.

HF793—Seifert, J. (R)
Commerce
Lien and right of detainer created for reasonable charges for a rented replacement motor vehicle retained for one being serviced.

HF794—Hackbarth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Natural resources department account interest disposition specified and unrefunded gasoline tax computation provisions modified.

HF795—Finseth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Red River basin board water management grant provided and money appropriated.

HF796—Bakk (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Counties provided increased natural resources land payments in lieu of taxes.

HF797—Finseth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Small city wetland replacement cost-share program created and money appropriated.

Thursday, Feb. 18

HF798—Anderson, B. (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Injured employees civil remedies provided in cases of employer safety violations.

HF799—Tingelstad (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Education facilities funding provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF800—Olson (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Health care providers and health plan companies uniform charges required.

HF801—Knoblach (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minnesota partnership for action against tobacco not considered a state agency, and report required.

HF802—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Unlicensed child care provider permanent expansion provided.

HF803—Reuter (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Lawful gambling minimum age raised.

HF804—Erickson (R)
Education Policy
Licensure-specific teaching skills examination rules effective date extended.

HF805—Leighton (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Municipal liability provisions expanded to include municipal power agencies.

HF806—Ness (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Advertising in connection with the lottery prohibited.

HF807—Howes (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Rural hospital improvement grant program expanded, medical assistance coverage of telemedicine conferences and critical access hospital outpatient fee cost-based system provided, uniform billing established, and money appropriated.

HF808—Ness (R)
Agriculture Policy
Bovine paratuberculosis diagnosis data classification provided, board of animal health executive secretary name changed to executive director, and sale of cattle limitations repealed.

HF809—Skoglund (DFL)
Taxes
Tree trimming and stump removal services sales tax exemption provided.

HF810—Marko (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Archery bow transportation requirements modified.

HF811—Wolf (R)
Transportation Finance
Scott County state-aid highway No. 27 preliminary engineering and environmental studies funded, and money appropriated.

HF812—Wolf (R)
Commerce
Legislative electric energy task force house chairs modified.

HF813—Hausman (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Unicameral Legislature provided and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF814—Kalis (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Teachers retirement and first-class city teacher retirement fund associations prior military service credit purchase authorized.

HF815—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Material supplier filing of sales tax returns and tax remittance provided.

HF816—Peterson (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Feedlot and manure management advisory committee composition modified.

HF817—Wagenius (DFL)
Civil Law
Relative ex parte temporary child custody provisions expanded.

HF818—Nornes (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Residential mental health facility upgrades established and money appropriated.

HF819—Ness (R)
Education Policy
Adult English as a second language program requirements modified.

HF820—Seagren (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Charter schools; referendum revenue and integration revenue provided, building lease aid increased, leased facilities real estate taxes eliminated, start-up funding payment schedule established, and money appropriated.

HF821—Reuter (R)
Civil Law
National origin discrimination by businesses prohibited.

HF822—Wagenius (DFL)
Education Policy
Parents' right to know act adopted related to pest management, and money appropriated.

HF823—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School district transportation reserved revenue accounts authorized.

HF824—Biernat (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School district compensatory revenue allocation flexibility continued.

HF825—Kielkucki (R)
Education Policy
Graduation rule; student knowledge in personal and family financial management and investment required.

HF826—Johnson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School year minimum instructional days report provided and money appropriated.

HF827—Rest (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Virtual school district created and money appropriated.

HF828—Carlson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School enrichment partnership program expanded to include academic booster clubs, and money appropriated.

HF829—Mahoney (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Ramsey County group residential facility for women supplementary service rates authorized.

HF830—Lieder (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle sales tax proceeds dedicated to roads and public transit, registration tax rate reduced, depreciation schedule modified, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF831—Solberg (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Surface transportation fund established, motor vehicle registration tax rate reduced, excise tax proceeds dedicated to transportation, money appropriated, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF832—Anderson, B. (R)
Transportation Policy
Personal-use passenger automobile flat registration tax imposed, sales tax allocated to the highway user tax distribution fund, and technical changes provided.

HF833—Mullery (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Criminal trial final argument rebuttal and surrebuttal limited.

HF834—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Adult mental illness crisis housing assistance program created and money appropriated.

HF835—Bakk (DFL)
Taxes
Babbitt municipal building renovation materials and supplies sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF836—Goodno (R)**Civil Law**

Business corporations regulated and uniform partnership act conforming changes provided.

HF837—Davids (R)**Commerce**

Insurance companies, agents, and coverages regulated and technical changes provided.

HF838—Harder (R)**Agriculture &****Rural Development Finance**

Soybean diseases and genetics additional research provided, and money appropriated.

HF839—Pawlenty (R)**Crime Prevention**

Defense of dwelling clarified related to use of deadly force, and duty to retreat in self-defense situations limited.

HF840—Wenzel (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Garrison; local contributions for tax increment financing district authorized.

HF841—Opatz (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Central Minnesota regional parks and trails plan created in Stearns, Benton, and Sherburne counties.

HF842—Fuller (R)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Cross-country ski pass provisions modified.

HF843—Anderson, B. (R)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Sherburne County authorized to convey tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF844—Boudreau (R)**Crime Prevention**

Permits to carry firearms required to be issued only to responsible, competent adults.

HF845—Mares (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Higher education faculty and other state employee retirement and related benefits modified.

HF846—Koskinen (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Eyeglasses and hearing aid health insurance coverage required.

HF847—Sykora (R)**Family & Early Childhood****Education Finance**

First call Minnesota; statewide family and community services information and referral system established, and money appropriated.

HF848—Paymar (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Prior incarceration credit provided for offenders sentenced to the Camp Ripley work program.

HF849—Haake (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Minor and intermediate use airports defined for metro expansion and upgrade purposes, and reliever airport sound abatement council established.

HF850—Swenson (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Regional development commission planning grants provided and money appropriated.

HF851—Entenza (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Partial-birth abortion; intact dilation and extraction prohibited.

HF852—Anderson, I. (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Itasca County authorized to sell tax-forfeited land bordering public water.

HF853—Rostberg (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Fire sprinklers required in newly constructed state-owned buildings, fire suppression system review and inspection plan responsibilities clarified, and approval requirements provided.

HF854—Chaudhary (DFL)**Taxes**

Local government paid aid base to cities increased.

HF855—Ozment (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district maximum crime-related costs levy amount increased and proceeds use modified.

HF856—Seifert, J. (R)**Transportation Finance**

Washington County drivers' license examination station constructed and money appropriated.

HF857—Greenfield (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Seat belt use failure violation provided primary offense designation.

HF858—Workman (R)**Transportation Policy**

Motorcycle helmet use evidence admissibility prohibited in cases involving the operation a motor vehicle.

HF859—Seagren (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

A Chance to Grow/New Visions; Minnesota learning resource center program start-up costs funded and money appropriated.

HF860—Boudreau (R)**Health and Human Services Policy**

Board of dentistry hygienist membership increased.

HF861—Rhodes (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Lobbyist registration, conflicts of interest, and campaign finance provisions clarified; and invalid provisions repealed.

HF862—Holberg (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

County board ordinance violation civil penalty procedures established, and fine certification to auditors as a special tax against the land authorized.

HF863—Tingelstad (R)**Civil Law**

Putative fathers' adoption registry, communication and contact agreements, and postadoption report requirements and procedures modified.

HF864—Howes (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Hubbard County sheriff part-time peace officer positions authorized.

HF865—Bakk (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Combined firearm and archery antlered deer license created, and the taking of one by each method authorized.

HF866—Bakk (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Blaze orange requirement exemption provided to trappers.

HF867—Hackbarth (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Home ownership counseling services provided for persons with disabilities and money appropriated.

HF868—Hackbarth (R)**Crime Prevention**

Crimes constituting theft modified to include situations involving rental personal property or equipment.

HF869—Mares (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Deferred retirement annuity calculation method modified for certain higher education faculty.

HF870—Haas (R)**Commerce**

Small employer alternative health insurance benefit plan provided and pilot project authorized.

HF871—Sykora (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Charter school districts provided.

HF872—Holsten (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Policy**

Building and construction contacts regulated, and environmental liability indemnification enforceability provided.

HF873—Mulder (R)**Education Policy**

CLEARCorps; lead hazard reduction project grant provided and money appropriated.

HF874—Trimble (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Policy**

NeighborLink; St. Paul Urban League community job counseling, retention, and mentoring program appropriated money.

HF875—Bakk (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Small business government contract bid preference limited to two years.

Correction

Committee assignments for Rep. Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington) were listed incorrectly in the Feb. 12 issue of *Session Weekly*. She serves on the following House committees: Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy; Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs; Taxes; and the Property Tax Division of the Taxes Committee.

Committee Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.

For information updates, call

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HF741 (Knobloch) Providing procedures for testing the blood of inmates for blood-borne pathogens; providing procedural safeguards; imposing penalties.

HF448 (Seifert, J.) Intrusion upon seclusion, appropriation, and publication of private facts actions two-year statute of limitations established.

HF518 (Seifert, J.) Uniform correction or clarification of defamation act adopted.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency budget overview continued.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HF343 (Hilty) Department of Trade and Economic Development technology corridor planning and feasibility review required, and Pine Technical College technology center federal funding accepted.

HF492 (Dorn) Mankato State University authorized to construct the Taylor Center multipurpose facility.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Gov. Ventura's K-12 Education Finance budget.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF508 (Van Dellen) Unimproved real estate bordering public waters property tax class rate reduction provided.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: State and federal funding overview by Cynthia Coronado Templin, House Fiscal Analysis Department.

Department of Children, Families and Learning performance report review.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF294 (Broecker) Extraordinary local disaster expense aid provided and money appropriated.

HF453 (Haake) Minneapolis required to enroll trades and electrical workers, stagehands, production technicians, and apprentices in the deferred compensation plan.

HF777 (Rest) Delaying the expiration of corporations created by political subdivisions; establishing a task force to develop legislation

relating to establishment of corporations by political subdivisions.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

TUESDAY, Feb. 23

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF302 (Davids) Ambulance services authorized to participate in shared service purchasing under the uniform municipal contracting law.

HF463 (Davids) Ambulance services and first responders review provided.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF595 (Holsten) Petrofund reimbursement reductions standard of proof provided, above ground storage tank upgrade or closure reimbursed, and contaminated land cleanup regulated.

HF420 (Haas) Brooklyn Park; housing improvement area established.

Final affordable housing presentations.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Supreme Court budget presentation.

HF542 (Bishop) Number of district court judges increased.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF528 (Westrom) Fiberglass and steel underground fuel storage tank specifications required.

HF571 (Westrom) Trunk highway contract documents required to express measurements in the English system only, and commissioner prohibited from requiring otherwise for county contracts.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Budget presentations by state treasurer's office and Campaign Finance & Public Disclosure Board.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF158 (Stanek) Credit for time served

MONDAY, Feb. 22

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF861 (Rhodes) Clarifying and simplifying the law related to lobbyist registration, conflicts of interest, and campaign finance; eliminating invalid provisions.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Disability Board budget presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Labor and Industry budget presentation.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF765 (Broecker) Providing for maximum percentage of the motorcycle safety fund that may be spent for certain activities. Bob Illingworth, Minnesota Motorcycle Riders Association.

Presentations by John Williams, House Research, and John Walz, House Fiscal Analysis Department.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF53 (Biernat) Uniform child custody jurisdiction and enforcement act adopted. HF293 (Daggett) Notary commission recording fees reduced.

HF534 (Hackbarth) Municipal tort liability exclusion provided for special wildlife hunting or trapping season losses.

intent clarified, presumption in favor of consecutive sentences created, specific findings required for concurrent sentences, and sentencing guidelines conforming changes required.

HF734 (Osskopp) Clarifies the crime of wrongfully obtaining public assistance.

HF735 (Osskopp) Expanding the scope of the crime of adultery to include adulterations capable of causing death or bodily harm; increasing penalties for certain acts of adultery.

HF665 (Wenzel) Marijuana; possession or sale of small amounts provided increased criminal penalties.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF473 (Harder) High school diploma warranty coverage exception provided for students refusing to repeat a grade.

HF403 (Ness) Uniform minimum school year length established.

Student achievement levels report, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

HF320 (Opatz) State expectations for schools defined related to student achievement.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF505 (Swenson) Sporting license subagents authorized to retain a sales commission.

HF444 (Stang) Sauk River Watershed District administrative funds levy authorized.

HF795 (Finseth) Appropriating money for water management in the Red River basin.

HF55 (Tomassoni) Trained force of firefighters maintained by the commissioner of natural resources, and public employee definition expanded.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF50 (Dempsey) Goodhue County levy limit adjustment authorized for certain payments in lieu of tax.

HF72 (Rukavina) Biwabik community pavilion construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF86 (Rest) Pollution control and solar energy equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF168 (Mulder) Smoking cessation devices sales tax exemption provided.

HF472 (Harder) Windom Multipurpose Center construction materials and supplies sales and use tax exemption provided.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Proposal for an urban agricultural high school.

Programs for the agriculture education leadership council.

Training new dairy herders.

International dairy training.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: HF726 (Knoblach) Providing standards for state assistance to capital improvement projects of political subdivisions.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids

Agenda: HF478 (Haas) Structured settlement payment rights protected related to tort or workers' compensation claims.

HF837 (Davids) Regulating insurers, agents, and coverages; modifying reporting requirements; regulating the rehabilitation and liquidation of insurers; modifying certain notice and disclosure provisions.

2 p.m.

Adult Basic Education Workgroup/ FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

400N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Discussion and workgroup recommendations continued.

2:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Elections & Rules/ GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Marty Seifert

Agenda: To be announced.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF54 (Finseth) Personal watercraft surcharge removed.

HF426 (Rukavina) BWCA and Superior National Forest; President and Congress memorialized to expedite state and federal land exchange for the purpose of enabling proper discharge of each government's management duties.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF345 (Bradley) Home and community-based waived services for persons with mental retardation waiting list eliminated, unspent resources reallocated, county partnerships required, reserve account authorized, and money appropriated.

HF670 (Goodno) Medical assistance eligibility expanded to include employed persons with disabilities.

3:45 p.m.

Child Care Workgroup/ FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

400N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Child care issues discussion continued.

4 p.m.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

House TAXES/ Senate TAXES

15 State Capitol

Chrs. Rep. Ron Abrams,

Sen. Douglas J. Johnson

Agenda: HF1 (Abrams) One-time individual income tax rebate provided, and money appropriated.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 24

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF484 (Paulsen) Initiative and referendum implementation act adopted, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Department of Health budget presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Trade and Economic Development budget presentation.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Department of Transportation budget presentation continued, Barbara Sundquist, Finance and Administration Division; Paul Jensen, buildings engineer; Dick Stehr, Metro Division engineer.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF391 (Seifert, J.) Punitive damages limited in cases involving Food and Drug Administration approved products or devices.

HF624 (Stanek) Dishonored checks; theft and related crimes penalty uniformity provided, civil penalties increased, and pretrial diversion program created.

HF73 (Hilty) Year 2000; local government units mutual aid authority clarified, health department required to collect and disseminate information regarding possible problems and solutions, immunity provided, and money appropriated. HF592 (Larsen, P.) Municipal utilities customer data classification provided.

HF650 (Hackbarth) Shooting range servitudes provided and operator liability limited.

HF717 (Seifert, J.) Extending the housing calendar consolidation program to districts outside of the second and fourth judicial districts. HF59 (Bakk) Snowmobile trail grants-in-aid provisions modified to include maintenance of Voyageurs National Park trails.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL

RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Minnesota State Colleges and Universities budget presentation by Laura King.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF720 (Kielkucki) Modifying school lunch aid and targeted breakfast grants; appropriating money for school lunch and food storage aid, school breakfast, and targeted breakfast grants.

HF222 (Olson) Independent School District No. 882, Monticello, fund transfer authorized.

HF260 (Kielkucki) Independent School District No. 2687, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted, reorganization operating debt levy calculation date clarified.

HF194 (Juhnke) Independent School District No. 347, Willmar, magnet school authorized, and money appropriated.

Property Tax Division/ TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF557 (Tunheim) Relative homestead treatment extended to include property occupied by the owner's niece or nephew.

HF418 (Hasskamp) Temporary and seasonal resorts property tax classification requirements modified.

HF517 (Skoe) Proposed property tax notification date modified.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF710 (Holsten) Permitting the hunting of farmed cervidae on licensed shooting preserves.

HF715 (Peterson) Permitting the hunting of farmed cervidae on licensed shooting preserves.

FAMILY & EARLY

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Early childhood programs.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF338 (Larsen, P.) Emergency management grant program created and rulemaking authorized.

HF525 (Westerberg) Anoka County; city administration of dangerous dog registration system provided.

HF849 (Haake) Defining minor use and intermediate use of airports for certain purposes; establishing a reliever airport sound abatement council.

Subcommittee on Regulated Industries/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: HF48 (Wolf) Performance-based gas purchasing plans sunset abolished.

HF358 (Wolf) Coin-operated and public pay telephones deregulated, and telecommunication provider anticompetitive activity administrative penalties assessed.

HF359 (Wolf) Public Utilities Commission subcommittees established and commissioners designated, petitions deemed approved unless set aside for affirmative action, investigation and contingency revolving fund created, and money appropriated.

2:30 p.m.

Subcommittee on Health Care Directives/ HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Lynda Boudreau

Agenda: Occupational licensing presentation by Legislative Auditor.

THURSDAY, Feb. 25

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: (Note: the following bills will be author-only presentations.)

HF206 (Entenza) American sign language/English interpreters and transliterators required to be certified and registered, criminal and civil penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF342 (Rostberg) Board of licensed professional mental health counseling established, counselor licensing required, penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF376 (Haas) Medical practice act; administration and prescription of anesthetics specified as the practice of medicine, and restriction exemptions defined.

HF408 (Goodno) Practice of pharmacy definition modified and patient counseling defined.

HF476 (Juhnke) Ambulance services and first responder standards modified; emergency medical technicians, medical response units, and emergency medical technician instructor certification and training program approval required; and penalties imposed.

HF568 (Clark, K.) General and health care interpreter voluntary registration programs established, spoken language interpreter pilot training program developed, and money appropriated.

HF718 (Ozment) Regulating advanced practice registered nursing.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF584 (Dawkins) Low-income housing income tax credit provided.

HF724 (Gunther) Increasing the statewide, hourly reimbursement rates for the extended employment program; appropriating money for the continuation of the welfare-to-work extended employment partnership program.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: Supreme Court budget presentation continued (if necessary).

HF112 (Bishop) Fraudulent use of another's personal identity provided felony penalties, and civil forfeiture of property authorized.

HF570 (Clark, K.) Intensive case management services provided for prostituted individuals and money appropriated.

HF683 (Clark, K.) Restorative justice program grants and training funded, and money appropriated.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman,

Agenda: To be announced.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Budget presentations by the Racing Commission, Lawful Gambling Control Board, and Minnesota State Lottery.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF536 (Broecker) Carisoprodol schedule IV controlled substance listing effective date delayed.

HF12 (Seifert, J.) Three strikes; mandatory life sentence imposed for persons convicted of a third violent felony offense.

HF135 (Bishop) Repeat assault offenders with prior delinquency adjudications provided enhanced penalties.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF320 (Opatz) State expectations for schools defined related to student achievement.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF96 (Kuisle) Environmental assessment worksheet signature requirements modified.

HFXXXX (Hackbarth) Report from Outdoor Recreation Task Force on snowmobile stud use.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF267 (Westerberg) Income tax brackets and alternative minimum tax exemption amount modified to reduce marriage penalties. HF703 (Van Dellen) Single factor sales apportionment adopted related to corporate franchise tax.

HF393 (Finseth) Lawful gambling tax rates reduced.

HF507 (Daggett) Lawful gambling, pull-tabs, tip-boards, and combined receipts tax rates reduced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Dairy industry.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch
Agenda: HF438 (Swenson) Independent School District No. 2887, McLeod, previous grant provision modified.
Higher Education Asset Preservation Renewal Account presentation, University of Minnesota representatives.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Gregory M. Davids
Agenda: HF288 (Rostberg) Pollution Control Agency Mississippi River emergency spill response equipment and training provided, and money appropriated.

2:30 p.m.

The House meets in session.

FRIDAY, Feb. 26

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: HF441 (Knobloch) Campaign finance provisions modified.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: Department of Health budget presentation.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: Department of Trade and Economic Development budget presentation continued.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: HFXXXX (Stanek) Integrated information systems.
HF263 (Gerlach) Counterfeited intellectual property manufacturing, distribution, selling, or possession criminal penalties imposed; and forfeiture provided.
HF652 (Westerberg) Disorderly conduct law application clarified to include acts committed in the presence of peace officers or public safety personnel.
HFXXXX (Westerberg) Hidden automobile drug compartments.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget presentation continued.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: Minnesota State Colleges and Universities budget presentation continued, Laura King.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: HF725 (Westerberg) Establishing a class size project in Independent School District No. 12, Centennial; appropriating money.
HF455 (Biernat) Secondary students public transportation grants provided to school districts and money appropriated.
HF349 (Pelowski) Independent School District No. 861, Winona, Jefferson elementary school full-day kindergarten program grant authorized, and money appropriated.
HF131 (Harder) Independent School District No. 330, Heron Lake-Okabena, provided Southwest Star Concept School grant extension.
HF326 (Winter) Independent School District No. 330, Heron Lake-Okabena, Southwest Star concept school grant clarified, and money appropriated.
HF327 (Winter) Independent School District No. 330, Heron Lake-Okabena, grant authorized, and money appropriated.

If you will be visiting the Capitol in the near future, call the Capitol Historic Site Program at (651) 296-2881 to schedule a tour.

No suspects in Capitol vandalism

Capitol Security officials are still searching for a suspect in a Feb. 11 case of vandalism at the Capitol.

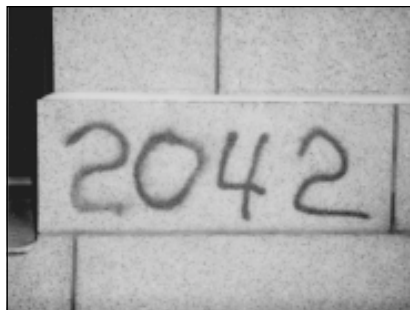
Sometime between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. on that Thursday evening, the number "2042" was spray-painted in bright red on the east, west, and south sides of the Capitol building.

Security officials discovered the graffiti in 16 spots shortly after 10 p.m. and were at a loss for suspects.

No one appeared on videotapes from security cameras, and so far, there are no witnesses.

But State Trooper M. Strassburg-Peltz said the number led them to a possible suspect, who denied having any involvement with the incident. That person is not affiliated with the Capitol.

"We were hoping that our lead would



Graffiti like the markings shown here was found in 16 places on the Capitol.

pan out," Strassburg-Peltz said. She noted that the offense would be difficult to prove.

Lt. Alesia Metry said the security department received many calls from people theorizing about what 2042 means.

Among the possibilities: It's the same

number of a Marine platoon, it's the year meteors will strike the Earth, and it is also the equivalent to 1999 in the Buddhist calendar.

Security personnel originally thought 2042 might refer to a House or Senate file number, but bill numbers have not progressed that far this year, and both HF2042 and SF2042 from the 1998 session were ruled out as noncontroversial.

Officials tried to have the paint removed over the weekend, but the first company hired was unable to take it off. A second company was successful and the building was clean by Feb. 15.

"If people saw anything, we would sure appreciate if they would come down," Metry said.

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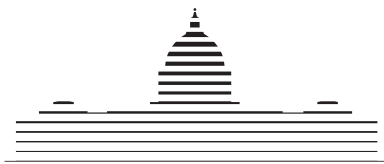
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26 Beckman, Tracy L. DFL	124G Cap.	5713	54 Marty, John DFL	326 Cap.	5645
41 Belanger Jr., William V. R	113 SOB	5975	39 Metzen, James P. DFL	303 Cap.	4370
13 Berg, Charles A. (IND.)	G-51 SOB	5094	2 Moe, Roger D. DFL	208 Cap.	2577
61 Berglin, Linda DFL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

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Majority Leader: Tim Pawlenty
Minority Leader: Thomas W. Pugh

MINNESOTA INDEX

Regulating occupations in Minnesota

Number of occupations regulated —by licensure, certification, or registration — by state of Minnesota, 1999	188
Number regulated in 1899	13
States that regulate more occupations than Minnesota	12
Teachers licensed in Minnesota, August 1998	111,995
Complaints filed against those teachers, fiscal year 1998	220
Attorneys licensed in Minnesota, August 1998	21,476
Complaints filed against those attorneys, fiscal year 1998	973
Physicians licensed in Minnesota, August 1998	14,771
Complaints filed against those physicians, fiscal year 1998	875
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Apprentice barbers licensed by board, August 1998	146
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Professional karate contestants licensed by board, August 1998	6
Professional boxing referees licensed by board, August 1998	5
Professional karate referees licensed by board, August 1998	1
Amateur boxing referees licensed by board, August 1998	24
Amateur karate referees licensed by board, August, 1998	0
Year Minnesota began licensing professional weather modifiers	1977
Weather modifier licenses issued since then	0

Source: *Occupational Regulation: A Program Evaluation Report*, January 1999,
Office of the Legislative Auditor.

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