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IMPROVING SCHOOL SAFETY &

MINNESOTA'S "ASSISTANT GOVERNOR"

HF3671-HF3903

Session Weekly

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On the cover: The Minnesota State Flag flies at half staff Feb. 21 in memory of the late cartoonist and St. Paul native Charles Schulz, creator of the "Peanuts" comic strip. Schultz died earlier this month of complications from colon cancer. He was 77.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

Preventing school violence

Legislators pitch programs to identify problems before violence erupts and to equip schools with security in case it does

By MIKE DELARCO

Few in the field of education will soon forget the haunting aftermath of the Columbine High School tragedy in Littleton, Colo., last April.

The shooting spree, perpetrated by teenagers Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris, left 12 students and one teacher dead and sent many more to the hospital.

Klebold and Harris, both described by peers as quiet yet quite intelligent, forced educators to examine district policies regarding violence prevention and prompted legislators near and far to ponder measures they could draft to make schools safer for learning.

"It's absolutely essential that we ensure that people are safe in their homes, communities, and especially in their schools, and I think it's the responsibility of government to see that that occurs," said Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings), speaking before the House K-12 Finance Committee on Feb. 23.

Most who speak about education, however, believe that schools *are* very safe places for students to be, regardless of what occurred in Colorado.

Statistics would serve to affirm that notion. According to the U.S. Justice and Education departments, of the more than 2,500 children who were murdered or committed suicide in

One sponsored by Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul) would provide \$2.5 million in bond proceeds for capital improvements to generally improve the safety of students, teachers, and faculty who use public school buildings.

The bill (HF3141) would leave it to the direction of the commissioner of the Department of Children, Families and Learning to award grants at the department's discretion.

The measure does not include more specific details about what improvements might merit funding.

A bill sponsored by Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) would take things a step further by requiring that school safety plans describe a process to make facilities safer and more secure.

The bill (HF2621) would appropriate \$10 million in state aid for fiscal years 2000 and 2001 to help districts fund safety-related measures such as installing security cameras or hiring police liaison officers and adult hall monitors.

"I truly hope that we, as legislators, will do something in the year 2000 to address issues of school safety," Folliard said.

But what are things that make up a safe school? Experts say they share certain characteristics.

A report provided by the national Safe and Drug Free Schools Program suggests safe schools are ones with strong leaders, high academic standards, and resources and training programs to help teachers address students' problems before they lead to violence.

Schools that develop partnerships in the community and establish good relationships with law enforcement, youth services, and other community agencies are likely to provide the type of learning environment where students feel comfortable, the report said.

Experts have also said that safety measures such as cameras in school hallways help to discourage school violence, but just as important are measures that address the root of problem.

"Many after-the-fact punitive reactions focus on deterrents rather than causes of the problem," said Del Elliot, director of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado at Boulder. "Serious violence continues because the underlying problems are never addressed."



Grace Dymanyk keeps an eye on the lobby at Mounds View High School during school hours, as part of one of the initiatives the school is using to improve safety. Officials have also instituted a gated parking lot, and doors are locked from the outside to keep the school safer.

Photo by A. J. Olmscheid

In short, the shooting in Littleton created a sense of urgency to tighten rules and address problems so that the likelihood of another tragedy occurring in our nation's schools would be minimal.

Several bills proposed in Minnesota this session seek to address the issue of violence prevention in schools.

the first half of the 1997-98 school year, less than one percent were at school or at a school sponsored event.

Four noteworthy bills pertaining to school safety and violence prevention have been debated by the K-12 Education Finance Committee.



Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) testifies for HF2621 at the House K-12 Education Finance Committee Feb. 23.

Two other bills considered by the K-12 Finance Committee would attempt to tackle issues that lead to crime. Bills sponsored by Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) would increase the amount of aid available to districts for drug, crime, and gang prevention programs.

Abeler's bill (HF2631) would allow districts to levy up to \$1.50 per capita for crime prevention activities and require the state to match those efforts by a two-to-one ratio.

If Abeler's bill were to be fully funded, it would require \$14.3 million in state aid.

Dr. James Cole, assistant superintendent in the Anoka-Hennepin School District, spoke in support of Abeler's bill. Cole told committee members the additional revenue could go a long way in helping districts pay for programs and preventive equipment in the schools.

The committee referred Abeler's bill without recommendation to the House Crime Prevention Committee for review.

Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington), chair of the committee, said she wants the bill to return to the K-12 committee for further review, once the Crime Prevention Committee has considered it.

Carlson's bill (HF3320) is similar to Abeler's bill in design, but it would allow districts to levy up to \$3 per capita for crime prevention aid. Carlson's bill would not require the state to match funds levied.

Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park) voiced concern that plans by Abeler and Carlson to adjust levy limits for crime prevention encourages school districts to raise property taxes. She hinted at other ways to fund programs that would leave a property owner's tax bill undisturbed.

"If we agree there's a need out there for increased safety measures in schools, let's use some of the budget surplus money the state has to protect our children," Johnson said. 🐼



A life on the bench

Chief justice knew the long and the short of it

In early 1870, it appeared James Gilfillan's career on the Minnesota Supreme Court would be remembered for its brevity, not longevity.

Gilfillan was down, having been rejected by voters after serving only six months as chief justice of the court, but he wasn't out. He was on his way to an unprecedented comeback.

The Civil War veteran went on to become the state's longest-serving chief justice and the only chief justice to serve a split term.

He also has the distinction of being one of only two foreign-born Minnesota chief justices and one of two chief justices to die in office.

In 1869, Gov. Horace Austin appointed Gilfillan chief justice of the Supreme Court. The seat was up for election at the end of the year, an election Gilfillan wound end up losing. (Justices are elected to the court, and mid-term vacancies are filled by governor's appointment.)

Historians of the time note that Gilfillan was caught in political jockeying atypical of judicial elections. Justices were elected on nonpartisan ballots, but they sought and needed party support.

Gilfillan had been a Republican favorite, but the party wound up backing a relative unknown, Christopher Ripley, who ultimately won the election.

Five years later, after Ripley resigned because of poor health, Gilfillan was reappointed to the position of chief justice, a responsibility he would carry out for the remainder of his career and, for that matter, the rest of his life.

Under Gilfillan's leadership in 1881, the Minnesota Supreme Court expanded from three to five members. One of the justices appointed when the court expanded was William Mitchell, destined to be one of the state's great jurists.

During his tenure, Gilfillan authored

1,289 opinions and 43 dissents. His opinions as chief justice span 40 volumes of *Minnesota Reports*, the first 20 volumes of which he personally revised and annotated.

Gilfillan's family had immigrated from Bannockburn, Scotland, shortly after his birth in 1829, settling on a farm in Chenango County, New York.

He first showed an interest in law at the age of 16 and was admitted to the bar only four years later at age 20. Following seven years of practicing law in Buffalo, New York, Gilfillan moved to St. Paul in 1857, in what was then the Minnesota Territory.

Five years later, the young lawyer's life would take a quite different turn. In 1862, Gilfillan volunteered for military service and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Minnesota Infantry.

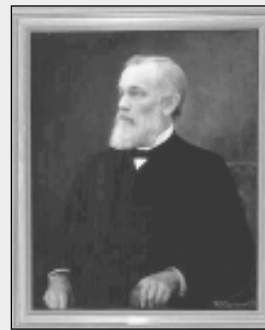
He was soon thrust into battle against the Sioux in the Dakotas and later saw action in the Civil War in Tennessee and Kentucky. Just two years after volunteering for military service, Gilfillan became a colonel in the Eleventh Minnesota.

After the war, Gilfillan returned to his law practice in St. Paul. His unusual career ended in 1894, when he died at the age of 65.

In the days following his death, he was described as a man "without fear or favor" whose "life was pure and his reputation stainless."

At a memorial service in Jan. 7, 1895, Justice Isaac Atwater said, "His fearlessness in expressing his honest conviction whenever demanded, even at the sacrifice of personal interest, his broad grasp of equity and his entire impartiality between suitors, whether persons, corporations, or political parties was unmatched."

(M. DELARCO)



Justice James Gilfillan

Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society

★ AGRICULTURE

Aid for ailing farms

Factors such as crop disease and abnormal precipitation have, in successive years, resulted in economic hardship for farmers in certain areas of the state.

A bill sponsored by Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) would attempt to address those issues by appropriating \$10 million of general fund money to the state Board of Water and Soil Resources for a set-aside program to provide short-term economic assistance to landowners.

The bill (HF3240) would allow farmers with land in a county under a presidential disaster declaration in 1998 or 1999 to set aside up to 160 acres of farming property for payment eligibility for a period of three years.

An amendment, offered by Rep. Julie Storm (R-St. Peter) and incorporated into the bill by the House Agriculture Policy Committee on Feb. 23, would extend eligibility to include farmers in counties that receive presidential disaster declarations in the future.

The committee approved the bill and referred it to the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

Bruce Kleven, a lobbyist for the Minnesota Wheat and Barley Association, pledged support for the bill.

"As the farming community is very aware, weather can, at times, be very unpredictable," he said. "Certainly this is an initiative that could help our guys out."

Language in the bill states that payments to farmers under the program would be based on soil rental rates established by the federal Conservation Reserve Program.

One complaint farmers have about aid available for disaster relief through the Conservation Reserve Program is that participation in the program ties up property for a period of 10 years, Finseth said. A three-year time limit on participation in the proposed land set-aside program is in response to such concerns, he added.

Under Finseth's bill, land already covered by the Conservation Reserve Program would not be eligible to receive additional aid.

Finseth said if the bill were to become law, a program application process would need to be established and landowners would likely apply for set-aside aid on a first-come, first-served basis.

★ CHILDREN

Warning labels for Web porn

Sexually explicit images on the Internet should have warning labels, says Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake), and those labels should be posted before any of those images appear.

Olson is sponsoring a bill (HF3662) that would require all sexually explicit images that originate in Minnesota to show the warning. Because the bill only refers to Minnesotans, Olson said he believes the bill would pass constitutional muster.

Dubbing the bill the "Internet Parent Information Act," Olson said he hopes the legislation would keep pornographic images away from children. The Regulated Industries Subcommittee of the House Commerce Committee approved the measure Feb. 23.

The Commerce Committee was scheduled to discuss the matter the evening of Feb. 24, after this edition of *Session Weekly* went to press.

Other forms of pornography already place warnings on the product, such as colored plastic wrappers covering magazines. The definition of a sexually explicit image would not change from current law, Olson said.

Internet providers and search engine operators would not be held responsible for the display of the images, according to the bill.

The bill also would create the ability for individuals to sue an Internet site for failing to comply with the act.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) wondered what percent of Internet pornography actually originates in Minnesota. Olson said he has not seen any research that shows where the images originate.

Kahn also asked if other states are pursuing similar laws. Olson said he is not aware of any. He said his bill could be a model for other states or the federal government to warn Internet users.

★ CONSUMERS

Privacy on the Internet

Internet patrons should know if information about them is being collected, said Rep. Jim Seifert (R-Woodbury).

Seifert is sponsoring a bill (HF3731) that would require a state or local government agency that provides online services to disclose

the privacy policy. Seifert said consumers should know who is collecting the information, how it is being used, and for how long it will be used.

The Regulated Industries Subcommittee of the House Commerce Committee approved the bill Feb. 23. The Commerce Committee was scheduled to take up the matter the evening of Feb. 24, after this issue of *Session Weekly* went to press.

Seifert's bill would prevent unknown harvesting of information by the government or Internet providers.

While federal lawmakers are working through bills to keep Internet information private, Seifert said the state can pass a bill that "creates a foundation."

If an organization can track what sites an Internet consumer has visited, the organization could predict whether the consumer has children, the consumer's income, race, and religion, Seifert said.

The bill would require state agencies and Internet providers to disclose any information collected on a person upon request by that individual. The individual would have the right to correct any errors in the information.

The measure would be enforced through civil penalties, Seifert said.

Plan seeks to halt fraud

A bill approved Feb. 23 by the House Civil Law Committee would grant certain businesses access to driver's license pictures to serve as identification for customers using credit cards.

The bill (HF3200), sponsored by Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), would allow stores to purchase photo equipment and access the photos, which are currently classified as private.

Here's how the program works. A customer steps to the cash register to purchase items with a credit card. The store employee swipes the card. Automatically, a picture of the customer appears on a screen, verifying the person is using his or her own credit card.

Cort Holten, an attorney who is lobbying for Image Data Corporation of New Hampshire, testified before the committee. Holten said the photos would be stored in a separate and "incorruptible" database. Customers could opt-in to the program; participation would not be mandatory.

The photo imaging program aims to curb

the high volume of fraud that stores continue to face, Holten said.

"This type of system so vastly eclipses what we currently do," Holten said. "This is a system where security people won't have to compete with the technology of crooks."

The computer screen would provide a large photo — about 3 inches by 5 inches. However, the screen would show nothing else, Holten said.

"The store clerk gets no other information. Your street address, your height, weight, whether you are an organ donor, is unavailable," he said.

Consumers would file paperwork choosing to participate at the bank or business. Consumers who choose to not participate could still show a driver's license to clerks.

Rep. Phil Carruthers (DFL-Brooklyn Center) said clerks should still ask for a driver's license, even if this program is implemented.

"I think retailers would be making a mistake relying on these only," Carruthers said.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) wondered what the cost of the bill would be. Stanek said the fiscal impact has not been finalized.

The attorney general's office would handle any liability issues with improper display of pictures.

The bill now goes to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

★ CRIME

Photocop is watching

Cars that zip through red lights are not just breaking the law — they are dangerous to others, Michael Gillen, traffic engineer with the state Department of Transportation, told lawmakers.

The number of stop light violations in some areas of the Twin Cities is alarming, Gillen said. A recent motion imaging test project at Snelling and St. Anthony avenues in St. Paul yielded 5,300 violations in 700 hours of study — an average of 179 violations each day.

Gillen told the House Crime Prevention Committee on Feb. 22 about the "photocop" program, where a camera placed on a pole takes a snapshot of cars that proceed through a stop light after the light has turned red.

"They are not photographed if they have passed through a yellow light," Gillen said.

Forty other countries and several U.S. cities are using the photographic tool to curb traffic signal violations, Gillen said.

Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls) is sponsoring a bill (HF3322) that would allow three cities to implement the program. The cities would be allowed to dispense fines similar to parking tickets — the vehicle owner would be responsible for paying the fine, regardless of who was driving the car.

"Once these are out there, people will drive differently," Biernat said.

Gillen said a study showed Minnesotans approve of using cameras at intersections by a four-to-one margin. He said the technology is blind to color, race, sex, or age — it catches all violators.

The camera is positioned purposely to catch the license plate and would not photograph who is inside the vehicle. Violators would be mailed a ticket. Because the fine is treated like a parking ticket, the violation would not affect a person's insurance or driving record.

The cities in the program would have the responsibility to determine the level of the fine, Gillen said.

Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown) said she would like signs placed at intersections where the cameras are installed. Biernat dismissed that idea.

"We don't put up signs that say, 'Warning, speed trap ahead,'" Biernat said. "These people are breaking the law."

Cities would be required to pay for the equipment, Biernat said. Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Bloomington have expressed interest in the program.

The committee took no action on the matter, but the bill is expected to come up again this session.

Crime lab in bonding proposal

The House Judiciary Finance Committee voted Feb. 24 to recommend \$70 million in bonding funds for criminal justice projects.

The proposal, which goes to the House Capital Investment Committee, includes funding for five projects in the Department of Corrections, a grant program to fund public safety training facilities, and money to build a new lab for the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA).

It calls for a study of regional jail facilities, but does not call for bond funds to build any such facilities.

Full funding is provided in the proposal for sewer repair at the Faribault correctional facility, a mental health unit at Red Wing, a special high-security unit at Oak Park Heights, a prison-yard wall repair project at Stillwater, and remodeling of a unit at Lino Lakes.

The committee recommended \$30 million for the BCA lab, which is estimated to cost \$58 million.

Notable omissions from the proposal include requests for new health facilities at the Stillwater prison, a vocational building at the Lino Lakes facility, and an activities building at Willow River.

Scott Arneson, Aitkin County administrator, and Gary Waller, a jail consultant, gave a last minute plea to the committee to fund at least some of the proposed regional jail projects in the state that are ready to go.

Arneson said 21 counties have agreements and plans in place to build regional facilities, which would replace outmoded county jails. He said for many of those counties, their expenses are too high for their tax base to sustain and they need help from the state.

For example, Aitkin County's tax base has increased by about 3 percent annually, he said. The county's corrections costs have increased as much as 30 percent a year at the same time.

He said to cover those costs without substantially raising taxes, the county has taken money from human services benefits. He said many of those are prevention programs designed to keep people out of jail.

Members of the committee said they sympathized with the plight of counties, but they were too strapped by the governor's recommendations for bonding for this year.

"I don't think the issue is with the Judiciary Finance Committee. I think we all support the concept," said Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul). "The issue is that the fiscal parameters of this bonding bill are too small. This is inadequate funding for corrections and the judicial system."

KNOWING NOSE



Patrolman Jason Mork, Ortonville Police Department, holds his police dog Felony during Feb. 24 testimony before the House Judiciary Finance Committee in support of a bill that would provide up to \$150,000 in grants to buy and train drug-sniffing dogs.

Information on criminals

Law enforcement officers need the tools to solve crimes and catch lawbreakers, said Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), but officials lack the information-sharing technology they need.

Stanek is sponsoring a bill (HF3346) that would create an integrated statewide criminal justice network. The bill was approved Feb. 22 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

The system, estimated to cost between \$15 million and \$22 million, would link all state law enforcement records — such as sex offender registration, probation records, and criminal records.

"I think people think this already goes on today," Stanek said.

Minnesotans would be "horrificed" to know law enforcement cannot access other systems, he said.

Stanek said too many defendants are slipping through the system because law enforcement agencies have no vehicle for sharing information.

He suggested the need for an integrated information system is more important than the need for a new Bureau of Criminal Apprehension lab in St. Paul, a project backed by the governor in his bonding recommendations.

Bob Vanasek, former House speaker who now lobbies for Citizens for a Safer Minnesota, said the bill would cut costs elsewhere.

"We're currently spending millions of



Hennepin County Sheriff Pat McGowan testifies for a bill that would improve the criminal justice information system throughout the state. McGowan spoke during a Feb. 22 hearing of the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Governor decides to forgo speech to Legislature

There will be no State of the State address this year.

Gov. Jesse Ventura's office put out a brief press release Feb. 22 citing the "fast pace of this off-year session" as the reason Ventura will not address the 2000 Legislature.

Last year, Ventura addressed a joint session of the Legislature in early March, about two months after his inauguration. He used that occasion to lay out the philosophy of his administration, which included his widely noted declaration that "the free ride is over."

The Minnesota Constitution states, "The governor shall communicate by message to each session of the Legislature information touching the state and country." That requirement can be satisfied by delivering a message in the first year of each two-year session, as Ventura did last year.

Since the Legislature began meeting

annually in 1973, the governor has delivered a message at the beginning of each session, but not always in the second year of the biennium, according to the Legislative Reference Library. In 1976, former Gov. Wendell Anderson sent only a written message to the Legislature.

In recent years, an annual State of the State has been commonplace. The only exception may have been in 1986. There is no record that former Gov. Rudy Perpich gave a State of the State speech that year, but the library did find that Perpich sent a message to the Legislature in late January of that year about how to handle a \$700 million shortfall.

Former Gov. Arne Carlson used the off year as an opportunity to take the show on the road. He gave State of the State speeches away from the Capitol on three occasions, including his 1996 speech at a Minnesota Chamber of Commerce event held at a Bloomington hotel.

dollars on the hodge-podge systems through the state," Vanasek said.

Paul Aasen, assistant commissioner for the Department of Public Safety, spoke on behalf of the governor at the hearing. Aasen said Gov. Jesse Ventura is not supporting any supplemental funding this year.

Stanek said the committee cannot wait for the governor's support.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) said the system is needed now and legislators should not wait for next session.

Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) cautioned Stanek to not create an "either/or" situation where legislators are choosing between integrated information system and the crime lab, estimated to cost \$58 million.

"We have the support to start tracking these criminals," Mahoney said. "These are both important issues."

The bill would require cities to provide a portion of the funding, although the legislation does not cite what the match would be. The committee rejected an amendment that sought to require the state to pay for the entire system.

The measure now goes to the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Murder case strains finances

A bill to help Carlton County pay for the costs of a high-profile 1999 murder trial was considered Feb. 22 by the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

The bill (HF 2112), sponsored by Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown), would provide an

emergency appropriation to the county, which incurred nearly \$80,000 in expenses to prosecute the defendants in the Paul Antonich murder.

Antonich, a 17-year-old Two Harbors boy, was beaten and shot after a minor traffic accident in Duluth. Five men were ultimately convicted of varying roles in the crime.

The case became Carlton County's responsibility because Antonich's body was found in a ditch in the county, just inside the Fond du Lac Indian Reservation.

Pre-trial publicity for the trial of the triggerman, John Steven Martin, required that it be moved to Dakota County. As a result, all the prosecutors, court staff, and defendants had to be lodged and fed in Hastings during the trial.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) asked whether this was a routine or unusual request. Murphy said it is unusual, especially in light of the fact that Carlton County has investigated 13 murders in the past six years and only one of the defendants has been a resident of the county.

County officials also claim the investigation of the Katie Poirier abduction and murder has strained the county's resources, though the county is not yet requesting emergency funds from the Legislature to cover those expenses.

The committee also considered a deficiency request from the Public Safety Department's Division of Emergency Management for \$3.8 million to cover disaster payments from severe weather in 1998 and 1999.

Committee members will consider the requests for inclusion in the omnibus judiciary funding measure.

Shifting defense expenses

The state would pay for investigative work, expert witnesses, and other such costs incurred by public defenders, under a bill advancing in the House.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove) is sponsoring a measure (HF3361) that would shift certain costs from the state's 87 counties to the state Board of Public Defense.

"I believe this type of fees should be controlled by the state," Stanek told the House Crime Prevention Committee on Feb. 18. The committee approved the measure and sent it to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Currently, counties pay for some of the costs generated by the public defender's office, including expert witnesses. When a high-profile trial occurs in an area that is not accustomed to such court cases, the county has to pay the enormous costs, Stanek said.

Counties cannot control or budget for these types of court cases because they are unexpected, Stanek said.

Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown) agreed with Stanek.

"County boards have been talking about this for years, wondering why they have to pay for prosecution and defense," Murphy said.

Kevin Corbid, policy analyst for the Association of Minnesota Counties, told the committee that counties are irritated they pick up the tab.

"It is always easier to spend money when you are not the one paying the bill," Corbid wrote to legislators. "Moving this responsibility to the Board of Public Defense increases the accountability on behalf of defenders who request funding."

Rep. David Bishop (R-Rochester) said counties must be fiscally responsible, and that includes paying for court costs. He noted that the state does not pay for county attorneys.

Stanek said removing the defense fees would free law enforcement and county attorneys to investigate crimes and not be concerned about court costs that could be incurred by the defense.

"I want to de-politicize this process," Stanek said. "I want the county attorney to enforce the laws in this state."

Dick Schurman of the Board of Public Defenders spoke against the bill. He said that legislators have provided deficiency funding to counties in past years when the county had high public defense costs.

Crackdown on fake IDs

Minors who use false identification to purchase alcohol or tobacco could lose their driver's license and face increased penalties,

under a bill sponsored by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley).

Leppik's bill (HF2655) would allow clerks at liquor stores to confiscate what they believe to be false identification cards. The clerk would then be required to turn the identification over to the police or return it to the card's owner within 48 hours.

"My bill is intended to create a meaningful deterrent," Leppik told the House Crime Prevention Committee on Feb. 24. "Currently, there are very few penalties for using fake IDs."

However, there are heavy consequences for retailers, such as temporary loss of their liquor licenses, if they sell alcohol to minors, Leppik said.

Robert Pomplun of Loss Control Services has worked in the liquor business for 30 years. Because of the Internet, minors have easy access to obtaining false identification cards, Pomplun said.

"The amount of fake IDs used by kids is just huge," Pomplun said. "Minnesota has a real problem with fake IDs that isn't getting attention."

The committee delayed a vote on the bill while awaiting additional language for tobacco sales. The bill will be discussed further at an upcoming hearing.

Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji) said that if the identification was real, the card owner would probably stand at the counter and demand the police to come and authenticate it. If the card was false identification, the minors would probably run away, Fuller said.

Currently, people under age 21 who attempt to purchase alcohol with false identification face a misdemeanor penalty. Leppik proposed to increase the penalty to a gross misdemeanor.

Rep. Peg Larsen (R-Lakeland) said a gross misdemeanor on a first offense was too harsh.

The committee agreed and amended the bill to make a second violation a gross misdemeanor.

David Hall, co-owner of the Mermaid Supper Club in Mounds View, said the gross misdemeanor language is needed.

"Nothing happens to these kids," Hall said. "The police know it; the kids know it. It's a joke."

Hall stressed that these offenders are 19 or 20 years old and they are fully aware that they are breaking the law when they attempt to buy alcohol.

★ EDUCATION

Background checks for assistants

A bill that would require unlicensed teaching assistants to undergo criminal background

checks before being hired was approved Feb. 22 by the House Education Policy Committee.

The bill (HF3402), sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), would add educational aides, assistants, and specialists to the list of school employees required by law to submit to a check prior to employment.

Entenza said he introduced the bill because he is concerned that current state law allows for a small percentage of instructors to enter classrooms without having to undergo background checks.

"Unfortunately, and may I add recently, we've discovered there are some who slip through the cracks," he said.

As an example, Entenza said a background check on unlicensed foreign language instructor Kristin Osterbauer, who was accused of engaging in inappropriate conduct with a student last fall, would have revealed her past problems with alcohol that could have kept her from teaching junior high students.

Osterbauer, who served as an instructor at Eagle River Junior High School in Savage, was charged in November 1999 with first-degree criminal sexual conduct and providing alcohol to a minor shortly after accusations surfaced that she had sex with a 13-year-old student.

Although Osterbauer wasn't a licensed teacher, she taught two sections of Spanish in addition to working as an assistant. She was fired from her position in December.

"By making sure that everyone teaching in a classroom setting has undergone a criminal background check, we can avoid these types of situations," Entenza said.

Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan) asked whether an expanded scope of background checks would delay school districts' hiring processes.

"Remember, you're weighing the safety of students against the convenience of hiring," replied Bob Meeks, director of governmental



Fridley resident Connie Bernardy, a parent organizer for Save Our Schools, testifies Feb. 22 in support of a bill that would require criminal background checks for unlicensed classroom instructors.

relations for the Minnesota School Boards Association.

Criminal background checks cost between \$10 and \$30, which must be paid by the applicant.

The bill now moves to the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Sharing student information

School officials would be allowed to share information with teachers and other school staff about students who have a prior criminal history, under a bill sponsored by Rep. Andrew Westerberg (R-Blaine).

The bill (HF2672) would allow the information to be distributed between school districts if it is shared in good faith. Districts would be immune from criminal or civil actions that might result from sharing the information.

The House Civil Law Committee considered the bill Feb. 21 and is expected to include the measure in a larger data privacy bill.

During his discussion, Westerberg mentioned shootings at schools in Jonesboro, Ark., and Littleton, Colo. While Westerberg acknowledged the bill would not eliminate concerns about violence, he said the legislation could help teachers and staff be aware of problems before they occur.

The bill has the support of the Department of Public Safety, Westerberg said.

Julia Corneil, a counselor at Centennial High School, told the committee that the information would be helpful to teachers.

"We value confidentiality," Corneil said. "But in some instances we'd like to be able to share that data. Right now, we don't feel we are legally able to do that."

Don Helmstetter, superintendent of the Spring Lake Park School District, said a student could be expelled from one school and transfer to another district. Then the second district would have no way of knowing why that student had been expelled.

"This is not a theoretical situation," Helmstetter said.

Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) expressed concern about the bill. He asked if the information could be limited to people who have direct contact with the child.

"If this passes, it sounds like every adult in the school gets to hear this information," Mahoney said.

Don Gemberling, director of information policy for the Department of Administration, said the bill is narrowly targeted to students with criminal history, and not other problems, such as chemical dependency or family troubles.

Westerberg said he would like to see teachers get even more information on their students.

"I think we need to open the lines of information," Westerberg said. "The more we know about our children the better we can help them."

Coaches as bus drivers

In a school with only 365 students, it is common to transport very small groups to athletic and academic events, said John Hornung, superintendent of Nicollet Public Schools.

Hornung said his southern Minnesota school district often struggles to find drivers for such occasions.

Rather than paying drivers to transport mostly empty buses to events within 60 miles of Nicollet, Hornung would like to allow coaches to drive vans or minibuses carrying the small groups of students. But the superintendent doesn't believe the coaches should be required to obtain commercial driver's licenses.

Hornung testified at a Feb. 22 hearing of the House Transportation Policy Committee in favor of a bill that would allow that practice.

"If you check across the state, finding a bus driver is almost impossible," Hornung said.

Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet) is sponsoring a bill (HF3145) that would allow a per-

son with a Class D license (the basic driver's license in Minnesota) to drive a school bus if there were 15 or fewer passengers. That would allow coaches to drive a bus, minibus, or van to events.

The bill also calls for several other changes related to school bus drivers.

Under the measure, a person could drive a school bus for up to 180 days without the proper license if the person meets qualifications for license endorsement. That would allow drivers to begin training and working before they take the test to get the endorsement.

In addition, the bill would allow non-physicians such as chiropractors and advanced practice nurses to perform the required physical examinations on bus drivers.

Brad Lundell, lobbyist for Minnesota Association for Pupil Transit, spoke against the bill. Lundell said Minnesotans recognize the color and shape of Minnesota school buses, and they expect drivers to be qualified.

"The training has to be there, and the operators must be licensed," Lundell said.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) said she believes schools would require coaches to complete bus driving training.

"I have a feeling that there isn't a school district out there that doesn't understand the liability involved," Molnau said. Insurance companies would almost certainly require training, she added.

Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park)

LEARNING THE TRADE



Five-year-old Kyle Petersburg of Kennedy visits with Rep. David Tomassoni during a Feb. 22 hearing of the House Education Policy Committee. Kyle, who is a neighbor of Rep. Jim Tunheim, was shadowing his legislator all day.

said she favors the existing system.

"The issue is safety of children," Johnson said. "And that's why we have the endorsement."

The committee set the bill aside for further discussion.

★ ELECTIONS

Election law adjustments

A bill that would make minor changes in state election laws was approved Feb. 18 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

The bill (HF2826), sponsored by Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall), would specify that some provisions related to general elections also apply to special elections, among other minor changes.

It would change the beginning date of the terms of office for soil and water conservation district supervisors, school board members, town officers, and hospital district officers to conform with those of other elected offices. Those terms would begin the first Monday in January instead of Jan. 1.

And voter registration forms that are submitted with driver's license applications would have to be sent within 10 business days to the county auditor, under the bill.

Currently, there is no time limit for the public safety department to send the forms to the county auditor. Sometimes there has been such a long delay that people find that they are not registered when they go to vote, said Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer.

Some committee members proposed amendments to the bill that would allow a major political party to designate a different date for a the party's caucus.

Current law requires caucuses to be held the first Tuesday in March of a general election year. But the state DFL party has scheduled its caucuses this year on the weekend of March 11 to try to encourage more participation. That date has not been publicized by the secretary of state. Election information that the office has published this year has used the statutory date, which is March 7.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) said that traditionally, when a law interferes with such a change by a political party, the law has been thrown out.

Kahn and Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) each proposed amendments that would require the secretary of state to notify the public in those types of situations. But both amendments were defeated.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

★ EMPLOYMENT

Penalties for safety violations

In 1998, Patrick Randel, a college student from Buffalo, Minn., was on his ninth day of work for Buffalo Bituminous, a construction company, when he died. Randel was sent down into a manhole with no oxygen, and he suffocated.

Randel's mother Margaret said that according to an Occupational Safety and Health Administration report, the company deliberately ignored safety regulations. Yet, she said, the only compensation the family was able to recover were the costs of Patrick's funeral.

"His death was a senseless tragedy that should never have happened," she said.

The House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee approved a bill Feb. 22 that would provide a minimum \$50,000 penalty, paid to the state, against an employer who commits a willful or repeated OSHA violation that leads to the death of an employee.

Rep. Bruce Anderson (R-Buffero Township), the bill's sponsor, said that the measure offers a small step in addressing inadequacies in current state law.

The committee also approved an amendment, offered by Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville), which would set the minimum penalty for a serious violation at \$25,000.

McElroy's amendment also would allow the next of kin of a deceased employee to participate in the process of reviewing and challenging citations issued to the employer.

Roger McBride, safety director for Ames Construction in Burnsville, spoke against the bill.

"I'm concerned whenever we try to apply quick fix solutions to complex problems," McBride said.

McBride said that OSHA's definition of a "serious" violation differs from what many may regard as serious. He said that his company was once cited for a serious violation when an employee was not wearing his safety goggles but had them in his hand.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) offered an amendment that would allow workers injured on the job and descendents of workers killed on the job to seek civil damages. Rukavina said the bill as written would do little to address the problem. He said that fines would go to the state, rather than the families. The amendment failed on a 12-9 roll call vote.

Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin) offered a similar amendment designed to permit civil action when a worker is killed on the job, the employer knowingly violated a safety regulation, and the violation was substantial in contributing to the death. Leighton's amendment also failed by a 12-9 roll call vote.

The bill was sent to the Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.



Margaret Randel of Buffalo describes how her 19-year-old son died on the job as a result of unsafe work practices. She spoke Feb. 22 before the House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee in support of a bill that would penalize companies that violate safety regulations.

Itemizing energy costs

Electric utilities would have to itemize costs for generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity, under a bill approved Feb. 21 by the Regulated Industries Subcommittee of the House Commerce Committee.

Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville) is sponsoring a bill (HF2996) that would require industries to separate billing costs and pass that information on to consumers.

Each company would be required to develop its own system and guidelines on how it splits costs. The bill would require utilities to say the source of the power, be it nuclear, hydropower, coal, or wind.

Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) offered an amendment that would require the electric utilities to disclose emissions from the plants, such as carbon dioxide, mercury or spent nuclear fuel.

The emissions would be tracked under the standard guidelines already in place with the Department of Commerce.

The committee approved the amendment.

Linda Taylor, assistant commissioner of the Commerce Department's Energy Division, spoke in favor of Jennings' amendment, saying she wants to make sure consumers understand the information.

"If providing this information leads to people turning off lights, it will save many kilowatts of energy," Taylor said.

The subcommittee approved another amendment that stated utilities would have to provide the cost breakdown in customer's utility bills at least twice a year. Originally, the legislation said the separation information should be in all monthly bills.

The bill was sent to the full Commerce Committee.

Energy loan program

Officials from the Department of Commerce told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee on Feb. 21 of the need to continue a loan program geared towards energy conservation measures.

Linda Taylor, an assistant commissioner of the department, said that the agency is requesting \$8 million for the Energy Investment Loan Program. The program extends loans to schools and local governments for projects to make buildings more energy efficient. The governor has recommended funding of \$2.5 million.

Janet Streff, the manager of the department's Energy Programs, Information and Technologies Division, said the program was created in 1983 as the Public School Energy Loan Program.

In 1987 the scope was expanded to include loans to cities and counties.

Streff said the program is financed by the state selling general obligation bonds. The bond proceeds are then issued as loans.

The program has not operated since 1998 because bonding authority has been exhausted, Streff said. The department would like to start issuing loans again.

"The program is 100 percent user-financed," she said. "Money to repay the loans is generated from the energy cost savings."

She said most school districts, cities, and counties own large energy consuming buildings that were built before concern over energy use and cost was an issue. She said that other budget needs prohibit governments from making energy conservation improvements high priorities, even though the improvements often pay for themselves.

Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls) asked when the program would no longer be needed because energy efficiency goals have been met.

Jeremy De Fiebre, the program's grant specialist, said new technology continues to become available, creating an ongoing need for energy efficiency improvements.

Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul) asked if the department would be opposed to changing the structure of the program into a revolving loan program.

Taylor said the department would support that type of change so officials don't need to continually come before the Legislature to request bonding funds.

The request may be considered for inclusion in the committee's bonding recommendations, which will be passed along to the House Capital Investment Committee.

★ **ENVIRONMENT****Concerns about fuel additive**

A ban on a gasoline additive that has caused severe water pollution in some states was debated Feb. 24 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Gas that is blended with methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE) has contaminated water in some U.S. states.

The committee approved a bill (HF3292), sponsored by Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea), that would take a step toward banning MTBE in Minnesota by allowing gasoline to contain only 0.1 percent of the compound.

Currently, MTBE is not used in Minnesota's gasoline supply, but it is used in nearly one-third of the gasoline in the United States, Dorman said.

The compound is an alternative fuel additive to ethanol.

As other states ban the chemical, Dorman said the glut of gasoline with MTBE could be sent to Minnesota unless it is banned.

"This would be a pre-emptive strike," he said.

But some state officials said it would be impossible to keep out trace amounts of MTBE.

Dorman's bill had originally proposed banning MTBE, but the committee moved to allow 0.1 percent of the compound in gasoline, based on recommendations from the state Pollution Control Agency and the Weights and Measures Division of the Department of Public Service.

Gasoline is moved through common pipelines throughout the country, so traces of MTBE can be found in almost all gasoline. If the state completely bans the chemical, some retailers fear that they would be forced to shut down their gas pumps.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

Lighted fishing lures

Minnesotans can manufacture and sell lighted fishing lures, but under state law, they cannot use them while fishing.

A bill (HF3352) that would allow anglers to use those types of lures was approved Feb. 22 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley), sponsor of the bill, said the lures are used in neighboring

First committee deadline approaching

The House voted Feb. 24 to formally set the committee deadlines for the 2000 session, and the first deadline is coming up fast.

The first deadline will be **Friday, March 3**. By that date, policy bills must pass out of necessary committees in the house of origin.

The second committee deadline will be **Friday, March 10**. By that date, committees must act favorably on bills, or companions of bills, that met the first deadline in the other chamber. That means all bills other than those containing appropriations must pass out of committee in the both the House and the Senate to remain alive for consideration.

The third deadline will be **Friday, March 17**. All omnibus finance bills, which are exempt from the first two deadlines, must pass out of committee by that date.

Of course, there are exceptions to the deadlines. The taxes committees and rules committees in both bodies are exempt. And a bill can be heard after the deadlines if the rules committee in either body grants its permission.

states. The lures generally cost less than \$5.

Committee members questioned whether the bill would have an impact on the number of fish people are allowed to catch. Lighted lures alone are not expected to dramatically increase the number of fish caught in the state, said Ron Payer, chief of the fisheries section of the Department of Natural Resources.

However, Payer said, the combined effects of the lures and other types of new technology could lead to adjusting limits in the future.

Some committee members were concerned that batteries that are swallowed by fish or lost in the water would create environmental problems, but Gerlach said the surrounding states have not experienced such problems.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

Adding recycling at plants

A proposal to build two recycling facilities was heard Feb. 21 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

Both facilities would be built near waste-to-energy facilities, one of which serves Pope and Douglas counties and the other serves Dodge and Olmsted counties.

Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria), sponsor of the bill (HF2765), said it would help both areas conserve landfill space. The facilities burn solid waste and convert it to energy. The leftover ash from the facilities is put in landfills.

Cassell said the landfill space is limited and the populations in those areas are growing. Building the recycling facilities would cut down on the items sent to the waste-to-energy facilities. That would in turn reduce the amount of ash that is sent to the landfills.

Neither proposal is included in Gov. Jesse Ventura's capital investment plan.

The bill would spend nearly \$5 million for the two projects. The money would go to the Office of Environmental Assistance, which would then administer grants for the two projects.

The proposal could be included in the committee's omnibus bonding bill.

New DNR building proposed

A proposal to build a new \$5 million office building in Fergus Falls is among the top priorities of the Department of Natural Resources, but an alternative plan was discussed Feb. 21 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

Gov. Jesse Ventura has included the \$5 million request in his capital budget plan. The alternative is proposed in a bill (HF2734) sponsored by Rep. Bob Westfall (R-Rothsay) that would allow the DNR to buy a Pelican Rapids building for \$1 million.

Currently, the DNR employees in Fergus

Falls work in a renovated horse barn. The DNR leases space in the building for \$31,000 per year.

Deputy Commissioner Steve Morse said the DNR has been seeking to build a new facility for about six years. The Legislature had approved a plan for a new facility in 1996, but it was vetoed by former Gov. Arne Carlson.

The Pelican Rapids building is currently owned by the Lake Region Electrical Cooperative. Dave Weaklend, general manager of the cooperative, said a new headquarters was built because the organization needed an additional 60,000 square feet of space.

Weaklend said the offer to sell the old facility includes furniture in the building, so the DNR could move in immediately. The amount of office and storage space in the building and its adjacent out-buildings is comparable to the

amount that is proposed for the new Fergus Falls facility.

In addition, the facility would mainly house conservation agents, who would be doing most of their work outside the office.

But Morse said he and other DNR employees looked at the Pelican Rapids building and decided it would be more feasible to build a new building. The Pelican Rapids building is 40 years old, and the costs of renovating it to make it comply with Americans with Disabilities Act standards and other building code requirements would cost about \$2 million.

The major expenses would include adding an elevator, renovating bathrooms, and improving the insulation of the building to make it more energy efficient.

The committee will consider the matter again when committee members assemble their bonding recommendations for this year.

THREE-DIMENSIONAL GRAPH



Dag Knudsen, who does presentation and sales training for technical professionals, uses a three-dimensional graph to compare construction costs, left, and maintenance and operational costs, center, to fees collected by architects, engineers, surveyors, landscape architects, geoscientists, and interior design services, right. His testimony came Feb. 23 before the House Capital Investment Committee, which was considering a bill that would provide exceptions in the bid solicitation process. No action was taken on the measure.

★ FAMILY

Church day care centers

A bill that would permit a church or religious organization to operate a day care program under the rules governing family day care and group family day care was approved Feb. 22 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), is an attempt to increase nonresidential childcare options for parents.

"What I like about this bill is that it gives churches a chance to step in and help both the families and communities they serve," Sykora said.

Under current law, a church or religious organization that provides nonresidential child care centers is required to operate under the rules for a child care center, which are considerably more strict.

This bill would allow private day care organizations greater flexibility to operate, while limiting the number of children served in a church setting to 14. A church participating in a partnership with a child care provider would likely donate the space and use of utilities, Sykora said.

Day care centers housed in churches would also still require a license.

The bill was referred to the House Family and Early Childhood Finance Committee.

Nursing mothers off juries

Nursing mothers would be excluded from jury duty under a bill the House passed Feb. 21. The vote was 128-0.

The bill (HF1865), sponsored by Rep. Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), originally applied only to women who are solely responsible for the daily

care of the child and are not regularly employed outside the household.

The bill was amended on the House floor, to include all nursing mothers, whether they are employed outside their homes or not.

According to the bill passed by the House, all nursing mothers would be exempted from serving on a jury.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

★ **GAME & FISH**

New revenue for resources

A proposal to expand who pays for the management of the state's natural resources was considered Feb. 18 by the House Taxes Committee.

The bill (HF1092), sponsored by Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), would transfer what amounts to a sales tax on lottery tickets from the state's general fund to the game and fish fund.

The committee took no action on the measure, which may be considered for inclusion in this year's omnibus tax bill.

Holsten's plan is one alternative to add to the current revenue sources for the Department of Natural Resources, which officials say faces funding shortfalls in the coming years.

There is no actual sales tax collected when a person buys a lottery ticket. In lieu of the sales tax, an amount equal to 6.5 percent of the gross receipts collected from the sale of lottery tickets is credited to the general fund.

Forty percent of the remaining proceeds collected from ticket sales goes to the state's environmental and natural resources trust fund. Other proceeds also go to the general fund.

The game and fish fund receives much of its funding from the sale of fishing and hunting licenses.

Holsten said that under the bill the game and fish fund would receive between \$12 million and \$25 million more each year. He said that the state's philosophy toward managing its natural resources is shifting.

"There has been a change in management style from the fish to the water. We have stopped managing pheasants and started managing the habitat," Holsten said.

And because of that change, Holsten said it is only fair that all

Minnesotans, rather than just those who fish and hunt, should contribute toward managing natural resources.

Bill Berhjem, the director of the Department of Natural Resources Enforcement Division, said the additional funds would help restore staffing levels to 1993 standards. He said that many of the department's

conservation officers were hired in the late 1960s are now approaching retirement age.

"Our concern is that we're in a demographic bubble," Berhjem said.

He said that the department already is short 30 to 40 officers and in the next three years. Fifteen to 20 are expected to retire each year.

★ **GOVERNMENT**

New rule for House prayer

The House voted Feb. 24 to scrap requirements that the prayer that precedes each floor session be "nondenominational" and that it respect the "religious diversity of the House."

The Permanent Rules of the House now require only that there be "a prayer by the chaplain."

"It is difficult, if not impossible, to construct an individual prayer that respects the diversity of the entire House," said Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan). "If you're going to have diversity, you've got to allow it."

The measure to change the rule came in the form of a report from the House Rules Committee, which Pawlenty chairs. Two votes were taken on the measure — one to strike the word "nondenominational" (passed 79-52) and one to strike the language related to "religious diversity" (passed 71-60).

The rules related to the prayer have been a source of controversy since they were altered early in the 1999 session. The issue was raised after a choir performing as part of opening day events last year sang a song that included several references to Jesus Christ and that struck some as being uncomfortably sectarian.

Critics of the 1999 change said that the attempt to be sensitive to diverse religious beliefs resulted in a rule seeking "homogenized" prayer that would not allow that diversity to be expressed.

"I want to be able to be exposed to everything," said Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby). "I'm voting for this rule because I'm not afraid of other religious beliefs."

But some lawmakers expressed doubts that the rule change will do anything to foster the expression of diverse beliefs.

Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley) said that the notion that the diversity is seen by considering all the prayers given throughout the course of the year, rather than focusing on each day, doesn't hold up.

"Over 10 years, I think I can count on one hand the number of times I have heard a rabbi lead us in prayer," she said. "I recall once that we had a Native American religious leader."

This is the second time this year that lawmakers have wrestled with the prayer rule. On

the first day back, Rep. Doug Reuter (Ind.-Owatonna) made a motion to ditch the changes made last year. His proposal won a 69-63 majority of votes, but it failed to muster the two-thirds support (or 90 votes) needed because it had not been through the committee process.

★ **HEALTH**

Tobacco money for health care

A proposal that would use tobacco settlement funds to offset health care costs and cut taxes cleared its second hurdle Feb. 21.

The House Health and Human Services Finance Committee approved the bill (HF2716), sponsored by Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), and referred it to the House Taxes Committee.

The bill would transfer some of the one-time tobacco settlement money and the ongoing payments into the state's health care access fund and provide for a contingent elimination of both the 1 percent premium tax and MinnesotaCare provider tax beginning Jan. 1, 2001.

Bradley's bill would attempt to provide some relief from rising health care coverage costs. The bill has the potential to provide the greatest amount of aid to low-income patients and fixed-income senior citizens with substantial pharmaceutical costs, Bradley said.

Information provided by the Minnesota Taxpayers Association notes the poorest 10 percent of Minnesotans account for only about 1 percent of income earned. However, that same group pays 2.6 percent of the MinnesotaCare tax, while the richest 10 percent pay a far less percentage of their total income to the tax.

A 1999 law used one-time tobacco funds to establish three endowments — one to fund tobacco use prevention, one to finance medical education programs, and one to pay for public health efforts.

Bradley's bill would not affect the endowments established last year. It would draw on separate revenues owed to the state from tobacco companies.

Air quality in schools

A bill that would set minimum air filtration standards for new school buildings and require future school facilities to monitor the quality of indoor and outdoor airflow was presented to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee on Feb. 23.

"Indoor air quality is becoming a leading health concern in public schools and I believe that we need to take steps to assure that the

schools we build in the future are places that are safe and healthy for students to learn," said Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover), sponsor of the bill.

According to Tingelstad, 25 percent of Minnesota's population spends nearly every day inside a public school. More needs to be done to help prevent health problems caused by airborne particles, she said.

Her bill (HF3097) would take a proactive approach toward regulating air quality in school buildings, she said.

School buildings constructed after July 1, 2002, would be affected by the bill. The bill targets monitoring indoor and outdoor air-flow in new schools every 10 years beginning in 2010.

Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings) asked if the bill were to later become law, what kind of fiscal impact would it have on the school construction process.

Norm Chaffer of the Department of Children, Families and Learning said the spending increase for improved equipment would be slight and that it would be offset in the form of cost savings down the road.

"In the long run, an improved system will be more efficient and cost effective," Chaffer said. The committee took no action on the bill, but will consider it at a later date for inclusion in the K-12 omnibus spending bill.

★ HIGHER EDUCATION

Effort to save college

Anoka-Hennepin Technical College would remain open, despite plans by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system to close it, under a bill considered Feb. 18 by the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

The bill (HF2649), sponsored by Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka), would allot \$14.7 million to replace and repair the school's heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems.

Supporters of the bill argue that the MnSCU board acted hastily and without proper research when they voted in January to close the facility.

"We intend to find a way to serve the students of MnSCU," Abeler said. "This is not a partisan matter; this is a battle about mission. Our missions are similar."

However, MnSCU officials said students would be best served at alternative institutions.

Morrie Anderson, chancellor of the system, recommended a "program realignment," which would involve a relocation of Anoka-Hennepin programs to the separate Hennepin Technical College and Anoka-Ramsey Community College.

He said the board decided to close the



Supporters of a bill that would appropriate \$14.7 million in bond proceeds to repair and remodel facilities at Anoka-Hennepin Technical College listen to Feb. 18 testimony on the bill before the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

school because of high building maintenance costs and low population projections. In fact, Anderson said, Abeler's bill "leaves future liability for work left undone."

Nearly 2,900 students are enrolled in Anoka-Hennepin Technical College this year.

Health care training programs are a primary function for the school. Health care industry officials expressed concern that the profession would lose the graduates the school provides to the field each year.

Cheryl Streit, director of corporate human resources at Fairview Hospitals, said Minnesota will need thousands of new health care workers next year. She said the field can't afford to lose one school or even one student.

Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph) asked how many graduates of Anoka-Hennepin Technical College enter health care professions each year.

College officials estimated there will be 720 such graduates this year, well below the demand.

"We're not going to make it," Dehler said.

Although the college might not be able to fuel the health care profession on its own, proponents of the bill argue it is a quality institution and should not be closed.

"There are not frills at AHTC; this is strictly education for employment," said Ed Schones, a lobbyist for Education Minnesota. "The state may or may not save money by closing AHTC, but they would be giving up a valuable investment."

★ RECREATION

New terms for park permits

Annual permits for state park visitors would be valid for one year after the date of purchase, under a bill that was approved Feb. 21 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

Currently, annual park permits are only valid for the calendar year, which discourages people from buying them in the late summer or fall, said Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), sponsor of the bill.

She said the proposal would likely increase the number of annual permits that are sold and encourage more visits to state parks year-round.

Bill Morrissey, director of the Department of Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Division, said the department estimates it could sell about 5,000 more permits per year, based on survey results.

The change likely would make enforcement more difficult than the current system, where an annual permit is distinctive and easy for park employees to see. But Morrissey said it would not be much more difficult under Leppik's proposal because the sticker would be designed to clearly show the month and year it expires.

The bill (HF2505) now moves to the House floor.

★ TAXES

Cut in gambling taxes proposed

A bill that would reduce taxes on lawful gambling for the third straight year was considered Feb. 22 by the House Taxes Committee.

Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee), the sponsor of the measure, said her proposal would keep more charitable money in local communities where it belongs.

The committee took no action on the bill but will consider it later for inclusion in the omnibus tax package.

The bill (HF2715) would reduce the tax on paddlewheels, raffles, and bingo from 9 percent of gross receipts after prizes to 7.5 percent. The tax on pull-tabs and tipboards would be reduced from 1.8 percent of gross receipts to 1.5 percent.

Taxes on combined receipts or gross receipts from pull-tabs and tipboards for an organization receives more than \$500,000 annually would be reduced as little as 0.3 percent or as much as 0.9 percent. Under this provision, the more an organization takes in, the greater a tax reduction it would receive.

King Wilson, the executive director of Allied Charities of Minnesota, a nonprofit organization that lobbies for charitable gambling causes, said that in 1998 the gross receipts from charitable gambling were more than \$1.4 billion. Organizations paid out more than \$1.1 billion in prizes, contributed more than \$77 million to charity, and paid in excess of \$63 million in taxes.

Wilson said that gambling taxes in Minnesota are among the highest in the nation. For example, he said, in 1987 a Columbia Heights sports booster group had charitable contributions of \$22,464 while paying \$7,520 in state gambling taxes. But in 1999, the same organization contributed \$96,387 to charities while paying \$123,270 in taxes.

Mike Burress, president of the Dead Broke Saddle Club in Hugo, said the club contributes to causes such as the Minnesota Special Olympics. But when approached last year by a volunteer fire department that needed equipment including the “jaws of life,” the club couldn’t help out. Burress said it takes the club six months to raise enough funds to pay for taxes alone.

Looking to tax billboards

A proposal to change tax law related to billboards was debated Feb. 21 by the Property Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee.

Most personal property is exempt from property tax, and billboards are generally considered personal property.

The bill (HF2645), sponsored by Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul), would list outdoor advertising devices as personal property subject to property taxes.

Last year, St. Paul residents rejected a referendum question that would have banned billboards in the city. Trimble said the bill is not an attempt to pose any restrictions on billboard advertising in the state. Rather, he said, the bill is an attempt to clarify and bring fairness to a property taxation issue.

Until 1978, billboards were subject to property tax, but a ruling by a tax court that year held them to be exempt personal property. Trimble said currently some counties may be assessing billboards one way and other counties a different way.

Hennepin County Assessor Thomas May said that billboards are not subject to property tax but are considered in the overall property’s value when the assessment is made.

Tom Hauk, owner of Hauk Outdoor Advertising Company, opposed the measure. He said that during a time of a budget surplus, it is questionable why there is a need for new taxes.

He cited a Department of Revenue

document that says the proposal would not add administrative costs for the department but would create significant costs for local government assessors who would be required to evaluate outdoor advertising devices both when they go up and on a continuing basis.

“Billboards are already being taxed. This would amount to a double taxation,” Hauk said.

Reps. William Kuisle (R-Rochester) and James Clark (R-Springfield) questioned whether the definition of outdoor advertising in the bill is too broad and would open up other business signs to property taxation.

Trimble said the intent of the bill was to primarily address freestanding billboards and that he would agree to a more specific definition.

The bill may be considered for inclusion in this year’s omnibus tax package.

Homestead tax clarification

Last year, the Legislature expanded the agricultural homestead tax classification so that a person who farms the land but isn’t actually living on the farm could qualify for homestead status.

The change provided unexpected difficulties for the Department of Revenue.

“It is far and away one of our most difficult programs to administer,” Jennifer Engh, an assistant commissioner of the department, told the House Taxes Committee’s Property Tax Division on Feb. 18.

The new law allowed at least 40 acres of farmland not adjacent to a residence to be considered a homestead if certain conditions were met. Confusion arose over some of the new law’s definitions.

Engh said that the numerous combinations of agricultural partnerships that exist throughout the state are causing part of the problem. From father-son run farms to aunt-and-niece partnerships, the change last year left many wondering whether the new law applied to them. Also what the term “actively farming” actually means is still unclear.

Two bills attempt to clarify some of that confusion. HF2600, sponsored by Rep. Jim Tunheim (DFL-Kennedy), and HF2758, sponsored by Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet), would extend the agricultural homestead classification to certain shareholders of family farm corporations and partners who do not live on the agricultural property.

The bills are identical, and the committee may further consider each for inclusion in this year’s omnibus tax bill.

In order to qualify for full homestead status, both bills would require that the shareholders are actively farming the agricultural property and

they are Minnesota residents. The shareholders also would not be allowed to claim another agricultural homestead in the state, and they would have to live within four townships or cities of the agricultural property.

Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda) said he thought the intent of last year’s legislation was clear.

“It is simple. You don’t have to live on the land to get homestead status as long as you are actively farming the land and you live within the four townships,” Winter said.

★ VETERANS

Merchant marine honors

A proposal to recognize Minnesota’s members of the merchant marine who served in World War II was approved Feb. 18 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

The bill (HF3017), sponsored by Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls), would allow a memorial plaque to be placed in the court of honor on the State Capitol grounds. Biernat said the plaque would be paid for through private donations, so there would be no cost to the state.

Those who served in the merchant marine are not technically veterans, Biernat said, but they worked on ships during the war and many were killed at sea.

None of the committee members opposed the idea, but Paul Mandell, a planner on the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, said there is some concern about the number of places left in the court of honor.

Mandell said he agrees that the merchant marine is worthy of being recognized, but there are only 11 spots left in the court of honor, and many more organizations could argue that they should be recognized.

The bill now moves to the House Rules Committee.



Howard Wilson, Minneapolis, testifies Feb. 18 in front of the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee in favor of a bill that would place a plaque on Capitol grounds to honor the Minnesota members of the World War II merchant marine.

Meeting the demand

Low unemployment prompts lawmakers to focus on training skilled workers in developing industries

By DAVID MAEDA

Historically, Minnesota's economic development initiatives have focused on job creation, in an effort to move unemployed residents of the state into the workforce.

As the state's unemployment rate reaches record low levels at the same time technology is changing the world in the blink of an eye, policy-makers are looking at whether the state's workforce programs are adequately meeting needs.

To get a clearer picture of these issues, last year the Legislature asked for a report examining the way government supports workforce development.

A governor's "mini-cabinet" was established to examine employment and training programs. Its report, entitled *World Competitor — The Governor's Workforce Development Plan*, was released last week. The document is an examination of more than 80 state programs.

It contains several recommendations as to how the state should redirect the focus of existing programs, eliminate redundancy, and develop measurements to continually evaluate the effectiveness of programs.

The plan also recommends steps to address workforce shortages while at the same time moving people who are already employed into better paying jobs.

"This is a start, something we put on the table," Department of Economic Security Commissioner Earl Wilson told the House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee on Feb. 24. "It is not a panacea, not the whole answer, but it is a start."

According to the report, Minnesota's unemployment rate in 1999 was 2.5 percent, much lower than the 5.5 percent level that is considered to be the full employment level by many economists.

To increase the pool of available workers and to ensure that the workers of tomorrow are trained in growing occupational areas, the plan recommends transferring the state's portion of the Workers Development Fund to other areas.

Wilson said the program, which has been used to assist dislocated workers, would con-



Dr. Robert Musgrove, president of Pine Technical College in Pine City, testifies Feb. 22 before the House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee in support of a bill that would create an initiative to foster growth among existing businesses and attract technology companies to the northeast region of the state.

tinue with federal funding that amounts to between \$8 million and \$9 million a year.

Under the proposal, \$4 million of the funds would go to a new emerging worker program. The new program would provide specialized training for 11th and 12th grade students to move into targeted industries.

Some members met this recommendation with criticism. Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) said that the current system already allows students to get adequate vocational training. He said that the state's dislocated workers program is the best in the nation and he questioned the wisdom of changing something that is working well.

Rep. Julie Storm (R-St. Peter) questioned a recommendation to move the state's displaced homemakers program into the dislocated workers program. Storm said that homemakers who have been married for 25-30 years and are suddenly on their own with few marketable skills need the program. They also

need to know the program exists, she said.

Strengthening the connection between the state's higher education system and the marketplace is another component of the governor's plan.

The report also recognizes that because local economies differ, the state's various regions have different needs. The employment issues in the metropolitan area are much different than those in Greater Minnesota.

This is one area where legislators seemed to agree.

Already this session, several bills have been heard that address growing concern over how to keep young people in rural Minnesota and slow down the migration to the Twin Cities area.

A bill (HF2820) sponsored by Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) would make a one-time appropriation of \$1 million for grants to promote Internet access in rural Minnesota.

McElroy's bill has been approved by the House Jobs and Economic Development Policy and Economic Development Finance committees, as well the House Commerce Committee. It is now waiting for action by the House Ways and Means Committee.


A separate bill (HF2604) sponsored by Rep. Bill Hilty (DFL-Finlayson) would establish a public-private corporation, Northern Technology Initiative Inc., that would focus on encouraging growth among existing businesses and attracting technology companies to the northeast region of the state.

Hilty's bill was approved Feb. 22 by the Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee and was sent to the House Government Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls) criticized the governor's development plan's recommendation to eliminate agriculture improvement grants.

"Agriculture is still the state's largest industry. Businesses relating to agriculture are begging for people," Kubly said. "This is removing a small piece but it is a very vital piece. Agriculture is a necessary component of the Minnesota economy."

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) agreed that many of the issues raised in the report need further discussion. But he also agreed with Wilson that the report is a necessary beginning to the discussion.

"It's not perfect but it is a giant step forward. It is the first time we have something on the table that will help the under-employed," he said. 

A green legacy

Plan would provide millions to enhance and protect the environment

By JON FURE

A plan to provide \$195 million to enhance wildlife management and recreation areas, improve wastewater treatment facilities, and reduce water pollution was approved Feb. 18 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

The proposal would spend \$70 million more than Gov. Jesse Ventura's capital budget plan for environment-related initiatives. But proponents of the proposal say it covers only a fraction of the current state needs in those areas.

The bill (HF2651), known as Legacy 2000, is sponsored by Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield). Tuma said the goal of the initiative is to leave a positive legacy for future generations.

"If you talk to Minnesotans and ask them what they cherish most about the state, the majority of them would say something to do with the outdoors," he said. "Minnesotans place a high value on our natural resources."

Most of the money for the initiative would come from the sale of bonds, but some could come from the state's general fund.

One program in Tuma's bill would provide state funds to match donations from people or organizations that support improvements to critical wildlife habitats, which is part of the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program. Since 1986, the program has received \$4.8 million in cash donations and \$16.7 million in land donations. Also, revenue from the critical habitat vehicle license plates brings in about \$615,000 per year for that program, which is administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The Legacy 2000 initiative would spend \$3 million for the critical habitat program, while the governor recommended spending only \$1 million.

The DNR ranked the critical habitat program 11th out of its 19 non-building programs. Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), chair of the committee, said that he and other committee members would make that a much higher priority and that the low ranking "makes us question the direction of (the department)."



Whitney Clark testifies Feb. 18 on the shoreline protection portion of the Legacy 2000 bill approved by the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

Another high priority of the committee that is reflected in the Legacy 2000 initiative is a proposal to fund conservation easements along the Minnesota River, known as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

In some areas, surface water carries soil and chemicals from farm fields into the river. The easements require the landowners to stop cultivating the land, so that it can filter out soil and chemicals, help control flooding, and establish wildlife habitat.

Under the conservation program, each \$1 in state funds is matched by \$2.30 in federal funds. So far the state has spent \$10 million that has been matched by \$23 million in federal funds.

The federal matching funds are only available through September 2002. To qualify for the total \$140 million of the remaining federal funds, the state would have to pay \$60

million, which is the amount that is proposed in Tuma's initiative. Of that \$60 million, \$20 million would be funded through bonds to be sold after July 1, 2002, so those funds would not be counted as part of the total spending in the current biennium.

Steve Hansen, executive director of the Minnesota River Joint Powers Board, said the Legacy 2000 initiative would double the amount of land in the program. And he said it is supported by all of the affected counties.

The governor's recommendation is to spend \$25 million for that conservation program.


Other programs that would be funded under the Legacy 2000 initiative include:

- \$26 million to the Public Facilities Authority for grants to improve wastewater systems in the state, which would be matched by an equal amount of federal funds;
- \$14 million in grants to local governments to establish parks, trails, or scenic areas, which would require 50 percent in matching local funds;
- \$10 million to acquire land for metro greenways;
- \$10 million for improvements to state parks;
- \$10 million for grants to the Department of Agriculture for conservation easements, which would require 50 percent matching funds from counties;
- \$9.5 million to help reduce flooding and restore natural areas in the Red River Valley;
- \$5 million to protect the state's remaining native prairies; and
- \$5 million for a pilot grant program to protect lake shores and river banks from commercial development.

Timing is critical to maximize the benefits of many of the programs, said Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul). The metro greenways program, for example, is designed to acquire remaining natural areas for parks, trails, and scenic areas, and the money will go farther the earlier it is used.

"Land prices are skyrocketing while we're sitting here," he said.

Osthoff added that the bill would spend only about \$22 million in the metro area.

The legacy bill now moves to the House Capital Investment Committee, where it will be considered for inclusion in the committee's omnibus bonding bill. 

Building bridges

Bonding plan would provide \$300 million more for transportation than the governor requested

By CHRIS VETTER

After weeks of discussing Minnesota's outdated transportation infrastructure — from faltering bridges to out-of-shape roads — the House Transportation Finance Committee Feb. 23 approved a \$382.6 million bonding proposal.

The proposal calls for \$55 million in general obligation bonds to be sold for transportation projects, primarily for bridge upgrades. The remaining costs would be paid by bonds paid off by the Trunk Highway Fund.

The plan now heads to the House Capital Investment Committee.

The funding request is dramatically different from the governor's proposal. Gov. Jesse Ventura recommended \$27 million in Trunk Highway Fund bonds; the committee topped that number by \$300 million.

In fact, the governor's total request, combining general obligation and trunk highway fund bonding, was \$67 million for transportation.

In a ranking of bonding priorities, Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska), chair of the committee, placed bridge replacement at the top. Bridges, unlike roads, can be funded through general obligation bonds.

More than 600 bridges in Minnesota need to be replaced in the next two years at a cost of \$44 million, said Ed Cohoon, chief financial officer for the Department of Transportation. There are currently 2,558 deficient bridges in county, city, and township systems.

Cohoon noted that Ventura, who vetoed bridge funding last year, submitted a general obligation bond request of \$30 million.

Julie Skallman, metro division engineer with the Transportation Department, said if the full \$44 million request is not met, the department will select bridges based on what projects have federal matching funds.

Molnau said that not providing funding for bridges would create hazardous conditions.

"The idea is we would actually close those bridges," Molnau said recently.

"They'll probably be in Greater Minnesota, so it doesn't matter anyway," she added sarcastically.

"That bridge would be closed if we thought it was unsafe," Cohoon told the committee. "But I don't think we're at that point."

Delaying repairs on a bridge can hurt a town financially if a bridge is closed, Molnau said. Towns that do not receive funding for a bridge this year can expect to wait for repairs, Molnau said. Because the governor vetoed bridge funds a year ago, it is unlikely he would approve a bonding request in 2001, she added.

Transportation officials predict the total annual investment needed to replace bridges for the next 10 years is \$68 million.

The bridge replacement project was initiated in 1976 and has received an average of \$8 million each year since 1990, according to a department report.

Though bridges are critical needs, road repair is the key component of the trunk highway fund bonding proposal. Approximately \$200 million would be spent in the metropolitan area, with another \$100 million for outstate roads.

"The costs of doing projects in the metro is much greater than the outstate area," Molnau said.

The committee approved funding for a new

\$10.4 million Department of Transportation facility in St. Cloud, along with an \$8.7 million upgrade at its Detroit Lakes headquarters. The Regional Transportation Management Center in Roseville would get \$6.7 million for a new facility, but would be ordered to sell its old facility within three years. The facilities are required by the Minnesota Constitution to be financed through the Trunk Highway Fund.

The committee also approved funding for rail projects. The Minnesota Rail Service Investment program, which initially sought \$12 million for rail upgrades on short lines in the state, was approved for \$5 million in general obligation bonds.


The Capital Investment Committee will consider a proposed \$5 million for the planned upgrades on the DM&E rail line crossing the southern part of the state from Winona to Lake Benton. The railroad sought \$50 million. The DM&E project was sent to the Capital Investment Committee without recommendation to pass and is not included in the Transportation Finance Committee's \$382.6 million bonding request.

Neither rail project was included in the governor's request.

Another \$5 million in general obligation bonds would be appropriated for port development assistance grants, under the committee's plan.

One notable request that was not approved was \$10 million to design a transitway in the Twin Cities. The money would have been used to begin engineering and designs on one bus-only road. The governor has recommended planning and constructing three bus-only transitways at a cost of about \$110 million each.

Rep. Dan Larson (DFL-Bloomington) was critical of the committee's decision to not fund the transitways, saying the bus-only roads are a better option than light rail.

Molnau said the committee will hear a bill later this session that would transfer about \$400 million of the state surplus from the general fund to the trunk highway fund for road upgrades. 

The assistant governor

African-American aide served 14 chief executives from 1904 to 1957

BY LECLAIR G. LAMBERT

When Governor-elect John A. Johnson prepared to move into the new Capitol building late in 1904, he sent a telegram to William F. “Billy” Williams, a young acquaintance and semi-pro baseball player. Johnson wanted him to handle the transfer of official documents, papers, and other details for the office.

The governor-elect felt that only a few men he knew could handle such important duties, and one was Billy Williams. The skill, daring, and determination Williams showed as a star on the baseball field, and the wit and intelligence he displayed when the two first met on the baseball diamond, had impressed the newly elected governor.

Johnson’s offer to Williams created some indecision for the black athlete, who had just been offered a chance at a baseball career with a couple of professional teams. But knowing that discrimination would limit

his chances in baseball and faced with the advice from one big-league scout that he deny his ethnicity and claim to be an American Indian, Williams turned down his chance to pursue a life in baseball.

The governor-elect convinced him that a job at the Capitol would be more meaningful for him as a bellwether for his race’s sparse population in the area.

So Williams, who was a St.

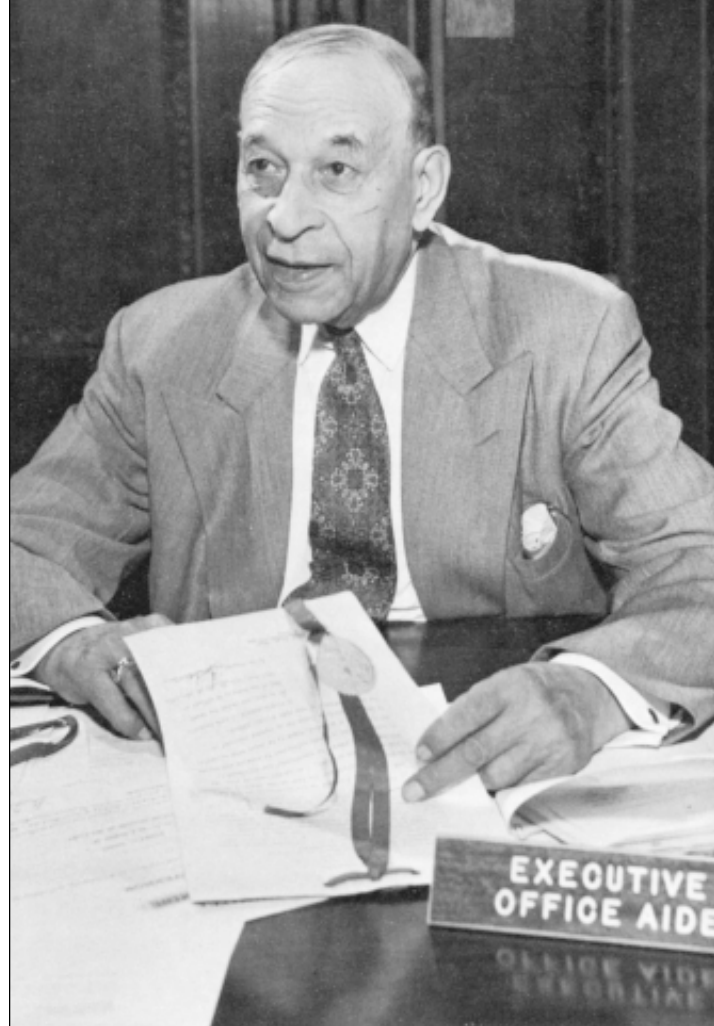
Paul waiter at the time, took Gov. Johnson’s offer, which allowed him to continue playing baseball on weekends.

A lifetime of service

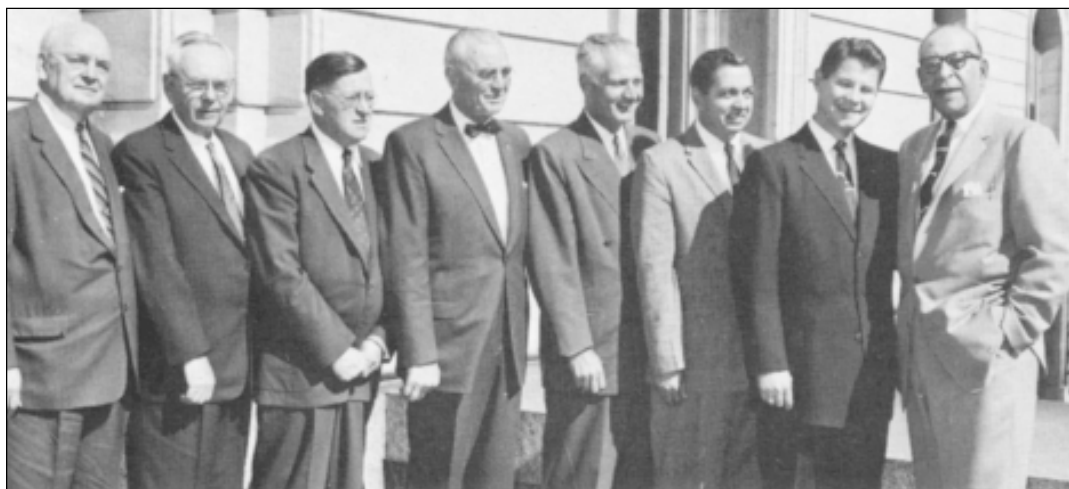
Johnson was sworn in on January 4, 1905, with Williams as his aide and confidant. When Johnson died in office in 1909, Williams was so respected around the Capitol that he did not lose his job when Lt. Gov. Adolph O. Eberhart was sworn in.

And Williams didn’t leave the governor’s office until 1957, when he retired after 53 years of public service.

Williams served 14 governors of different political parties. As part of a tribute to 50 years of service, the 1955 Legislative Manual is dedicated to him and contains his photograph and biography.



Billy Williams at work in the governor’s office.



Pictured with Billy Williams, right, at his retirement in September 1957 are seven of the 14 governors he served. They are, from left, Govs. J.A.A. Burnquist (1915-1921), Hjalmer Peterson (1936-1937), Elmer A. Benson (1937-1939), Edward J. Thye (1943-1947), Luther W. Youngdahl (1947-1951), C. Elmer Anderson (1951-1955), and Orville Freeman (1955-1961).

Williams was known to some as the "assistant governor" because of his vast knowledge about the office and his continual closeness to all the chief executives he worked for. On many occasions he encouraged legislators to promote equal rights and other issues he believed were important for all Minnesotans.

Born, raised in St. Paul

Williams was born on a cool October evening in 1877, in his family's home on West Ninth Street in St. Paul. He grew up in the shadow of the second State Capitol.

The experience of being one of few African Americans in the state's capital city made him understand what a tremendous opportunity Johnson had given him.

"No other Negro in the state will be in the position you'll be in," Johnson told Williams when he accepted the job. "The people you'll meet, the friends you'll make can be a tremendous asset for good racial harmony."

He felt very strongly that his position with the governor's office gave him a chance to advocate for issues important to members of his race.

But he also got the benefit of welcoming national and international dignitaries, as well as world-class athletes to the State Capitol.

Williams was always the first person to greet visitors to the governor's office. In fact, among the 350,000 people he greeted were Woodrow Wilson (then governor of New Jersey), William Jennings Bryan, and six sitting U.S. presidents. Harry S.

Truman even attended a reception for him.

On different occasions, boxers Joe Louis and Jack Johnson visited.

Williams also met a group of four Sioux Indian chiefs who wanted to demand money for land along the Minnesota River. Williams diffused the situation before the potentially hostile situation could go any further.

Perhaps the most memorable visitor who met with Williams was Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia.


Honoring a legend

When Williams died in 1963 at the age of 86, seven Minnesota governors were honorary pallbearers for the legendary public servant. Former Gov. Harold Stassen wanted to attend, but could not

because he was working with the United Nations.

Hundreds of people mourned the loss of William F. "Billy" Williams, and a tribute to him was read into the U.S. Congressional Record.

Williams was replaced by Charles A. Graham, who died in January of this year at the age of 94. Graham also served as an executive aide in the governor's office for many years. During his tenure, he worked for seven governors.

Graham's son, Ralph, who died in January 1999 at the age of 73, served as assistant sergeant in the Senate for 33 years. Ralph Graham continued the high principles exhibited by Williams and his father by never faltering in preserving the dignity and decorum of the Senate. 



Ralph Graham

Minnesota forever linked to the Dred Scott case

Perhaps the most noteworthy of all African-Americans in the region that would later become the state of Minnesota was a slave named Dred Scott.

Scott came to Fort Snelling in the late 1830s with his owner, Dr. John Emerson, an Army surgeon. When Scott was there, Fort Snelling was part of the Wisconsin Territory. The area would later be part of the Minnesota Territory, established in 1849 and granted statehood nine years later.

At the fort, Scott did not live wholly as a slave. He married Harriet Robinson, servant of Maj.

Lawrence Taliaferro, an Indian agent at the fort who allowed Robinson to become a part of Emerson's household.

Scott and Emerson were from Missouri, then a slave state. In the coming years, Scott would use his residence at Fort Snelling to try to gain his own freedom.

Backed by abolitionists, Scott sued for freedom, saying that because he had been taken to the free territories including Fort Snelling and had lived as a free man, he should be free when he returned to his native Missouri.

Precedent seemed to be on Scott's side. Others had sued successfully on the same grounds. For example, a 1836 Missouri case involving another slave who had been taken to Fort Snelling ended

with the slave being freed.

Scott would not succeed, but his case would be a turning point that propelled the nation toward the Civil War and, ultimately, the end of slavery in all states.

The U. S. Supreme Court, however, did not agree. Its famous decision of 1857 ruled that slaves taken to a free state were still property. As such, the court said, Scott was not a citizen and did not even have the right to sue.

Three years later, in 1860, a slave named Eliza Winston would use the same argument and be granted her freedom.

She was the servant to the wife of a wealthy Mississippi plantation family that had a summer cottage on Lake Harriet in Minneapolis.

Winston wanted her freedom, so with the help of a free black family and assistance from an anti-slavery group, a writ of *habeas corpus*, or unlawful imprisonment, was submitted to a judge on her behalf.

Though lawyers for Col. Richard Christmas, the slave owner, argued that the Dred Scott decision should have precedence over the case, the judge ruled that Winston should be freed. The judge based his ruling on the Minnesota Constitution, which said slavery was illegal in the state. He proclaimed Winston "free to go."

(L. LAMBERT)



Monday, Feb. 21

HF3671—Swapinski (DFL)

State Government Finance

Duluth State Office Building renovated, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3672—Davids (R)

Taxes

Electric generation peaking facility personal property tax exemption provided.

HF3673—Ozment (R)

Environment &

Natural Resources Finance

Metropolitan Council regional trails developed, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3674—Sviggum (R)

Education Policy

Student discipline reasonable force by teachers and other district employees authorized.

HF3675—Abrams (R)

Local Government &

Metropolitan Affairs

Tax-increment financing district property tax abatement agreements authorized and abatement duration limit extension provided.

HF3676—Solberg (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Itasca County family preservation services base adjusted.

HF3677—Wenzel (DFL)

Governmental Operations &

Veterans Affairs Policy

State and public retirement plan contributions, distributions, and fiduciary activities modified.

HF3678—Bakk (DFL)

Environment &

Natural Resources Finance

Lake, Cook, and St. Louis counties wildfire emergency communications equipment and response training grants provided; and money appropriated.

HF3679—Seagren (R)

Governmental Operations &

Veterans Affairs Policy

Charter school appeals considered by the Board of Government Innovation and Cooperation, and charter school approval process modified.

HF3680—Haas (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Housing with services and adult foster care pilot project expenditure requirements modified, and expiration date extended.

HF3681—Seifert, M. (R)

Education Policy

Rural charter schools of excellence grants provided and money appropriated.

HF3682—Biernat (DFL)

Governmental Operations &

Veterans Affairs Policy

Lieutenant governor and attorney general salaries established.

HF3683—Paulsen (R)

Commerce

State fund mutual insurance company involvement with the state repealed.

HF3684—McElroy (R)

Taxes

Qualified low-income housing projects construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF3685—Westfall (R)

Environment &

Natural Resources Policy

Aggregate resources management provided and money appropriated.

HF3686—Swenson (R)

Jobs & Economic

Development Finance

Minnesota Historical Society county and local preservation projects grants authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3687—Skoe (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

American Indian child placement costs reimbursement provided.

HF3688—Molnau (R)

Transportation Policy

Midwest interstate passenger rail compact adopted.

HF3689—Westrom (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 771, Chokio-Alberta, fund transfer authorized.

HF3690—Kielkucki (R)

Agriculture &

Rural Development Finance

Minnesota agricultural research grants board established, agricultural cropland levy authorized, school district and county ad valorem property tax exemption provided, and money appropriated.

HF3691—Boudreau (R)

Governmental Operations &

Veterans Affairs Policy

Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) previously exempt service credit purchase authorized for an eligible member.

HF3692—Kuisle (R)

Agriculture Policy

Feedlot permit provisions modified, manure applicator education and training requirements provided, and administrative penalty order requirements expanded.

HF3693—Mullery (DFL)

Family & Early Childhood

Education Finance

Early head start programs funded, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds transferred, and money appropriated.

HF3694—Dawkins (DFL)

Local Government &

Metropolitan Affairs

Metropolitan Council unnecessary requirements modified or eliminated, and facsimile and digital signatures authorized.

HF3695—Holberg (R)

Civil Law

Guardian and conservatorship system advisory committee established and report required.

HF3696—Holberg (R)

Civil Law

Data practices recodification conforming changes provided.

HF3697—Larsen, P. (R)

Transportation Policy

Emergency motor vehicle dealers provided licensing requirement exemption.

HF3698—Seagren (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Excellent teacher recruitment improved, loan forgiveness program created, and money appropriated.

HF3699—Tuma (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Board of Trustees property transactions and capital improvements authority provided.

HF3700—Kuisle (R)

Taxes

Manufactured home parks property tax class rate reduced.

HF3701—Paymar (DFL)

Taxes

Senior citizen property tax deferral eligibility criteria modified.

HF3702—Harder (R)

Taxes

Federal alcohol fuel subtraction from individual income and corporate franchise taxes authorized.

HF3703—Pelowski (DFL)

Higher Education Finance

Designer selection board process exception provided to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) and design-build construction method authorized.

HF3704—Seifert, M. (R)

Education Policy

Desegregation rule flexibility options provided for school districts located outside the metropolitan area.

HF3705—Tomassoni (DFL)

Higher Education Finance

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Board of Trustees debt service requirements on specified projects modified.

HF3706—Mares (R)

Education Policy

Teacher preparation program created and money appropriated.

HF3707—Swenson (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 2859, Glencoe-Silver Lake, levy authority restored.

HF3708—Jennings (DFL)

Local Government &

Metropolitan Affairs

Municipalities required to issue building permits once special permits have been issued and environmental assessment worksheets have been completed.

HF3709—Rukavina (DFL)

Taxes

Independent School District No. 2154, Eveleth-Gilbert, joint recreation board tax levy authorized.

HF3710—Murphy (DFL)

Governmental Operations &

Veterans Affairs Policy

Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) normal retirement age definition and annuity formula modified.

HF3711—Huntley (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Telemedicine network established, interstate telemedicine services regulated, medical assistance reimbursement provided, grants authorized, and money appropriated.

HF3712—Huntley (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) education and training program participation modified, and money appropriated.

HF3713—Huntley (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) education and training program participation modified, and money appropriated.

HF3714—Huntley (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Children's toxic chemicals exposure minimized and standards provided.

HF3715—Otremba (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Eligible half-ton pickup trucks registered as farm trucks.

HF3716—Otremba (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 2170, Staples-Motley, fund transfer authorized.

HF3717—Westrom (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Spinal cord injury research board and trust account created, civil penalties imposed, and money appropriated.

HF3718—Westrom (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Diesel fuel biodiesel content mandate provided.

HF3719—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Consumer support program eligibility expanded.

HF3720—Van Dellen (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Eyeglasses and contact lenses prescription access provided to patients, and optometrists required to provide copies.

HF3721—Hausman (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Motor vehicle license plates and tabs renewal denial due to delinquent traffic fines, or nonpayment of support or maintenance provided; and money appropriated.

HF3722—Mullery (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grants transferred for early childhood family education programs funding and money appropriated.

HF3723—Molnau (R)
Transportation Finance
Major transportation projects account established in the trunk highway fund, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3724—Workman (R)
Transportation Finance
Major transportation projects fund established, uses specified, motor vehicle sales tax revenue allocated, and general fund transfers authorized.

HF3725—Sviggum (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School facility floor covering replacement costs included in health and safety revenue.

HF3726—Bishop (R)
Higher Education Finance
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) chancellor separate salary subdivision created, and additional foundation compensation authorized.

HF3727—Anderson, B. (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Wright County nursing facility rate adjustment provided and money appropriated.

HF3728—Rest (DFL)
Taxes
Working family income tax credit increased.

HF3729—Jennings (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Wyoming and Chisago City orderly annexed property reimbursement duration limit exemption provided.

HF3730—McGuire (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Child care staff retention initiative created and money appropriated.

HF3731—Seifert, J. (R)
Commerce
Internet privacy policy provided for state and local government, model online privacy notice developed, and subscriber personal information release restricted.

HF3732—Entenza (DFL)
Civil Law
Prosecuting attorney cost and fee awards provided in public nuisance cases.

HF3733—McCollum (DFL)
Taxes
Lawful gambling tax rates reduced.

HF3734—Hasskamp (DFL)
Taxes
Lawful gambling tax rates reduced.

HF3735—Dorman (R)
Taxes
Lawful gambling tax rates reduced.

HF3736—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) participants receiving mental health of chemical dependency treatment services considered eligible for MFIP child care.

HF3737—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Minnesota food assistance program legal noncitizen eligibility expanded, sanctions modified, and Minnesota family investment program (MFIP) training and employment services appropriated money.

HF3738—Rhodes (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
St. Paul RiverCentre's Roy Wilkins Auditorium redevelopment planned, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3739—Mariani (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Noncash child care assistance programs created.

HF3740—Jennings (DFL)
Taxes
Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided, and mandatory levy reductions required.

HF3741—Jennings (DFL)
Taxes
Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF3742—Smith (R)
Civil Law
Revenue recapture act collection of conciliation court judgements authorized, claims priority specified, and money appropriated.

HF3743—Dawkins (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Tax-increment financing redevelopment district definition expanded.

HF3744—Leighton (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Blazing Star State Trail bridge construction authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3745—Mulder (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 404, Lake Benton, fund balance penalty reimbursement grant authorized and money appropriated.

HF3746—Mulder (R)
Taxes
Agricultural property exempt from general education levies.

HF3747—Rukavina (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School district declining pupil unit aid established and money appropriated.

HF3748—Fuller (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Local government in lieu of tax payments increased.

HF3749—Lenczewski (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Patient health records release to the health data institute and commissioner of health prohibited without consent.

HF3750—Seifert, J. (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Board of architecture, engineering, land surveying, landscape architecture, geoscience, and interior design licensing fees increased; and enforcement activities enhanced.

HF3751—Wenzel (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Dislocated worker program support services funding allocation increased.

HF3752—Mariani (DFL)
State Government Finance
University of Minnesota showboat rebuilt and money appropriated.

HF3753—Workman (R)
Transportation Policy
Freeway metered ramp study required and money appropriated.

HF3754—Paulsen (R)
Commerce
Brewers prohibited from requiring wholesalers to agree not to sell another brewer's products, and agreement terminations authorized.

HF3755—Chaudhary (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Weight training equipment in state correctional facilities prohibited.

HF3756—Abrams (R)
Commerce
Holocaust victims insurance relief established and civil penalties imposed.

HF3757—Abrams (R)
Taxes
Patent, trademark, and copyright drawings and documents sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF3758—Abrams (R)
Taxes
Tax-increment financing district property tax abatement agreements authorized and abatement duration limit extension provided.

HF3759—Chaudhary (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Level 2 predatory offender information disclosed to additional persons.

HF3760—Ness (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Small school enhanced equity revenue component added to general education revenue.

HF3761—Mullery (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nontraditional career assistance and training programs established for low-income women with children, and money appropriated.

HF3762—Jaros (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Port authority electronic disbursement of funds authorized.

HF3763—Abeler (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Area learning center establishment criteria modified.

HF3764—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Health insurance purchasing pool account and nursing facility health insurance board established, duties specified, and report required.

HF3765—Ness (R)
Taxes
Relative homestead treatment requirement that agricultural property owner be a Minnesota resident eliminated.

HF3766—Skoglund (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Pawnbrokers providing electronic transaction records to law enforcement agencies required to use most current version of the interchange file specification format.

Wednesday, Feb 23

HF3767—Finseth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Red River basin flood hazard mitigation grant level increased, flood hazard mitigation funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3768—Kielkucki (R)
Education Policy
Profile of Learning portion of state high school graduation rule codified.

HF3769—Wenzel (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Garrison, Kathio, West Mille Lacs Lake sanitary sewer district wastewater infrastructure grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3770—Juhnke (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Gas theft crime created and driver's license suspension required for repeat offenders.

HF3771—Winter (DFL)
Taxes
Farm machinery sales and use tax definition modified to include equipment used to produce flowering or ornamental plants including nursery stock.

HF3772—McElroy (R)
Taxes
Individual income tax education credit modified.

HF3773—Tomassoni (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Federal child and adult care food program waiver requested for licensed child care programs under the department of children, families, and learning.

HF3774—Seagren (R)
Education Policy
School district electronic products and services contract criteria established.

HF3775—Larsen, P. (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund (MERF) prior temporary employment service credit purchase authorized for a specified employee.

HF3776—Winter (DFL)
Education Policy
Profile of Learning statewide accountability and district autonomy balanced.

HF3777—Dorn (DFL)
Education Policy
Charter school sponsorship denial appeal time limited.

HF3778—Rifenberg (R)
Commerce
Financial institution federal data privacy regulation conformity required and state enforcement provided.

HF3779—Clark, K. (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Youth shelter and juvenile prostitution prevention grant program established, and money appropriated.

HF3780—Westerberg (R)
Taxes
Nonprofit organization charitable purposes sales and use tax definition expanded to include purchases used for qualified accessibility modifications.

HF3781—Carruthers (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Three additional days of student instruction mandate funding provided and money appropriated.

HF3782—Westerberg (R)
Taxes
Private noncommercial aircraft storage hangars on leased airport land property tax exemption provided and classification specified.

HF3783—Smith (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Water quality cooperatives repealed.

HF3784—Vandever (R)
Transportation Policy
Centerville and Lino Lakes school zone speed limit authorized.

HF3785—Kelliher (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
Minneapolis Community and Technical College improvements provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3786—Anderson, B. (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Wright County ditch conveyance to St. Michael and Albertville authorized.

HF3787—Clark, J. (R)
Taxes
Passenger automobile registration tax reduced, motor vehicle sales tax deposited in the highway user tax distribution fund, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF3788—Stanek (R)
Taxes
Political subdivision sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF3789—Stanek (R)
Crime Prevention
Criminal and juvenile justice information policy group membership modified, data group created, technology infrastructure improvements authorized, and money appropriated.

HF3790—Larsen, P. (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Marginal cost funding applied to school districts with declining enrollment and money appropriated.

HF3791—Vandever (R)
Transportation Policy
Trunk highway fund expenditures for light-rail transit purposed prohibited.

HF3792—Opatz (DFL)
Education Policy
Statewide educational accountability and public reporting system guidelines established.

HF3793—Clark, J. (R)
Commerce
Invention developer contract requirements modified.

HF3794—Molnau (R)
Transportation Policy
Hiawatha Avenue light rail federal funding for transit capital projects application limited.

HF3795—Kuisle (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Rochester firefighter probationary period rules modified.

HF3796—Kuisle (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
New firefighter probationary period established.

HF3797—Chaudhary (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
General community education revenue increased and money appropriated.

HF3798—McElroy (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Distressed rural county training and telecommuting program created, and money appropriated.

HF3799—Stang (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
State meat inspection program supplemental appropriation provided.

HF3800—Seagren (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Charter school provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF3801—Erickson (R)
Education Policy
Profile of Learning moratorium established pending conditions, educational standards reviewed, technology needs addressed, student course grades scoring criteria provided, and curriculum and instructional practices improved.

HF3802—Westfall (R)
Agriculture Policy
Canadian geese crop depredation abatement materials purchased, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3803—Lenczewski (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Peace officer definition expanded to include licensed criminal investigators employed by prosecutorial offices and those offices included in law enforcement agency definition.

HF3804—Kuisle (R)
Taxes
Individual alternative minimum tax exemption amount increased.

HF3805—Dehler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Senior citizen drug program eligibility expanded.

HF3806—Wolf (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Nonprofit organization reemployment compensation provisions modified.

HF3807—Abrams (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Minnetonka replacement service transit program authorized.

HF3808—Nornes (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Child care center employee annually required inservice training provided.

HF3809—Wagenius (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Aerial pesticide application regulated, honeybees protected, and civil penalties imposed.

HF3810—Kuisle (R)**Taxes**

Eligible interstate carrier vehicles and engines sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF3811—Boudreau (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Alternative rate-setting methodologies authorized for day training and habilitation vendors, task force extended, and money appropriated.

HF3812—Larson, D. (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Historic Grimm Farm program/support facility construction grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3813—Schumacher (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Public drainage system transfer to a water management authority permitted and definition provided.

HF3814—Anderson, B. (R)**Local Government &****Metropolitan Affairs**

Aggregate material importer definition clarified and Wright County exported materials production tax authorized.

HF3815—Mahoney (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district crime-related costs levy increased.

HF3816—Chaudhary (DFL)**Family & Early Childhood****Education Finance**

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) state aid increased and money appropriated.

HF3817—Olson (R)**Education Policy**

Student uncensored use of historical documents in school provided, violence prevention curriculum modified, and character development education provided.

HF3818—Otremba (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

County-based purchasing medical assistance per capita payment modified.

HF3819—Entenza (DFL)**Education Policy**

Advanced placement and international baccalaureate program student scholarships and teacher stipends provided.

HF3820—Winter (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Spread of specified genetically modified organisms liability established and damages specified.

HF3821—Winter (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Minnesota agricultural production contract fair practices act adopted and criminal penalty imposed.

HF3822—Mares (R)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Teacher leaves of absence rights expanded.

HF3823—Seagren (R)**Local Government &****Metropolitan Affairs**

Hennepin County unclassified service expanded to include a chief detention deputy sheriff.

HF3824—Bradley (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association contributing member assessment reduced, and money appropriated.

HF3825—Smith (R)**Crime Prevention**

Tribal police departments annual insurance cap established.

HF3826—Jennings (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Medical response units voluntary registration provided.

HF3827—Kelliher (DFL)**Commerce**

Interactive service providers use of consumer information regulated, specified false or misleading electronic mail messages prohibited, and penalties imposed.

HF3828—Solberg (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

General education revenue isolation index modified.

HF3829—Greenfield (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, (TANF), federal block grant funds transferred to federal Title XX block grant for community social services.

HF3830—Daggett (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

New York Mills wastewater funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3831—Schumacher (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district small school revenue created, formula provided, and money appropriated.

HF3832—Smith (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Nursing facility property-related per diem increased.

HF3833—Goodno (R)**Commerce**

Uniform prescription drug information card issuance required of health benefit plans.

HF3834—Kelliher (DFL)**Local Government &****Metropolitan Affairs**

Minneapolis central library redevelopment tax increment financing, (TIF), district authorized.

HF3835—Workman (R)**Local Government &****Metropolitan Affairs**

Economic development district durational limits modified.

HF3836—Winter (DFL)**Higher Education Finance**

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, (MnSCU), capital improvements authorized at Ridgewater Community and Technical College at Willmar, Moorhead State University, and Minnesota West Community and Technical College at Worthington.

HF3837—Luther (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

MinnesotaCare premium and other health care taxes repealed, savings to purchasers required, losses transferred, tobacco settlement funds disposed of, contingent repeal of health care access fund, and civil penalties provided.

HF3838—Reuter (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Owatonna infrastructure improvements authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3839—Goodno (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Speech-language pathologist, audiologist, unlicensed mental health practitioners, and alcohol and drug counselors, and hearing instrument dispensers training, practice, licensure, and registration practices modified.

HF3840—Krinkie (R)**Education Policy**

Alternative license provided teachers who received training in other states.

HF3841—Howes (R)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Workers' compensation offset applicable to disabilities provisions modified relating to public employees retirement association.

HF3842—Howes (R)**Crime Prevention**

Fireworks sales and use permitted under specified circumstances.

HF3843—Pelowski (DFL)**Taxes**

Taxing authorities authorized to provide information on the Internet in lieu of conducting truth-in-taxation hearings.

Thursday, Feb. 24

HF3844—Ness (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Farmer-lender mediation program made permanent, ethanol producer payment eligibility expanded, agroforestry loan program created, farm relief funded, and money appropriated.

HF3845—Ness (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Pupil unit definition modified and general education formula allowance increased.

HF3846—Bishop (R)**Crime Prevention**

Community notification law clarified.

HF3847—Clark, K. (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Publicly owned low-income disabled and elderly high rise air-conditioning grants provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3848—Ozment (R)**Taxes**

Farm machinery sales and use tax definition modified to include equipment used to produce flowering and ornamental plants including nursery stock.

HF3849—Tingelstad (R)**Taxes**

Commuter rail diesel fuel sales and use tax exemption provided, and money appropriated.

HF3850—McGuire (DFL)**Commerce**

Beer keg identification standards prescribed, retailer records maintained, and penalties imposed.

HF3851—Ozment (R)**Crime Prevention**

Cigarette fire safety standards required.

HF3852—Westfall (R)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

State government decentralized.

HF3853—Krinkie (R)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Internal service funds budgetary information and reports required.

HF3854—Gray (DFL)**Family & Early Childhood****Education Finance**

Basic sliding fee child care program appropriated money.

HF3855—Wenzel (DFL)
Taxes
Personal and dependent income tax exemption subtraction provided.

HF3856—Dorn (DFL)
Judiciary Finance
Mankato regional public safety training facility grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3857—Workman (R)
Transportation Policy
New school buses required to have strobe lights.

HF3858—Davids (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Marginal cost pupil units definition modified.

HF3859—Carruthers (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
General education formula allowance increased and money appropriated.

HF3860—Carruthers (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Minimum wage increased and indexed.

HF3861—Davids (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association deficits funded through tobacco settlement revenues and money appropriated.

HF3862—Wenzel (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Hennepin Paper Company in Morrison County reemployment insurance claimants provided additional benefits and requirement exemption provided.

HF3863—Sykora (R)
Education Policy
Charter school districts provided.

HF3864—Davids (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Administrative rules legislative and executive approval required.

HF3865—Chaudhary (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Basic sliding fee child care assistance funded through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) fund transfers and money appropriated.

HF3866—Rukavina (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Semi-independent living costs classified as remedial care costs and group residential housing payments provided.

HF3867—Smith (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Open enrollment special education aid provided.

HF3868—Daggett (R)
Agriculture Policy
Aquatic farm licensing requirements modified.

HF3869—Greiling (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Voluntary paid parental leave program created and wage reimbursement provided.

HF3870—Finseth (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District Nos. 595, East Grand Forks, and 2854, Ada-Borup flood loans interest provided and money appropriated.

HF3871—Smith (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Aggregate material importer definition clarified and Wright County exported materials production tax authorized.

HF3872—Mariani (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) child care assistance made available to support participant employment and training work activities.

HF3873—Luther (DFL)
Education Policy
New school bus lap and shoulder belts required.

HF3874—Wenzel (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Aiding an offender criminal penalties increased, crimes resulting in death of a victim statute of limitations increased, and sentencing guidelines established.

HF3875—Krinkie (R)
Transportation Finance
Light-rail transit bonding and funding purposes modified for bottleneck congestion relief, and additional lanes provided.

HF3876—Jennings (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Internet gambling study required.

HF3877—Kubly (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Bird Island land exchange exempt acreage provided.

HF3878—Davids (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Debt service equalization program and capital loan provisions modified.

HF3879—Trimble (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
United States Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun bust placement in the State Capitol provided and money appropriated.

HF3880—Davids (R)
Commerce
Workers' compensation reinsurance association required to adhere to government data practices provisions.

HF3881—Trimble (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
State public water service connection fee repealed.

HF3882—Trimble (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle additional titling fee eliminated.

HF3883—Trimble (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Neighborhood Development Center, Inc. grant provided for neighborhood improvement and ethnic-based entrepreneurial support in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and money appropriated.

HF3884—Trimble (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Motor vehicle registration filing fee repealed.

HF3885—Rhodes (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
State treasurer powers and duties transferred to the state auditor.

HF3886—Krinkie (R)
Transportation Finance
Light-rail transit funding cancelled and bonding reduced.

HF3887—Vandever (R)
Transportation Policy
Personal rapid transit systems appropriated money.

HF3888—Chaudhary (DFL)
Education Policy
High school graduation rule provisions modified and codified.

HF3889—Knoblach (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Governmental Accounting Standards Board infrastructure reporting standards implementation required.

HF3890—Knoblach (R)
Ways & Means
Unexpected funds carryover authorized for state-owned facilities repairs and maintenance.

HF3891—Knoblach (R)
Higher Education Finance
Unexpected funds carryover authorized for state-owned facilities repairs and maintenance.

HF3892—Opatz (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) issued revenue bonds aggregate principal amount increased, and bond requirements clarified.

HF3893—Seagren (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Special education base revenue modified and money appropriated.

HF3894—Workman (R)
Transportation Policy
Motor carriers; requiring certain exempt carriers of property to obtain certificate of registration from commissioner of transportation.

HF3895—Rest (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Housing improvement area establishment authority modified.

HF3896—Abrams (R)
Taxes
Base blocks used in metalcasting sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF3897—Rhodes (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Health-related boards authorized to carry forward balances.

HF3898—Clark, J. (R)
Commerce
Springfield; on-sale liquor licensee authorized to dispense liquor at a city owned facility New Year's event.

HF3899—Jennings (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
North West company fur post interpretive center permanent exhibits constructed, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3900—Abrams (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
New Guthrie Theater constructed in Minneapolis, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3901—Storm (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Housing Finance Agency community rehabilitation grants and loans authorized to for-profit organizations.

HF3902—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
State prevention council created for early childhood development and family support services, and home visiting programs appropriated money.

HF3903—Westrom (R)
Commerce
Cooperative income financing and distribution provisions modified.

Schedule is subject to change.

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MONDAY, February 28

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF3652 (Goodno) Human services and pre-K-12 education housekeeping bill and money appropriated.

HF178 (Boudreau) Abortion informed consent required and civil remedies provided.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: HF3437 (Pawlenty) Gillette Children's Hospital improvements authorized in Ramsey County, bonds issued, and money appropriated. Presentation of the governor's bonding request for MHFA Transitional Housing.

HF2679 (Sykora) Family homeless prevention and assistance program appropriated money.

HF2895 (Mulder) Pipestone County museum grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3189 (Mulder) Laverne Carnegie Cultural Center capital improvements authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3191 (Mulder) Lake Benton Visitor Center and Railroad Depot grant authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3144 (Lindner) Dayton wastewater infrastructure program grant provided, bond issuance authorized, and money appropriated.

Note: The committee will recess and reconvene 30 minutes after session in 200 State Office Building.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF2635 (Luther) Driver's license applicants authorized to make a donation for public education and information on anatomical gifts.

HF446 (Kuisle) Passenger automobile registration tax depreciation rate decreased, and motor vehicle sales tax revenue allocated.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF3615 (Holberg) St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and St. Paul Economic Assistance data classification provided. HF3696 (Holberg) Data practices recodification conforming changes provided.

HF3577 (Holberg) Creditors' garnishments, executions, and levies regulated; forms revised; notification provided; attorneys' execution levies increased; and technical changes provided.

HF3225 (Gerlach) Health maintenance organization personal information disclosure circumstances specified.

HF2655 (Leppik) Underage persons attempting to purchase alcohol or tobacco products with false identification provided increased penalties and driver license sanctions, and retailers authorized to seize false I.D.

HF2883 (Howes) Prescription drug discounts regulated and remedies provided.

HF3497 (Tuma) State of Minnesota attorney fees recovery regulated, federal conformity provided, fee application procedures established, and existing law clarified.

HF3650 (Dawkins) De facto custodian rights clarified.

HF3566 (Dawkins) Motor vehicles towed at request of law enforcement lien provided; extent of lien clarified; and notice provided to owner for towing, sale, and right to reclaim.

HF1201 (Ness) Family farm partnership definition modified.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Finalization of committee recommendations to the Capital Investment Committee.

HFXXXX Environmental bonding bill.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HF3230 (Koskinen) Public higher education system exempt from debt service costs.

HF3440 (Pugh) Debt service tuition rebate provided to public post-secondary students and money appropriated.

HF3699 (Tuma) Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Board of Trustees property transactions and capital improvements authority provided.

Committee bonding priorities discussion.

Bills may be added.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF3689 (Westrom) Independent School District No. 771, Chokio-Alberta, fund transfer authorized.

HF2792 (Hackbarth) Independent School District No. 15, St. Francis, fund transfer authorized.

HF2772 (Tomassoni) Independent School District No. 2711, Mesabi East, severance levy authorized.

HF2773 (Lieder) Independent School District No. 2215, Norman County East, fund transfer authorized.

HF3038 (Mares) Independent School District No. 832, Mahtomedi, fund transfer authorized.

HF3283 (Otremba) Independent School District No. 787, Browerville, fund transfer authorized.

HF3366 (Gleason) Independent School District No. 280, Richfield, airport runway impact pupil unit aid provided.

HF3408 (Tomassoni) Independent School District No. 2142, St. Louis County, alternative facilities bonding and levy program authority provided.

HF3612 (Holberg) Independent School District No. 194, Lakeville, fund transfer authorized.

Property Tax Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF2795 (Ness) Specified county social service costs special levies authorized.

HF3343 (Daggett) Lake improvement district special levy authorized.

HF3321 (Daggett) Regional jails operation costs special levy provided.

HF3239 (Finseth) Polk County increased levy limit base provided.

HF3545 (Westfall) Special property tax levy and levy limit adjustments provided.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Adult Basic Education:

Policy and fiscal discussion of HF2708 (Nornes) Adult Basic Education funding modified, policy review board established, and money appropriated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: HF1182 (Kuisle) County economic development authorities authorized.

HF3057 (McElroy) Business subsidy provisions clarified.

HF3708 (Jennings) Kondirator; municipalities required to issue building permits once special permits have been issued and environmental assessment worksheets have been completed.

HF3586 (Larsen, P.) Alternative dispute resolution process use clarified.

HF3529 (Larsen, P.) Metropolitan Council made a state agency.

HF3260 (Olson) Lake improvement district provisions modified.

HF3016 (Stang) Contiguous city or town annexation to a city or town contiguous to a hospital district authorized.

HF3661 (Rukavina) City replacement heating systems and related energy conservation measures authorized.

HF3336 (Hilty) Silver election to join the Moose Lake area fire protection district clarified and district equipment certificate issuance authorized.

Note: It is anticipated that the committee meeting will continue after session in 316 State Capitol and that additional bills will be heard.

Regulated Industries Subcommittee/ COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: HF2496 (Davids) Department of Public Service abolished, and powers and duties transferred.

Discussion of telecommunication proposals:

HF2937 (Wolf) Telecommunications statutes modified and recodified, and money appropriated.

HF3329 (Wolf) Minnesota telecommunications act adopted.

HF3464 (Rukavina) Merged or consolidated electric cooperative members authorized to re-establish former electric cooperative.

HF3421 (Bakk) Electric cooperative's election to be regulated petition and balloting provisions modified.

HF2717 (Anderson I.) Intrastate long distance call toll charges prohibited.

Other bills to be announced.

Note: This meeting will be continued 30 minutes after session in 500S State Office Building.

3 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

30 Minutes after Session

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: HFXXXX (McElroy) Extension of the Boxing Board's sunset.

HF3581 (McElroy) Board of Electricity inspection fee rules codified.

HF3204 (Gunther) Redevelopment account funded, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3750 (Seifert, J.) Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience, and Interior Design licensing fees increased; and enforcement activities enhanced.

HF2854 (Chaudhary) Alien labor certification program appropriated money.

HF3631 (Trimble) St. Paul Rehabilitation Center job training and related services appropriated money.

6 p.m.

Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: SF1846 (Pogemiller) Minneapolis Teachers Retirement Fund Association union business agent coverage.

HF2285 (Kalis); SF2239 (Larson) Eligible retiring teachers permitted to elect the improved money purchase benefit plan in lieu of the formula benefit plan.

HF2587 (Westfall); SF2345 (Langseth) Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) improved money purchase plan annuity election authorized for an eligible teacher.

HF2776 (Johnson); SF2523 (Betzold) Spring Lake Park Fire Department, Inc. member prior service credit purchase in the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) authorized.

SF650 (Pogemiller) Teachers retirement associations retirement annuity formula modifications and Minneapolis and St. Paul TRA basic member early retirement discounts.

HF2605 (Wenzel); SF2311 (Pogemiller) Higher education retirement specified vendor contracts extended, supplemental retirement plan participants prior service credit purchase authorized, and maximum contribution limits increased.

HF3341 (Van Dellen); SF3193 (Olson) Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) uncredited Hennepin County employment service credit purchase authorized.

HF3569 (Skoglund); SF3365 (Flynn) Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund (MERF) service credit purchase authorized for a specified employee.

HF2606 (Hilty); SF2798 (Lourey) Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS) prior service credit purchase authorized for an eligible member.

HF2816 (Marko); SF2475 (Price) Payment of omitted salary deductions to the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) authorized for an employee of Dakota County.

HF3314 (Kahn); SF3135 (Pogemiller) Minneapolis Police Relief Association additional post-retirement asset distribution provided.

HFXXXX (Larsen, P.); SFXXXX (Laidig) MERF; Purchase of service credit for prior Minneapolis city temporary employment.

HF2654 (Seifert, M); SF2310 (Pogemiller) Post-retirement earnings limitations raised for specified Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) plan participants.

HF2467 (Mares); SF2275 (Betzold) High three-year average salary used to compute judges' retirement benefits, member and employer contribution rates increased, early retirement penalties reduced, and increased benefit maximums provided.

HF2619 (Murphy); SF2312 (Stumpf) Public employees post-retirement health care task force created and specified supplemental plan contributions authorized.

HF2999 (Mares); SF2796 (Pogemiller) State employees health care reimbursement fund created.

HF3449 (Mares); SF2374 (Price) Volunteer firefighters lump sum service benefits provided to an eligible former St. Paul employee.

HF3484 (Otremba); SF3163 (Sams) Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) disability benefits application authorized for an eligible employee.

HF2543 (Gleason); SF2358 (Ranum) Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis, Teachers Retirement Fund Association prior service credit purchase authorized.

HF2979 (Abeler); SF3042 (Scheid) Compensation definition modified for the purposes of public employment retirement annuities limitations.

HF675 (Mares) Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS), Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA), and Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) provisions modified; and service credit pilot program established.

TUESDAY, February 29

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF2945 (Sykora) Safe place for newborns; immunity and anonymity provided for leaving unharmed newborns at hospital emergency rooms, and procedures established. Consideration of bills recommended by the Healthcare Directives Subcommittee.

HF3196 (Osskopp) Nursing facility employee pension benefit costs treated as PERA contributions.

HF2994 (Fuller) Ambulance service and EMT requirements modified.

HF3310 (Abeler) Health plan contract stacking regulated and remedy provided.

HF3365 (Abeler) Vulnerable adult neglect provisions modified and health licensing boards required to make employment disqualification determinations.

HF3610 (Goodno) Health care patient protections provided and medical clinical trials insurance coverage required.

HF3824 (Bradley) Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association contributing assessment reduced, and money appropriated.

Note: The committee will reconvene after session.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF3646 (Bishop) Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) workforce center locations plan developed.

HFXXXX (Storm) Community Rehab Loan Program eligibility expanded to include for-profits.

HF3500 (Stang) Entertainment agencies provisions repealed.

HF3501 (Stang) Department of Labor and Industry information exchange with the Department of Revenue provisions modified.

HF3414 (Leighton) Child labor law violations provided increased penalties.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF2745 (Stanek) Omnibus DWI bill.
To be announced.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF2953 (Workman) Motor vehicle registration and titling provisions, plate impoundment provisions, and interstate commercial vehicle registration modified.

HF1491 (Larsen, P.) Annual overweight permit for firefighting equipment authorized.

HF3697 (Larsen, P.) Emergency motor vehicle dealers provided licensing requirement exemption.

HF3486 (Westrom) Farm truck quarterly registration beginning date modified.

HF3091 (Tomassoni) Motor vehicles driven in the right-hand lane requirement clarified, exceptions provided, and money appropriated.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkle

Agenda: To be announced.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

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

Agenda: HF3457 (Holberg) Sexually dangerous or psychopathic committed persons transfer to correctional facilities provisions modified.

HF3553 (Holberg) Minnesota Center for Crime Victim Services battered women's shelter per diem guidelines established.

HF3558 (Haake) Commissioner of Public Safety authorized to award public safety grants.

HF3550 (Hilty) Commissioner of Public Safety rule authority continued, and private detectives and protective agents board members per diem payments and training program rules modified.

HF3376 (Stanek) Minnesota capitol police department created and merged with capitol complex security division, oversight committee created, governor security increased, and money appropriated.
Other bills to be announced.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: Public testimony on Profile of Learning legislation.

Note: If necessary, the committee will reconvene at 3 p.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF2761 (Rostberg) Omnibus land bill. HF2819 (Cassell) Stearns County land conveyance authorized.

HF2940 (Workman) Drycleaner environmental response and reimbursement law modified.

HF2949 (Holsten) Solid waste management tax account created and excess revenue adjustment provided.

HF3596 (Ozment) Special purpose districts with environmental responsibilities grants provided,

special purpose district restructuring pilot projects authorized, and Board of Government Innovation and Cooperation pilot project grants provided. HF3748 (Fuller) Local government in lieu of tax payments increased.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF2743 (Finseth) Farm rebate provided and money appropriated.

HF2786 (Kubly) Additional agricultural assistance provided to at-risk multiple farmers on a single farm operation and money appropriated.

HF3166 (Ozment) Filing deadline extended for 1999 agricultural assistance aid.

Other bills may be added.

Presentation by Steven Taff, professor, University of Minnesota Department of Applied Economics, on agricultural assistance payments.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: HF3215 (Gunther) Swine pseudorabies control program appropriated money.

HF3799 (Stang) State meat inspection program supplemental appropriation provided.

HF3562 (Harder) Agricultural chemical response and reimbursement account maximum reimbursement amount increased.

HFXXXX (Ness) Department of Agriculture grant for Center for Farm Financial Management to develop farm marketing plan software.

HF2558 (Ness) Career and technical agricultural education program funding authorized, and money appropriated.

HFXXXX (Ness) Agroforestry loan program funding provided.

HF3690 (Kielkucki) Minnesota agricultural research grants board established, agricultural cropland levy authorized, school district and county ad valorem property tax exemption provided, and money appropriated.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: HF2656 (Wolf) Auto glass repair and replacement regulated, rebates and incentives limited, and prompt payment required.

HF2996 (Wolf) Electric utilities required to provide cost and fuel information to utility customers.

HF3756 (Abrams) Holocaust victims insurance relief act established and civil penalties imposed.

HF2464 (Olson) Health care provider discriminatory charges for goods and services prohibited.

HF3001 (Milbert) Fire insurance; failure to provide timely proof of loss regulated.

HF2974 (Davids) National Association of Insurance Commissioners model legislation conforming state statute changes provided.

HF1748 (Haas) Franchise definition expanded and modified related to motor vehicle fuel franchises, and right of first refusal upon assignment or sale of marketing premises created.

HF3683 (Paulsen) State fund mutual insurance company involvement with the state repealed.

HF3121 (Howes) Insurance coverage, notice and filing requirements, and rate increase disclosures provided; and motor vehicle insurance contracts and workers' compensation self-insurance regulated.

HF3238 (Swenson) Farm equipment

manufacturers and dealers regulated.

Other bills to be announced.

Note: This meeting will be continued 30 minutes after session in the Basement Hearing Room.

6 p.m.

WAYS & MEANS

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop

Agenda: February Revenue Forecast: Pam Wheelock, Commissioner, Department of Finance; Peggy Ingison, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Finance; Tom Stinson, State Economist.

House Budget Resolution.

HF178 (Boudreau) Abortion informed consent required and civil remedies provided.

WEDNESDAY, March 1

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF2809 (Howes) Ah-Gwah-Ching Nursing Center admissions criteria clarified, and center required to provide information on and promote geriatric rapid assessment stabilization program.

HF2935 (Larsen, P.) Dental services disclosures and consumer protection requirements clarified, and specified dental benefits disclosures required.

HF2623 (Anderson, B.) Infant inborn metabolic defect testing and follow-up program expanded to include medium chain acyl-CoA dehydrogenase deficiency, rules amended, and money appropriated.

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

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

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

Most of what this office publishes can be viewed on the Legislature's World Wide Web page. To connect, point your web browser at:

<http://www.leg.state.mn.us>

HF3278 (Abeler) Seniors' agenda for independent living program expanded, congregate housing services project administration modified, and money appropriated.

Note: The committee will reconvene after session.

JOB'S & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: HF1510 (Erhardt) Filing fees modified for securities issued by open-end management companies and unit investments trusts.

HFXXXX Guthrie Theater project, money appropriated.

HF3299 (Wejcman) Minneapolis empowerment zone sub-projects infrastructure improvements authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3073 (Solberg) Fort Snelling Building No. 17 restored for use as an international hostel, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2702 (Osthoff) St. Paul: new Maxson-Dale business center roads constructed, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3117 (Mahoney) St. Paul Phalen Corridor Initiative west segment construction gap financing grant authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3182 (Paymar) St. Paul Trunk Highway No. 5 landscaping improvements authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3227 (Dawkins) St. Paul; Pierce Butler Avenue relocated and extended, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3419 (McGuire) Ramsey County; Gibbs Farm interpretive/visitors center construction authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3298 (Entenza) Minnesota Children's Museum permanent exhibits grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

Note: The committee will recess and reconvene at 6:30 p.m. in 200 State Office Building.

Joint TRANSPORTATION POLICY/TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chrs. Rep. Tom Workman,

Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF2891 (Molnau) Motor vehicles sales tax portions deposited in the highway user tax distribution fund and the multimodal transportation fund, exclusive bus transit ways established, transit improvement financed, and money appropriated.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF3742 (Smith) Revenue recapture act collection of conciliation court judgments authorized, claims priority specified, and money appropriated.

HF3695 (Holberg) Guardian and conservatorship system advisory committee established and report required.

HF1267 (Pawlenty) Economic loss arising from the sale of goods provisions established related to the Uniform Commercial Code.

HF3574 (Olson) Ethical standards for the chief administrative law judge, administrative law judges, and compensation judges provided; and tape recordings included with file of hearings.

HF3347 (Gleason) Chief administrative law judge

authorized to establish a subject matter specialization system for judges.

HF3105 (Hasskamp) Indigent persons represented by legal aid offices conflicts of interest studied by court-appointed attorney task force.

HF3756 (Abrams) Holocaust victims insurance relief act established and civil penalties imposed.

HF3658 (Smith) Germany and Japan; forced labor actions statute of limitations waived.

HF2751 (Stanek) Financial institutions provided limited liability for information furnished for investigative purposes, stolen and counterfeit check reporting or transfer provided criminal penalties, and racketeering expanded.

HF47 (Bishop) Domestic abuse victim civil cause of action provided.

HF591 (Anderson, B.) Property owner costs and fees reimbursement provided in specified eminent domain proceedings.

SF551 (Fuller) Orders for protection service short form notification authorized, domestic abuse crime sentences and provisions modified, cash bail increased, domestic assault defined as crime of violence, and criminal penalties imposed.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: To be announced.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HF2611 (Dehler) Community and technical college resident tuition rates provided to nonresidents and contract requirements specified.

Finalize committee bonding priorities.

Bills to be added.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF3231 (Seagren) General education, special programs, lifework development, facilities and technology, education excellence, nutrition programs, and libraries provisions modified.

HF3668 (Seagren) School district net tax capacity assessment/sales ratio study annual adjustment modified.

HF2753 (Skoe) Three additional days of student instruction mandate funding provided and money appropriated.

HF2874 (Carlson) General education funding increased for class size reduction and full-day kindergarten, and money appropriated.

HF2754 (Dorn) Teacher mentorship programs funded through increased general education revenue and money appropriated.

HF2756 (Kelliher) Intervention programs funded through additional general education revenue and money appropriated.

HF3747 (Rukavina) School district declining pupil unit aid established and money appropriated.

HF3760 (Ness) Small school enhanced equity revenue component added to general education revenue.

HF3594 (Ness) School district adjusted pupil units modified.

Property Tax Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF3672 (Davids) Electric generation peaking facility personal property tax exemption provided.

HF3765 (Ness) Relative homestead treatment

requirement that agricultural property owner be a Minnesota resident eliminated.

HF3746 (Mulder) Agricultural property exempt from general education levies.

Additional bills may be added.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF3214 (Knoblach) Partition fence law applicability limited.

HF3582 (Holsten) Phosphorus plant food use prohibition provisions modified for specified counties, and adulteration factors clarified.

HF2796 (Ness) Farm real estate or operations third-party debtor disclosure required and remedies provided.

HF3325 (Westrom) Seed germination test time period extended.

HF3692 (Kuisle) Feedlot permit provisions modified, manure applicator education and training requirements provided, and administrative penalty order requirements expanded.

HF2877 (Peterson) Attorney general agri-business investigative unit established, "support family farms" license plates authorized, and money appropriated.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD

EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: HF3300 (Boudreau) Community Action, Head Start, and food shelf data classification provided; child care program provisions modified; and Learning Readiness Program plan submission requirement modified.

HF3660 (Mariani) Children's development fund created with tobacco settlement proceeds, advisory task force established, money appropriated, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF3533 (Juhnke) Community education revenue provided for youth programs and money appropriated.

Additional agenda items may be added.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen

Agenda: To be announced.

Regulated Industries Subcommittee/COMMERCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: Discussion of telecommunication proposals:

HF2937 (Wolf) Telecommunications statutes modified and recodified, and money appropriated.

HF3329 (Wolf) Minnesota telecommunications act adopted.

And other bills to be announced.

Note: This meeting will be continued 30 minutes after session in 500S State Office Building.

3 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

6:30 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: HF2916 (Erickson) Mora Workforce Center elevator provided bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3738 (Rhodes) St. Paul RiverCentre's Roy Wilkins Auditorium redevelopment planned, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HFXXXX (Rhodes) Schubert Theater project, money appropriated.

HF3186 (Trimble) Minnesota Council for Quality grant authorized, and money appropriated.

HF3072 (Kubly) Olivia agricultural innovation center established, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3560 (Wenzel) Little Falls Minnesota fishing museum construction grant authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3563 (Clark, K.) Minneapolis Hiawatha Corridor affordable housing, and mixed commercial and residential development appropriation provided; streets, infrastructure and capital improvements authorized; bonds issued; and money appropriated.

HF2266 (Skoe) Bagley stormwater and sediment control project appropriation provided.

HF3572 (Rukavina) Virginia Silver Lake storm sewer outlet relocation provided, and money appropriated.

HF3812 (Larson, D.) Historic Grimm Farm program/support facility construction grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3830 (Daggett) New York Mills wastewater funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3269 (Jaros) Duluth Lake Superior College multipurpose recreation complex authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3838 (Reuter) Owatonna infrastructure improvements authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

THURSDAY, March 2

8 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF3209 (Seifert, J.) Health care cost containment major commitment expenditure report requirements modified.

HF2553 (Seifert, J.) Supportive housing and managed care pilot project appropriated money.

HF3356 (Abeler) Essential community provider status application deadline extended for a nonprofit community health care facility serving Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees, and termination and renewal designation modified.

HF1757 (Haas) Health insurer and health maintenance organization regulations simplified.

HF3642 (Huntley) Medical education program funds application and distribution provisions modified.

Note: This meeting will be continued after session.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: HF3806 (Wolf) Nonprofit organization reemployment compensation provisions modified.

HF3290 (Dorman) Specified discrimination complaint communications classified as privileged.

Bills will be added.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker

Agenda: HF2892 (Stanek) Omnibus sex offender bill.

To be announced.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF3613 (Holberg) Claims against the state limited relating to losses involving the operation of a recreational vehicle on a trunk highway right-of-way.

HF3753 (Workman) Freeway metered ramp study required and money appropriated.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: To be announced.

10 a.m.

What's on the Web

You can find online postings for jobs currently available with the Legislature.

The Legislature's Web site includes information about jobs with the House, Senate, and joint departments such as the Revisor of Statutes, the Legislative Reference Library, the Office of the Legislative Auditor, and the legislative commissions.

There is also information about internship programs for college students and educational programs for high school students.

To find the job listings, just go to the Legislature's main Web page (www.leg.state.mn.us), then click on the link labeled "General Information." That link will take you to a menu that includes the list of employment opportunities.



CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF3614 (Holberg) Automobile theft prevention special revenue account funds provided for prevention activities, insurance surcharge exemptions provided for specified vehicles, and money appropriated.

HF3624 (Olson) Character development program completion required for juvenile property offenders on probation and repeat offenders required to pay full restitution plus program completion.

Other bills to be announced.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: To be announced.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF3416 (Holsten) Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund real property acquisition conditions specified.

HF3630 (Buesgens) Public entity construction debris recycling encouraged.

HF3576 (Osskopp) Solid waste and wastewater treatment facilities reporting requirements modified, and toxics in packaging exemption period extended.

HF2823 (Howes) Artificial light use provisions modified during hunting season.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF2941 (Daggett) Individual income tax rates reduced, health insurance premium subtraction provided, and corporate franchise tax appointment formulas modified.

HF3028 (Abrams) Individual income tax long-term capital gain exclusion authorized.

HF3101 (Abrams) Individual income tax long-term capital gain exclusion authorized.

HF3175 (Sykora) Personal and dependent income tax exemption subtraction provided.

HF2348 (Larsen, P) Automatic income tax rebate provided and money appropriated.

HF3728 (Rest) Working family income tax credit increased.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: Continuation of March 1 agenda.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: Continuation of bills not heard on Feb. 29, and bills passing out of Regulated Industries Subcommittee.

HF2394 (McGuire) Violent video games sale to children prohibited, display in public places restricted, and remedies provided.

Other bills to be announced.

Note: This meeting will be continued 30 minutes after session in 500S State Office Building.

3 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

4 p.m. or after Session

WAYS & MEANS

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dave Bishop
Agenda: To be announced.

FRIDAY, March 3

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

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

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: To be announced, if meeting is required.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF2564 (Workman) Public utility facilities relocated due to light rail construction entitled to expense reimbursement from the state. HF3030 (Seagren) Truck traffic prohibited on Hennepin County Road No. 1 between Trunk Highway No. 169 and Flying Cloud Drive. HF3573 (Knobloch) Minnesota Highway Safety Center at St. Cloud State University alcohol and highway safety education in elementary and secondary schools grants administration transferred to Commissioner of Public Safety.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: HF3766 (Skoglund) Pawnbrokers providing electronic transaction records to law enforcement agencies required to use most current version of the interchange file specification format. HF3369 (Peterson) Anhydrous ammonia tampering prohibited, and civil and criminal penalties imposed. HF3402 (Entenza) Nonlicensed classroom instructor criminal background checks required. Other bills to be announced.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: To be announced.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: HF2906 (Peterson) University of Minnesota College of Agriculture report to the legislature required. HF3417 (Opatz) Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) provided funding comparable to national peer institutions, and money appropriated. HF3726 (Bishop) Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) increased enrollment efforts appropriated money. Bills to be added.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: HF3044 (Dehler) Income tax long-term care insurance credit inflation protection requirement removed. HF3089 (Tomassoni) Income tax long-term care insurance credit modified. HF3544 (Chaudhary) Long-term care income tax credit expanded and money appropriated. HF3469 (Van Dellen) Charity care aid paid to counties for indigent nonresident medical care expenses and to reduce reliance on property taxes.

Reflections

The Legislature is constantly in a state of flux. As new members get elected every two years, others may lose at the polls or retire from service. Change may also occur when new laws are made or old and outdated laws get replaced.

Change is an ongoing process for the Legislature. Currently, the Legislature is debating with a possible change in its very nature — one house or two. The same issue was introduced in the 1930s, but never went far.

Other big changes possible this session could effect a new part of the Graduation Standards in schools and plans for light-rail transit.

The memory of some event or the anticipation of the results of some future proposal may also influence change. In the early 1600s, Shakespeare noted that we often "...summon up remembrances of things past" to deal maturely with the changes of things present.

And the popular early 1960s songster Sam Cooke evoked the need by crooning, "A Change is Gonna Come."

Memories affect change because they remind us of something different that evolved out of a former act or deed or set the tone for future achievements. The accomplishments of deceased lawmakers Barb Vickerman, Ken Otremba, Janet Johnson, Jim Rice, and Willard Munger are remembered because their good deeds are positive results on issues each one strongly believed in.

Their achievements may or may not be remembered in time because memories can be vulnerable to new changes that erase former deeds.

Whether change is motivation to create good government, or whether it is an every day method for improving the status quo, it controls how important each debate can be.

And the certainties of change plus compromise become deciding factors for what issues become law in the Legislature.

But to many people, the change we at the Legislature take for granted is jarring.

Nowhere else is that more evident than in the world of the city of St. Paul's late hero, "Peanuts" cartoonist Charles Schulz.

There, change always seemed to be uncertain or unexpected. It's possible that many diligent "Peanuts" fans recognized vulnerability in the cartoon and identified with its characters.

For sure, uncertainty has prevailed for the "Peanuts" family, more than any recent legislative action designed to change the status of important issues.

Maybe if changes were the norm and had always been available for Linus, Schroeder, and Peppermint Patty, Lucy would have allowed the football to be kicked. Even so, she probably still would have vocalized, "Good Grief, Charlie Brown," as a surprise to a change she had not come to expect.

Change is as certain as it is uncertain — for the Legislature and its constituency, and for "Peanuts" and the fans who avidly read it.

—LECLAIR GRIER LAMBERT

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE: STEVE SVIGGUM
MAJORITY LEADER: TIM PAWLENTY
MINORITY LEADER: THOMAS W. PUGH

MINNESOTA INDEX

Motor vehicle crash facts

Licensed drivers in Minnesota, 1998	3.53 million
Registered motor vehicles, 1998	3.9 million
Traffic crashes in Minnesota, 1998	92,926
Motor vehicles involved	169,938
Drivers involved	163,082
People injured in crashes, 1998	45,115
in 1997	46,064
People killed in crashes, 1998	650
in 1997	600
in 1968 (record high)	1,060
Men killed in traffic crashes, 1998	432
Women	218
Male drivers involved in crashes, 1998	92,493
Female drivers	62,742
Drunken driving arrests, 1998	30,892
Percent male	80
Drunken driving arrests, 1997	30,168
Known alcohol-related traffic fatalities, 1998	273
in 1997	179
Bicyclists killed in collisions with a motor vehicle, 1998	9
Pedestrian fatalities, 1998	56
in 1997	58
in 1971 (record high)	157
Fatalities on two-lane, two-way roads, 1998	361
on freeways and other divided highways	155
Fatal crashes in which illegal or unsafe speed was a contributing factor, 1998 ...	142
Injury crashes	4,862
Fatal crashes in which weather was a contributing factor, 1998	22
Injury crashes	1,478
Fatal crashes in which driver use of a cellular phone or CB radio was a contributing factor, 1998	0
Injury crashes	52
Motorcycles registered in Minnesota, 1998	118,275
Licensed motorcycle operators, 1998	301,992
Motorcycle crashes, 1998	1,065
Motorcyclists killed, 1998	40
Those wearing helmets	3

Source: *Minnesota Motor Vehicle Crash Facts, 1998*, Office of Traffic Safety, Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

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