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FORECAST SURPLUS GROWS,

PROFILE OF LEARNING PLANS & FARM AID

HF3904-HF4029

Session Weekly

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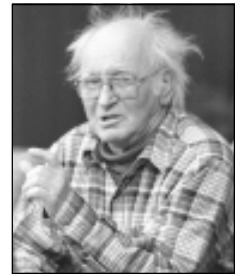
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CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS

Agriculture • 5
Children • 5
Consumers • 5
Crime • 5
Development • 6
Education • 7

Employment • 8
Environment • 8
Game & Fish • 9
Government • 9
Health • 10
Higher Education • 11

Housing • 11
Human Services • 11
Insurance • 12
Taxes • 12
Transportation • 13

FEATURES

AT ISSUE: AGRICULTURE — Lawmakers are considering tax proposals that would aid Minnesota's struggling family farmers. • 15

AT ISSUE: EDUCATION — A House committee is looking at several measures that aim to make the Profile of Learning more acceptable to teachers and students. • 16

AT ISSUE: TRANSPORTATION — The governor's plans would cut license tab fees for some and direct tax revenues for highways and mass transit. • 17

HISTORY — Death and devastation at the Milford mine prompted calls for lawmakers to aid survivors. • 18

DEPARTMENTS/RESOURCES

It's a Fact: Slippery Salesmen • 4
Resources: Members Roster • 19
Bill Introductions (HF3904-HF4029) • 21

Committee Schedule (March 6-10) • 24
Reflections: Capitol Visitors • 27
Minnesota Index: Crime in Decline • 28

On the cover: Farmers and supporters from Minnesota religious organizations rally in the rotunda March 1 to seek help for farmers, especially for small and mid-size farms being pinched by corporate farms and low commodity prices.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

Another sunny forecast

An increase in the projected surplus prompts calls for permanent tax cuts from House leaders, deferred tax reform from governor

By JON FURE

A clearer picture of the projected state budget surplus was presented Feb. 29, as the state Department of Finance released its most recent forecast of state revenues and expenditures.

The budget surplus for the 2000-2001 biennium is projected to be more than \$1.8 billion, which is \$229 million more than the department had projected last November. The latest report was the 16th consecutive state forecast to predict a budget surplus.

The news prompted some lawmakers to call for permanent tax cuts to avoid consistent surpluses.

beginning of the 2000 session to reduce the percentage of state income tax charged in each bracket — by 0.75 percent in the middle bracket and 0.5 percent in the upper and lower brackets. Those figures would match the income tax cuts that were made last year.

But Ventura said at a March 1 press conference that the numbers are still only projections and he plans to stick to his previous proposals

Finance Commissioner Pam Wheelock gave further explanation of issues related to the forecast during a House Ways and Means Committee meeting Feb. 29.

Wheelock stressed that the forecast is based on current law. Any changes in law that are proposed, such as tax cuts, will need to be judged on how they affect future biennia. To determine whether such a proposal is affordable, Wheelock said a key figure is the projected structural balance — the difference between the state's revenues and expenditures in a given year.

For example, an income tax cut that would go into effect in 2001 would affect the amount of revenue in the 2002-03 biennium.

The Finance Department would examine how such a tax cut would affect the projected difference in revenues and expenditures for fiscal year 2003, among other factors, to determine whether the proposal would be affordable for a sustained period of time.

The recent forecast projects a \$549 million structural surplus for fiscal year 2003 — if current law remains in effect. Therefore, this year's proposals to permanently change annual expenditures or revenue — either by spending more or collecting less — should only add up to that amount in order for the state to maintain a balanced budget, according to Wheelock.

"In terms of permanent commitment, \$549 million is the yardstick we will use to measure if (proposed changes) are affordable," Wheelock said.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) said it seems that the entire \$549 million would be taken up by the governor's proposals to cut vehicle license tab fees and to fund light-rail transit on the Hiawatha Corridor.

Wheelock agreed and said any other proposal by the Legislature would probably mean that Ventura would have to be persuaded to change his priorities.

Many factors influenced the changes between the November and February forecasts.

For the 2000-01 biennium, net general fund revenues are projected to be \$24.6 billion, which is \$222 million (0.9 percent) more than the amount that was projected in the November forecast.

Projected spending has decreased by \$12 million, partly due to reductions in health care spending. Declining costs of long-term health care and fewer people enrolled in the Department of Human Services' Minnesota Family



A swarm of media and legislators from the House and Senate surround House Speaker Steve Sviggum during a Feb. 29 news conference outside Gov. Jesse Ventura's office. Sviggum called for income tax cuts that would be paid for with the state's forecast budget surplus.

"Folks, enough is enough in regard to the overtaxation, the overcollection of hardworking families' and hardworking taxpayers' dollars in Minnesota," said House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) during a press conference outside the office of Gov. Jesse Ventura. "We need permanent tax reduction."

In response to the forecast, House Republicans re-emphasized their proposal from the

to cut vehicle license tab fees and use some of the surplus to reform property taxes in 2001.

The twice-yearly forecasts are based on information from the state's national economic consultant, Data Resources Inc. The state Finance Department and the Council of Economic Advisors study the information and make projections based on current laws and historic relationships between state and national data.

Investment Program (MFIP) are the two biggest factors of the reduction.

Projected spending in those areas decreased by \$42 million, but \$30 million in projected increases in education and other areas makes the net reduction \$12 million.

And interest earnings in the Property Tax Reform Account have increased by \$5 million since the November forecast. (The reform account serves as a quasi-reserve fund for the purpose of reforming property taxes. It was established in 1997.) That plus the \$222 million increase in revenue and \$12 million decrease in expenditures adds up to the \$229 million increase in the surplus.

State Economist Tom Stinson said the data provided by the consultant for the new forecast indicates only a slightly higher risk of a recession. A bigger concern is that the economy will "underperform" compared to its current rate of growth.

Officials point to a 3 percent decrease in the projected corporate income tax revenue for 2000-01 since the November forecast. That was based on a reduction in the projected corporate profits through 2002. Stinson attributed that to higher interest rates, higher energy prices, increasing wages for employees, and spending related to Y2K preparation.

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey) expressed concerns about the farm economy, which is bleak despite the good outlook overall for Minnesota.

According to the Finance Department's report on the February forecast, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has projected that this year soybeans will sink to their lowest price since 1973. In addition, corn, wheat, and milk prices will be as low as they have been in about 10 years.

"If you are in agriculture, times are not going to be good in 2000," Stinson said.

Unless crop yields this year are higher than normal for the second consecutive year and the federal government sends more financial assistance to farmers, the projected low prices will cause Minnesota's farm income to decrease significantly, Stinson said.

Minnesota farmers received \$314 million in federal disaster aid in 1999, according to the report.

Whether the projections in the forecast come true remains to be seen, but it provides some of the most up-to-date information that lawmakers and the governor will use to negotiate the major spending proposals before the end of the session in April. 🐾

Correction

A story in the Feb. 18 edition of Session Weekly incorrectly reflected the views of Edina resident Lynn Woodward, a critic of the state's light-rail transit plans for the Hiawatha Corridor. Woodward is not a supporter of personal rapid transit. We regret the error.



Too good to be true

Legislation aimed to protect consumers from slippery salesmen

The fast-talking, glad-handing merchants offering to sell Minnesotans swamp-land in Florida or the Brooklyn Bridge were dealt a blow during the tenure of former Gov. Karl Rolvaag.

In 1960, Walter Mondale, then the state's attorney general, appointed a 16-member Consumer Protection Advisory Council to protect consumers from fraudulent practices.

Composed of representatives from business and labor, the council was charged with the task of making recommendations to the Legislature of how the state could do that.

In a special message to the 1963 Legislature, Rolvaag urged members to pass several consumer protection related bills. In the speech, Rolvaag said that a free market economy depends on fair competition among producers and sellers for the business of an informed buying public.

Rolvaag said consumer deception and fraud cost legitimate businesses millions of dollars each year that were diverted to undeserving "unethical, shabby, inefficient, and incompetent" businesses.

He asked lawmakers to support legislation incorporating the ideas of the Consumer Protection Advisory group.

One of the bills proposed required people selling subdivided real estate located both inside and outside of the state to register with the commissioner of securities. Rolvaag said the bill addressed a growing problem in the state — naive consumers being swindled out of their retirement funds and ending up with worthless land.

Up until that point the state had no laws regulating the sale of subdivided land, defined in the bill as "land divided or proposed to be divided for the purpose of sale or lease, into five or more lots or parcels."

The measure proposed adopting a spe-

cific plan of registration for land sales. First, those attempting to sell subdivisions would go through the formal registration process, which would require the seller to submit to an investigation, verifying the legitimacy of the land sale.

Then, when the commissioner had completed the investigation, he would issue a public report, which would act as a prospectus to potential buyers.

The bill received unanimous support in both houses — passing the House on a 127-0 vote and the Senate by a 58-0 tally.

Two other consumer protection initiatives also were passed during the 1963 session. One expanded the powers of the attorney general to deal with fraud, deception, and misrepresentation in connection with the sale of merchandise.

The other had a little less obvious consumer spin to it.

The measure imposed a \$500 limit on the amount of contracts a person could sign for dance lessons at any given time.

Rolvaag said the measure addressed a serious problem in the state, where "glib-tongued, high-pressured salesmen for dance studios, who prey upon the lonely, the widowed, and the friendless" were inducing people to sign contracts for dance lessons far in excess of their needs.

Mondale described the problem, as follows: "Sums as high as \$17,000 could be contracted for if a lonely widow is made to think that her refusal will incur the displeasure of her 'teacher.'"

Other consumer protection initiatives that failed to pass that session continued to be debated throughout the decade and several later became part of the state's laws protecting the buying public.

(D. MAEDA)



Gov. Karl Rolvaag and then-U.S. Senator Walter Mondale in 1967.

Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society

★ **AGRICULTURE****Feedlot permit deadlines**

A bill that would set deadlines to assure timely review of feedlot permits was approved March 1 by the House Agriculture Policy Committee.

The bill (HF3271), sponsored by Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), would require an authority granting permits to provide the applicant a detailed checklist of obligations and requirements to obtain a permit within 30 days of receiving the permit application.

An applicant would then have all the time necessary to satisfy conditions of permit application and report back to the authority at the time all conditions are met, Ness said.

After all items on the checklist were satisfied, the bill would require that the authority either issue the permit or send a detailed order explaining why the permit was denied.

"The purpose of the bill is not to cause any trouble or to shake up the process, but rather to help farmers, the (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency), and all individuals involved in the process," Ness said.

Under the bill, an applicant denied a permit would be allowed to petition the denial in court. The permitting authority would then be required to pay 80 percent of the applicant's petition costs, Ness explained.

A Senate version of Ness's bill awaits a vote on the Senate floor. It would require that a decision on a request for a feedlot permit be made within 60 days of receipt of the permit application.

HF3271 now moves to the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee.

★ **CHILDREN****Funds for kids' programs**

Some lawmakers want the state to distribute currently unused federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds that it's already getting.

The House Family and Early Childhood and Education Finance Committee heard several bills March 1 that would invest the assistance funds in projects aimed at children. The committee set all the bills aside for later consideration.

None of the bills would create a new state appropriation. They all aim only to spend the federal dollars sent to the state.

Rep. Satveer Chaudhary (DFL-Fridley) is sponsoring a bill (HF3865) that would transfer \$35 million to the Department of Children, Families and Learning for the Basic Sliding Fee child care assistance program.

There are between 3,700 and 4,000 families on waiting lists to receive child care assistance, Chaudhary told the committee. The bill pertains to families with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

(Poverty guidelines vary based on the size of a household and income levels. The 1999 poverty level for a single person is \$8,240.)

Rep. Joe Mullery (DFL-Mpls) offered a bill (HF3722) that would appropriate \$15 million over the next three years for grants that would increase participation of low-income families in early childhood programs. Another Mullery bill (HF3693) would spend \$7.5 million over the next three years on grants for local Head Start programs.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) questioned the Head Start funding, wondering what specific unmet needs would be solved with the money. Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) said that 40 percent of children in his district that qualify for Head Start are not enrolled in the federal program because of a lack of money.

Minnesota spends more money on Head Start than any other state except Ohio, noted Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior).

The committee heard from several people who testified that having their children in Head Start has benefited the whole family because it frees up more of the parents' time to work.

The state receives \$267 million annually in TANF funds. Finance Department officials estimate the state would have reserves totaling \$173 million by the end of fiscal year 2000 if no laws are changed. The department predicts the unspent revenue would climb to \$223 million for fiscal year 2003.

★ **CONSUMERS****Drug discount cards**

Prescription drug discount cards are not always what they seem and they should be labeled clearly so there is no confusion, said Rep. Larry Howes (R-Hackensack).

Howes is sponsoring a bill (HF2883) that would require such labels. He told the House Civil Law Committee on Feb. 28 that many senior citizens purchase the cards, believing

the discounts are good at all pharmacies. The cards usually pertain to a specific store.

The committee approved the bill. It now heads to the House floor.

William Bond, chief executive officer of the Minnesota Pharmacies Association, told the committee that some seniors buy the cards, usually for \$8 a month, thinking the cards are accepted everywhere.

The cards may be accepted at all pharmacies in the Twin Cities, for example, but not accepted anywhere in rural Minnesota, Howes said.

Wording on the card should be printed in "bold and prominent type, prominently placed" so it is easily seen, the bill states.

The bill also includes civil penalties for companies that don't comply. The bill would require that an action must be brought within two years of the time the offense was committed or within two years of the time the offense was discovered.

No criminal penalties are included in the bill.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) praised the measure, calling it a good consumer-protection bill.

Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) suggested adding language to the bill that would require a minimum type size for the words on the cards so seniors can read them, but the committee did not approve Mahoney's proposal.

★ **CRIME****Some seek cheaper BCA plan**

A proposal for a new Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) building is not part of the House State Government Finance Committee's bonding recommendations.

The committee's bonding plan was presented Feb. 29 to the House Capital Investment Committee.

Rep. Philip Krinkie (R-Shoreview), chair of the state government panel, said the Department of Public Safety already has enough money to plan and design a smaller project on its current site that would satisfy its need for expansion.

The department has received \$7.2 million in previous years to plan a new BCA building, Krinkie said, and \$2.1 million of that has not been spent.

Officials are most concerned about the bureau's laboratory facilities, Krinkie said, and those problems could be resolved by

repairing the current building and using the \$2.1 million to design an adjacent lab building.

The bureau has requested \$58 million for the new building, which also has been recommended by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The House Judiciary Finance Committee recommended \$30 million for the project.

Krinkie said the \$58 million project seems to be the result of a "self-fulfilling prophecy," because it has been pushed forward without an appropriate study of the other options.

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Charlie Weaver stressed the need for a new building, calling the bureau the "nerve center of the entire criminal justice system." He listed severe problems with the existing building, including pipes that have recently burst and mold that is growing in the walls due to condensation.

Weaver said the current work environment is dangerous to employees and will eventually lead to evidence being compromised, among other problems.

That prompted Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) to question how the problem ever got so bad.

"We need to make sure that the BCA employees — wherever they're located — don't have these kinds of problems," he said.

Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul) said it would be a mistake to leave the project unfunded.

Most of the committee's other recommendations fall in line with the governor's plan. They include \$23.6 million for maintenance and repairs in state buildings, such as \$4.3 million for the Department of Health building and \$2.5 million to upgrade electrical systems throughout the Capitol complex.

Another committee recommendation is \$250,000 in grants to public television stations to prepare for a federal mandate to switch to a digital broadcast signal. The governor vetoed \$113,000 for that purpose in 1999.

Felony for repeat DWI offenders

In principle, a House proposal to create a felony penalty for multiple drunken driving offenses has received bipartisan support.

But when it comes down to the significant financial impact the plan could have on both state and local resources, the plan is more difficult to sell.

The House Judiciary Finance Committee approved the bill (HF2745) that would make a person's fourth conviction for drunken driving within a 10-year period a felony.

But members expressed concern that the state might not be able to afford all the fiscal effects that could accompany the measure.

"I'll vote for the bill, but in some ways, I

think this might be an exercise in futility," said Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul).

Beyond making the fourth offense a felony, the bill, sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), also would require anyone convicted of felony drunken driving to serve at least five to seven years in prison and pay up to a \$14,000 fine.

The bill would allow a judge to stay a prison sentence and instead require the person to serve six months in jail, and after serving that time, successfully complete a 10-year probationary period with no drug or alcohol use or subsequent offenses.

Currently, the highest penalty in Minnesota for drunken driving is a gross misdemeanor, which calls for up to one year in prison and a maximum \$3,000 fine.

Initial fiscal analysis of the bill projects it will cost the state \$3.3 million in fiscal year 2001, \$10.8 million in 2002, and \$18.6 million in 2003.

Progress Report

BILL: HF2745

SUMMARY: Felony penalties for fourth DWI conviction within 10 years

ACTION: Endorsed by Judiciary Finance Committee after earlier approval by Crime Prevention Committee

UP NEXT: Awaits hearing in State Government Finance Committee

SENATE: Companion bill introduced and referred to Senate Crime Prevention Committee

State officials said that beyond the costs of incarcerating drunken driving offenders in either state prisons or county jails, the new felony penalty would create several new positions for probation officers, lawyers, judges, and forensic scientists.

Officials testified that some of their assumptions have changed since the initial study and the fiscal impact might be less than originally anticipated. However, analysts said it will still be significant.

Analysts have not determined the full impact of costs passed down to counties if judges choose to depart from prison sentences and send offenders to jail.

Jerry Soma, division manager for Anoka County Human Services, said he anticipates the felony designation could cost the county between \$1 million and \$2 million. Soma said the county would need 35 to 40 new jail beds, as well.

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

Penalties for fake IDs

A bill that would increase penalties for attempting to purchase alcohol with false identification was approved March 2 by the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley) is sponsoring a bill (HF2655) that would make a person's second conviction for underage purchase alcohol a gross misdemeanor.

The bill also would allow the alcohol distributor — from a liquor store clerk to a bouncer at a nightclub — to confiscate identification cards that appear to be phony.

Leppik said the bill is needed to curb the widespread abuse of fake IDs.

"They can get it off the Internet, they can get it anywhere," she said. "It becomes a game."

The bill would require the ID to be turned over to the police or to the legitimate card owner within 48 hours.

Rep. Andrew Westerberg (R-Blaine) offered an amendment that would allow the person who confiscated the card to return it to the parent or guardian of the card owner. The committee approved the amendment.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) opposed the bill, saying it gives bouncers too much leeway to confiscate identification cards.

"It's quite a hardship for someone who is there legally," Skoglund said. "There is going to be abuse."

Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul) opposed the gross misdemeanor charge for a second offense, saying it is too strict. He said he preferred keeping the penalty as a misdemeanor.

A gross misdemeanor conviction carries a maximum penalty of one year imprisonment and a \$3,000 fine. A misdemeanor conviction carries a maximum penalty of 90 days in jail and a \$700 fine.

Leppik said that removing the gross misdemeanor would strip much of the impact from the bill.

The bill now heads to the House floor.

★ DEVELOPMENT

Guthrie funding pitched

The state would contribute \$25 million to help the Guthrie Theater move to a new Mississippi River site, under a proposal debated March 1 by the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.

The bill (HF3900), sponsored by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), would send bond proceeds for a grant to the Minneapolis Community Development Agency to help the city plan, design, construct, and furnish the new theater.

The request was one of nearly 70 bills totaling over \$312 million the committee



Joe Dowling, artistic director of the Guthrie Theater, testifies March 1 before the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee in support of a proposed \$25 million in state funds for a new theater along the Mississippi River in Minneapolis.

considered in its recommendation to the House Capital Investment Committee for this year's bonding bill.

"The Guthrie is part of what makes our quality of life what it is," Abrams said. "It is an asset not only for Minneapolis, but for the Twin Cities, for the entire state, for the United States, and for the world."

Stephen Sanger, president of General Mills, said the Guthrie Theater helps distinguish the city from others and plays a vital part of attracting and keeping workers in the state.

"It's not a matter of competing with Pillsbury or 3M, it's about competing with Amazon.com and Microsoft. It's Minneapolis versus Seattle and all of Silicone Valley," Sanger said.

Joe Dowling, the theater's artistic director, said the total cost of the project is expected to be \$75 million. Dowling said the proposal would expand the existing artistic program and provide three separate stages.

In addition, education and community outreach programs and the artist-training program would be expanded. The scheduled opening date for the new site would be 2004, he said.

Rep. Steve Trimble (DFL-St. Paul) questioned the bill's site-specific provisions because the location was not the Guthrie

Theater's first choice. And, he said, potential sites in St. Paul should have been considered.

Abrams said the theater's decision for the riverfront site reflected a loyalty to Minneapolis, where the theater has been located for 37 years.

Dowling said that the theater not only has metropolitan area appeal but that 40 percent of its customers come from outstate.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) agreed the theater is important for those in Greater Minnesota.

"I'm just a poor old farm boy but I'm behind this project 100 percent," Davids said.

★ EDUCATION

Teacher mentoring program

Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato) is sponsoring a bill that would appropriate \$34 million from the general fund in fiscal year 2001 to fund teacher mentoring programs in school districts across Minnesota.

Dorn's bill (HF2754) would provide a source of funding for districts to increase opportunities for interaction between new teachers and mentors, he said.

The House K-12 Education Finance Committee heard the bill March 1. It will be con-



Simone Haugen, a fifth-grade teacher at Turtle Lake Elementary School in Shoreview, describes her positive experiences with a teacher mentorship program. Haugen spoke before the House K-12 Education Finance Committee on March 1 in support of a bill that would increase spending for such efforts.

sidered for inclusion in the committee's omnibus spending measure.

The money would be directed to the commissioner of the Department of Children, Families and Learning, who would then distribute it to school districts on a need basis, Dorn said.

Under the bill, teacher mentoring revenue could be used by districts to hire mentors and coordinators, create release time for new teachers to spend with mentors, and allow new teachers to observe other teachers at work.

Money also could be spent to create after-hours, weekend, and summer programs for new teachers to work with mentors, and to establish mentoring programs for non-instructional staff, Dorn said.

Mentoring programs were identified by an interim subcommittee as a way to improve teacher training.

Pushing student achievement

Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Minneapolis) is sponsoring a bill that would authorize additional general education revenue for school intervention programs to improve student achievement.

The bill (HF2756), presented March 1 to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee, would appropriate an undetermined amount of general education aid in fiscal year 2001 to fund intervention programs targeting students at risk of performing poorly on third- and fifth-grade tests.

The appropriation also could be used to aid students who have not yet passed the basic skills tests in reading, math, and writing, Kelliher said.

Under the bill, money could be spent to create programs to train more teachers in appropriate early intervention techniques, and to establish reliable screening tools used to identify children who are not able to read at grade-appropriate levels, said Kelliher.

The bill would set a school district's intervention revenue at \$20 per pupil unit in kindergarten through grade six, and \$20 in grades nine through 12 per student for those who have not yet passed the three required basic skills tests.

Kelliher's bill also would encourage schools to select a nationally established, research-based early intervention reading curriculum that requires high parental involvement.

The committee took no action on the bill, but may consider it for inclusion in the committee's omnibus spending measure.

Child labor penalties

The House Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee approved a bill Feb. 29 that would increase the penalties for violations of the state's child labor laws.

The bill (HF3414), sponsored by Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin), would increase fines tenfold for violations of existing child labor laws.

Currently, fines range from \$25 for employing a minor without proof of age up to \$500 for employing a minor under age 18 who is injured in hazardous employment. Under the bill, those fines would increase to \$250 and \$5,000.

Jobs considered to be hazardous employment include some construction work, working with hazardous chemicals, and other occupations that are considered potentially life threatening.

Beth Hartgarten, an attorney from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, said the increased fines would align the state closer to federal fines. She said in an economy of low unemployment, violations of child labor laws are increasing.

Hartgarten said that between July 1998 and June 1999, there were 36 complaints and three fines issued. The department issued 287 exemptions mostly for allowing individuals to work longer hours and denied 10 exemption requests primarily for hazardous employment.

Between July 1999 and September 1999, there were 20 complaints and six fines.



Beth Hartgarten of the Department of Labor and Industry testifies Feb. 29 before the Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee in support of a bill that would increase penalties for child labor law violations.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) cited a personal experience as one of his reasons for opposing the bill. Gunther said that the grocery store he runs with his brother was fined after two 15-year-olds "who loved their work" traded shifts with two 16-year-olds and ended up working past legal hours.

"I can guarantee you all we're going to do is make sure employers never hire 15-year-olds again," he said.

Leighton said that most people would agree that the state's child labor laws are there for a good reason and the bill would not prevent 15-year-olds from working reasonable jobs.

"They certainly can still work," he said. "But if they have to work more than eight hours a day or 40 hours a week, there is something wrong in this state, in our society."

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

★ **ENVIRONMENT**

River funds ranked high

The House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee approved its list of bonding priorities Feb. 28.

The list recommends spending \$281 million on various projects, some of which are in Gov. Jesse Ventura's capital budget plan and others that have been proposed by House members. The governor recommended spending \$125 million on environment-related projects.

The committee's top priority is spending \$60 million for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which would establish conservation easements along the Minnesota River. The easements require landowners to stop cultivating the land near the river, so it can filter out soil and chemicals, help control flooding, and establish wildlife habitat.

The \$60 million in state funds would be matched by \$140 million in federal funds, but that money is only available through September 2002.

The governor's recommendation is to spend only \$25 million for that program, which would be matched by about \$58 million in federal funds.

Also high on the priority list is \$11.2 million for the Metropolitan Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program, which would be matched by \$18.1 million in federal and local funds.

The committee also gave high ranking to \$3 million for the critical habitat matching account, which is matched by private donations.

A \$6.5 million project would create a 5.1-acre public access area on Lake Minnetonka's Grays Bay. Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) said the proposal is critical because it involves purchasing property from a willing seller, an opportunity that is not going to last long considering the high demand for lakeshore property.

The project would feature boat ramps, a dock with several boat slips and parking for cars and trailers.

Some other projects the committee favored but are not included in the governor's recommendations include \$17.1 million for a Como Park education resource center, \$4.4 million to improve wildlife management areas and fisheries, \$4 million to acquire and develop a recreation area and campground near East Grand Forks, and \$13 million to control flooding in the Red River valley.

The committee also favored spending \$1 million to purchase an office building in Pelican Rapids instead of building a new \$5 million building in Fergus Falls for the Department of Natural Resources, against the governor's recommendations.

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



FYI

New publication available

There is a new publication available from the nonpartisan House Public Information Office. *Capitol Steps: How Six Bills Became Law* is a 34-page booklet that explains the legislative process in a simple, straightforward manner.

The booklet is an update of a popular publication originally printed by Public Information in 1990. The 2000 edition includes all new text and an updated design.

Short, easy-to-read chapters tell the story of six state laws and how they came to be. The process is followed from the time an idea for a new law comes up to the time a bill reflecting that idea is passed by the Legislature and signed into law.

Capitol Steps was designed to be a resource for junior and senior high school students, but it would be of interest to anyone who wants to gain an understanding of the basics of how the Legislature works.

If you would like to receive a copy of the new publication, call (651) 296-2146 or (800) 657-3550. There is no charge.

★ GAME & FISH

Hunting on reservation

A bill that would allow people to hunt on certain lands within the Red Lake Indian Reservation without a state hunting license was approved March 1 by the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

The Red Lake Band of Chippewa owns about 85 percent of the land within Minnesota's Northwest Angle. The band has hunting licenses for its members and for other area residents, but there has been some confusion over whether those hunters also need a state license.

The bill (HF304), sponsored by Rep. Jim Tunheim (DFL-Kennedy), would clarify the matter by making the Red Lake Band's license sufficient, and it would specify that the band has jurisdiction to regulate hunting in that area.

The Department of Natural Resources supports the proposal.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

★ GOVERNMENT

Increasing Capitol security

The Capitol complex would have its own separate police force under a bill sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove).

Stanek told the House Crime Prevention Committee on Feb. 29 that the Capitol security forces would add four additional licensed state troopers to the current staff of three troopers and 48 unlicensed security officers under the measure.

He said it is not his intention to displace the current security team.

"I'm not trying to match what we have right now, I'm trying to augment what we have," Stanek said.

The committee approved the bill (HF3376) and sent it to House Transportation Finance Committee.

The bill also would provide four additional state troopers to guard Gov. Jesse Ventura, bringing the total troopers assigned to the governor to 15.

A Capitol complex oversight committee, consisting of legislators from both houses and the chief justice of the Supreme Court, would be formed under the bill. The committee would set guidelines, develop short- and long-term plans and make budget recommends to the Legislature.

A report released in January recommended the Capitol close some of the building's 37 entrances and install metal detectors at the remaining open doors. The report also called for a card-access system.

Stanek's proposal does not feature any of those security measures. He said the oversight committee could make such specific recommendations in the future.

Rep. Joe Mullery (DFL-Mpls) questioned whether a full-time police force is needed. Mullery noted that crowds gather at the Capitol during the legislative session, but there is less of a need during the interim.

Mancel Mitchell, deputy commissioner of the Public Safety Department, said he prefers that a Capitol force be comprised of state troopers. The state spends about \$100,000 annually per trooper, including salary, vehicle, and other expenses, Mitchell said.

Stanek said the Capitol has been left with only a few law enforcement officials in the past when the governor has left the complex,

taking state troopers with him. Stanek added that the bill does not require that Capitol law enforcement be state troopers.

In addition, only sworn troopers have the power to make arrests and that power extends statewide.

Stanek also noted that the law enforcement agency would answer to the oversight committee rather than the governor.

The licensed Capitol police would have distinct blue uniforms, while the non-licensed staff would be in a different color, Stanek said.

New plan for Public Service

The Department of Public Service would be abolished with most of its functions transferred to the Public Utilities Commission, under a bill the House Commerce Committee approved Feb. 29.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) is sponsoring the bill (HF2496), which would undo the governor's 1999 order to merge the Commerce and Public Service departments.

"If we do nothing, it stands as it is," said Davids, chair of the committee. "My intent is that commerce should be commerce, and the other things should go somewhere else."

Prior to Ventura's reorganization, the Public Service Department consisted primarily of the Energy Division, the Telecommunications Division and the Weights and Measures Division.

The Weights and Measures Division is responsible for checking the accuracy of all commercial weighing and measuring equipment, including gas pumps and grocery scales. The Energy Division was given the mission of ensuring reliable and affordable energy supplies are available in the state. The Telecommunications Division was set up to represent residential and business consumers in the regulatory process.

Under Ventura's action, the Energy Division and Telecommunications Division were then shifted to the Department of Commerce, leaving the Weights and Measures Division by itself.

Davids' bill would send the Energy Division to the Office of Strategic and Long-Range Planning.

Linda Taylor, assistant commissioner of energy, told the committee the bill is not good policy. Taylor said the Energy and Telecommunications divisions should stay in the Commerce Department, which has strong enforcement powers.

Taylor said the enforcement powers would be lost if the Energy and Telecommunications divisions were placed in the planning office.

"We would lose our effectiveness," Taylor said. "We'd have monopolies out there doing what they want. That is not good public policy."



Capitol Security Lt. Alesia Metry looks on as the House Crime Prevention Committee passes a bill Feb. 29 that would create a new Capitol police department.

Taylor recommended the committee set aside the bill and require the Legislative Audit Commission to study the situation. Davids rejected the notion, saying a study should not be performed during the second year of a biennium.

Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina) proposed an amendment that would reverse the governor's changes, and restore both departments to their original makeup before the merger. The committee rejected the amendment.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) offered an amendment that would place all Weights and Measures functions in the Department of Agriculture except the functions related to petroleum. That amendment was adopted.

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

Naming new state symbols

Minnesota may be known as the "Gopher State," but it actually doesn't have an official state mammal.

The timber wolf would have that distinction under a bill (HF3508) that was approved Feb. 25 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

The committee also approved a bill to designate the monarch as the state butterfly.

The idea to designate the timber wolf as the state mammal came from a group of seventh graders at Wabasha-Kellogg High School in southeastern Minnesota. Students in that class discussed several possible creatures and narrowed the list down to three: the white tail deer, the gopher, and the timber wolf.

Wabasha-Kellogg seventh-graders Perry Hemmingson and Andrew Johnson were among the students who sent surveys to several schools throughout the state. The 13 schools that returned the surveys overwhelmingly voted for the timber wolf to be the official state mammal.



Hanna Nussbaum, a fourth grade student at OH Anderson Elementary School in Mahtomedi, asks lawmakers to name the monarch as Minnesota's state butterfly. The girl testified Feb. 25 before the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

Both boys were aware of the controversy surrounding wolves in the state. Lawmakers and other state officials are trying to develop policies for controlling the wolf population, while balancing the interests of animal-rights groups with landowners who have lost livestock due to wolf attacks.

Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) asked if the state-symbol designation would grant special protection to wolves.

But Hemmingson said such treatment is not given to other state symbols.

"The walleye is the state fish, and you can go around catching them," he said.

The bill is sponsored by Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City).

The monarch butterfly would become a state symbol under a separate bill (HF2588) sponsored by Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake). That idea came from fourth graders at OH Anderson Elementary School in Mahtomedi.

The monarch is found throughout the state, and like many Minnesotans, it migrates south for the winter and returns in the spring.

Both bills now move to the House floor.

★ HEALTH

Abortion plan approved

A bill that would prohibit any woman from receiving an abortion in Minnesota unless she meets requirements for "informed consent" was approved Feb. 28 by the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Sponsored by Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), the bill (HF178) would require that

any patient scheduled to undergo an abortion receive specified information either by telephone or by mail at least 24 hours prior to the operation.

It would also establish civil penalties for clinics failing to comply with informed consent requirements.

The information provided to the patient would include the name of the doctor performing the procedure and other details.

"The purpose of this bill is to make sure that a woman is adequately informed about what will happen during an abortion procedure, and is not meant as an obstacle for a woman who chooses to have an abortion," Boudreau said.

The bill would also require a referring physician at the clinic where the operation will be performed to tell the patient about information regarding alternatives to abortion and the risks and possible side effects associated with the procedure.

Information provided to the patient would also include facts about medical risks and other factors involved with carrying the child to term.

"Sometimes when a woman is in a crisis-type of a situation, she can feel pushed to make a tough decision without having all the information she'd like available to her," said Boudreau. "This bill would put, at her fingers, answers to both procedural and other types of questions regarding abortion."

The woman would then have to provide written consent at least 24 hours before the abortion showing that she has received the required information.

The financial impact of the bill was the focus of the hearing before the Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

HOUSE COMMITTEE PROFILE

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Chair: Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park)
Vice Chair: Rostberg (R-Isanti)
Minority Lead: Kahn (DFL-Mpls)
Members: 23 (12 R, 10 DFL, 1 Ind.)

Scope: Reviews legislation related to the overall operation of state government, including the purchase of materials and services by state agencies; state employee contracts; agency rulemaking procedures; Capitol complex maintenance; and the composition of state agencies. Hears legislation related to veterans affairs and gambling.

The bill would appropriate \$167,000 to the commissioner of health in fiscal year 2001 to amass the information mentioned. The bulk of the expense, Boudreau said, would cover the cost of producing numerous lists of specific community resources and the process of updating old information.

The bill was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee for further consideration.

★ HIGHER EDUCATION

New art facility supported

Some noteworthy projects shunned by the governor received high rankings from the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

Chief among them is the proposal for a new facility to replace the troubled Art Building on the Minneapolis campus of the University of Minnesota.

The U of M wants to tear down the existing Art Building and replace it with a new structure considered the centerpiece of the “arts quarter” being developed on the West Bank. The new building would cost \$44 million, but only \$21 million would come from the state.

Gov. Jesse Ventura’s bonding proposal would fund three of the university’s top four bonding priorities. He left out the Art Building, which the university ranked third.

The Higher Education Finance Committee also ranked replacement of the Art Building third among 10 proposed U of M projects.

The committee voted March 1 to send a list of bonding priorities to the House Capital Investment Committee, which will compile this year’s omnibus bonding bill.

The bill assembled by the higher education panel does not include spending figures for all of the projects. It merely sets forth the priorities of the committee. In most cases, the Capital Investment Committee will rely on the dollar amounts requested by the campuses and the governor’s proposals.

The Higher Education Finance Committee’s priorities closely reflect those of the U of M and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system, but there are some significant differences.

Sixth among the committee’s priorities for MnSCU is the \$9.9 million plan to construct and remodel athletic facilities and academic space at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

The work, considered the second phase of a three-phase plan, would be part of a larger project spurred by Mankato businessman and Minnesota Timberwolves owner Glen Taylor’s \$9.2 million gift to the university.

The Mankato project was ranked just 17th by MnSCU, which listed 24 capital projects in

its request. Ventura recommended no funds for the Mankato proposal.

The committee’s top priority for both the U of M and MnSCU is bond funding for building maintenance and repair. The U of M is seeking \$16 million for such work, while MnSCU wants \$100 million for structures at its 36 institutions.

Under the committee’s plan, funds would be provided to make needed improvements at Anoka-Hennepin Technical College, which the system’s Board of Trustees voted to close rather than repair.

The higher education bonding plan, a committee bill yet to be assigned a house file number, was referred to the House Capital Investment Committee.

★ HOUSING

Homelessness prevention funds

Angela Soulvar, a mother of three, found herself without a home after her abusive husband forced her out of their house.

Soulvar told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee Feb. 28 that her own family situation had been difficult. Her mother was an alcoholic and both her parents were abusive, she said.

She testified that she was 18 years old when she met her husband, and because of his abuse she tried to leave him four times in six years.

“He made me feel bad about who I was and what I was doing,” she said. “When my boys started getting mean, I knew I had to end it.”

Soulvar said that her experience with the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency’s Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program helped her get her life back on track.

“I got lots of emotional support and the financial support was very helpful,” she said.

A bill (HF2679) sponsored by Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior) would provide an additional \$2 million in fiscal year 2001 to the housing development fund for the homeless assistance program. The committee heard the bill and may consider it for inclusion in a possible omnibus funding measure.

The program provides grants to counties to assist families and individuals who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

Since her experience with the program, Soulvar received a degree from Anoka-Hennepin Technical College and works for an insurance company.

“The only assistance I get is child care,” she said.

Preventing people from becoming home-

less — rather than intervening after they do — is a more effective way to deal with the problem, said Michael Dahl from the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless.

“It is more humane, more cost effective, and better for the state in the long run,” he said.

Dahl said much of the program’s effectiveness is that it allows decisions to be made at the regional level to best decide where the grants should be used.

★ HUMAN SERVICES

Newborn drop-off program

Six days after the January kickoff of a Dakota County pilot program for unwanted newborns, a baby only a few hours old was found dead inside a trash can in neighboring Hennepin County.

Lilly Riordan, co-founder of Dakota County’s Safe Place for Newborns initiative, appeared before the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee on Feb. 29 to ask that more be done to keep extreme cases of neglect from occurring, regardless of what part of the state they happen.

“There is great urgency associated with our cause,” Riordan said. “When a newborn child is left alone to die, it’s truly a situation where everyone loses.”

Riordan testified for a bill (HF2945) that



Laura Plummer Zrust, human services licensing supervisor from the Department of Human Services, speaks Feb. 29 before the House Health and Human Services Committee in support of a bill that would allow a mother to leave her unharmed newborn baby at a hospital emergency room while remaining anonymous and immune from being reported to social services or police.

would allow a mother (or a person of her consent) to leave an unharmed newborn at a hospital emergency room without fear of prosecution up to 72 hours following the child's birth.

The committee approved the measure. It now moves to the House Civil Law Committee.

Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior) is sponsoring the bill, which would also provide anonymity by allowing the person bringing the child to the hospital to leave without providing identification.

Under current Minnesota law, a mother who willfully neglects a newborn when she is reasonably able to care for the infant can be charged with a gross misdemeanor.

Allowing a child to be left with a hospital would provide desperate mothers another option and could save lives, Sykora told the committee.

"I think this bill makes sense," she said.

As the bill reads, the hospital would be required to accept the child, if it has no visible injuries or sickness, and to notify a local welfare agency following the mother's departure from the premises.

A numbered identification bracelet would be issued to aid in linking the mother to the newborn at a later date if reunification was sought.

However, according to the bill's language, the newborn would technically be considered "abandoned," and the bracelet would not allow custody of the child on demand.

Officials do not know how many babies hospitals could realistically expect to be dropped off if the bill becomes law.

★ INSURANCE

Limiting windshield freebies

Customers may no longer receive free steaks, frequent flier miles, or savings bonds when they get a new auto windshield, under a bill endorsed by a House panel.

Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville) is sponsoring the bill (HF2656), which would cap free gifts from glass replacement companies at \$35 in value. The bill also would change current law from requiring insurers to pay "all reasonable costs" in windshield replacement to an "average cost" of repair.

"People understand windshield costs are too high," Wolf said.

The House Commerce Committee approved the bill Feb. 29 and sent it to the House floor. Wolf said he will ask that a vote on the



Pat Boldt of ABC Auto Glass in Cold Spring follows along as the House Commerce Committee debates a bill Feb. 29 that would place new regulations on auto glass companies. Boldt is opposed to the bill.

bill be slightly delayed, pending more negotiating between glass installers and insurance companies.

Jim Bernstein, acting commissioner of the Department of Commerce, said the legislation is needed to stem the increase of glass replacement costs. Consumers are aware that glass shop giveaways are a problem, Bernstein said.

"They are unhappy because they feel the insurance rates are going up and they are getting ripped off," Bernstein said.

In January, the state Court of Appeals ruled that free gifts are legitimate sales tools for glass service companies because the law says that "any cost necessary" must be paid by insurers.

Windshield replacement costs in Minnesota are 69 percent higher than the national average and are the highest overall, according to an insurance company's report released in December.

Under Wolf's legislation, insurance companies would contact three glass replacement companies in the county where the replacement is occurring. The insurance company would then be required to pay the average cost of the three estimates.

George Corporaal, owner of Glass Service Company in St. Paul, spoke against the bill. Corporaal began giving away a box of steaks with each job to draw customers to his business in 1991. Corporaal said insurance companies should not have final say in which glass companies are called for estimates.

Also, glass costs vary because of the quality of glass installed, Corporaal said. An insurance company could recommend low-quality glass that is less expensive, he noted.

"This bill is chaotic," Corporaal said. "It will cause nothing but trouble."

★ TAXES

Permanent tax cut proposal

A bill that would provide more than \$818 million in permanent tax cuts was pitched March 2 to the House Taxes Committee.

The bill (HF2941), sponsored by Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee), would reduce rates in all three income brackets and would allow individuals to subtract health insurance premiums from Minnesota taxable income.

The committee took no action on the measure but will consider it for inclusion in this year's omnibus tax package.

Daggett's bill would reduce rates in the lower bracket from 5.5 percent to 5 percent, from 7.25 percent to 6.5 percent in the middle bracket, and from 8 percent to 7.5 percent in the upper bracket.

She said the current health insurance deduction allowed for self-employed Minnesotans would be expanded to include all taxpayers.

The committee adopted an amendment offered by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), committee chair, that would phase-out by 2002 the three-factor system for determining corporate income taxes.

Under present law most corporations are taxed according to a three-factor formula based on sales, property, and payroll. The amendment would increase the sales portion of the formula currently at 75 percent to 80 percent for this year, to 90 percent in 2001, and to 100 percent beginning in 2002.

Gerry Morris, the senior manager of the General Mills tax department, said that because the company employs Minnesota workers and has a facility in the state, the company pays more in Minnesota corporate franchise tax on similar sales than competitors based out of state.

Duane Benson, the executive director of the Minnesota Business Partnership, said allowing the state's taxpayers to keep more of their money ultimately makes the state more competitive in the global marketplace.

Wayne Cox, the executive director of Minnesota Citizens for Tax Justice, spoke against the bill. Cox said under the proposal, 60 percent of the state's taxpayers would receive less tax cut dollars than taxpayers in the top 1 percent in income.

Where to find information

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 296-2314

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

Questions on health care tax

The Ventura administration is answering for its handling of the state's health care access fund.

Department of Finance Commissioner Pam Wheelock appeared before the House Taxes Committee on Feb. 24 to answer questions surrounding the decision not to increase the health care provider tax.

The tax was to rise to cover a structural deficit in the health care access fund, which provides revenue for MinnesotaCare, the state's health plan for low-income residents.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), the committee chair has been critical of the administration's decision, which he said did not follow the letter of the law.

State law provides for an increase in health-care taxes paid by health care providers when there is a structural deficit in the health care access fund.

Wheelock decided not to do so at the beginning of the current calendar year, when an increase was expected. There is still money in the health care access fund, but the fund is structured such that if revenue doesn't accrue from certain sources at specific time, additional provider-based taxes are mandated.

The 1999 Legislature approved a roughly \$84 million transfer from the general fund into the health care access fund. The goal of that move was to freeze the provider tax, often called the "sick tax."

But Gov. Jesse Ventura line-item vetoed that transfer.

"The governor wanted to take credit for the \$80 million veto, but didn't want to take responsibility for what the statute clearly required," Abrams said.

Wheelock said the governor vetoed the appropriation because he did not think it was appropriate to use general fund money for the health care access fund. And she said the administration was surprised by the Legislature's general fund appropriation.

But Wheelock also expressed understanding that her decision not to increase the tax may have been equally surprising to lawmakers.

"The law directs the commissioner of finance to make the decision. The responsibility was left with me and I made the decision," Wheelock said. "I understand that the decision I made was contrary to what the Legislature was expecting."

She said that the administration has learned that it needs to improve some of its efforts to communicate with the Legislature.

Abrams said that although he has been "extraordinarily frustrated" by communication breakdowns with the administration, input

from the governor and his staff is important in the process.

"I like Jesse Ventura. I respect him. I admire him and I want to work with him," Abrams said. "I want to work with you for the betterment of all Minnesotans."

Simplifying the sales tax

Though they pay them nearly every day, most Minnesotans have probably never taken the time to actually read the state's many sales tax laws.

And even if they did, they probably wouldn't understand them.

In 1997, the Legislature passed a provision, as part of the omnibus tax bill, to reorganize the statutes pertaining to sales taxes so they would be easier to understand.

More than two years in the making, the finished product is contained in a bill (HF3234), sponsored by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka). The bill was discussed Feb. 25 in the House Taxes Committee, which Abrams chairs.

The bill reflects the efforts of the Office of the Revisor of Statutes, along with research staff from the House and Senate and the Department of Revenue.

"This hopefully will improve the readability of the statutes," Janet Rahm, from the

revisor's office, told the committee. She said the intent of the bill is not to rewrite or restructure any substantive provisions.

"It uses simpler words and removes redundant language so that people can read the statutes," she said.

Much of the bill is devoted to clarifying definitions of terms used, and moving together the many definitions scattered throughout the statutes pertaining to sales taxes.

The bill also would divide groups of sales tax exempt items together in an effort to allow users to more easily find the provisions that might apply to them.

According to the nonpartisan House Research Department, the many items exempted from sales tax include some odd things.

For example, there currently is a provision that allows some flatware and silverware to be considered clothing but not exempt from sales tax.

Under the proposed revision, that provision would be removed altogether.

Abrams praised the efforts to make the statutes more clear and to keep the process open for input and yet avoid any substantive changes. He said the bill will be considered for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill but also may be considered as a separate bill.

★ TRANSPORTATION

Study of ramp meters

Highway ramp meters would be shut down to allow for an independent study of their effectiveness, under a bill sponsored by Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen.)

The House Transportation Policy Committee approved the bill (HF3753) March 2 and sent it to the House Transportation Finance Committee.

Workman said Minnesotans are frustrated by the long waits at entrance ramps and that a study is needed to show the effectiveness of the meters.

Officials have not yet determined how much the study would cost.

The meter system is used to alleviate bottlenecks on the interstate, said Tim Wirke, director of government relations for the Department of Transportation. The average wait time is 4 to 6 minutes.

Tom Trecker, Minnesota chapter coordinator for the National Motorists Association, told the committee it should examine the system's effectiveness.

"Twin Cities motorists have the most aggressive meter system and longest wait time in the nation," Trecker said. "And the system has never been tested."

Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park)

FAMILY FARMERS



Judy and Ernest Anderson of Benson carry their signs to the "March First" rally in the Capitol rotunda March 1 in support of family farmers.

disagreed. The Transportation Department gathers a large amount of data and conducts research before installing a light system to make sure it works, Johnson said.

Workman said his views on effectiveness might differ from the department's opinion.

"It's not that we don't believe them," Workman said. "It's that we have a different theory about the truth."

Trecker said other states use ramp meters, but only to enter the freeway system. Minnesota, however, has meters on connecting freeways.

"Once the vehicle is on the freeway, it makes no sense to stop between freeways," Trecker said.

Entrance ramps are too short to allow vehicles to accelerate and join traffic at the appropriate speed, Trecker said.

Rep. Henry Kalis (DFL-Walters) offered a successful amendment that would require the study to be performed by a private consulting firm instead of the department.

An amendment from Rep. Sharon Marko (DFL-Cottage Grove) changed the time of the proposed study from October 2000 to a time determined by the consulting firm.

"I believe the department may well be right about the value of ramp meters," said Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth). "But I also see the value of a study."

Slower traffic keep right

Slower traffic on Minnesota interstates would be required to travel only in the right-hand lane, under a bill advancing in the House.

Rep. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm) is sponsoring a bill (HF3091) that would make driving in the left lane against the law unless drivers are passing, avoiding accidents, entering or exiting the interstate, or being directed by law enforcement or construction markers.

"I'm just attempting to make the roadways a bit safer," Tomassoni said in Feb. 29 testimony to the House Transportation Policy Committee.

HOUSE COMMITTEE PROFILE

Transportation Policy

Chair: Workman

(R-Chanhassen)

Vice Chair: Clark, J.

(R-Springfield)

Minority Lead: Hausman

(DFL-St. Paul)

Members: 22

(12 R, 10 DFL)

Scope: Oversees the Department of Transportation, Driver and Vehicle Services and State Patrol within the Department of Public Safety, and the transportation, transit, and airway portions of the Metropolitan Council. Addresses highways, trucking, railroads, waterways, airports, and transit systems.

Tomassoni believes the bill would reduce "road rage" on Minnesota highways. He said many drivers become angry when they are stuck behind vehicles, traveling side by side, and traveling at the same speed.

The committee approved the measure and sent it to the Transportation Finance Committee.

Tomassoni said many European countries have similar laws.

Rep. Alice Johnson (DFL-Spring Lake Park) spoke against the bill, saying people would only drive faster.

"I think this is a way to encourage speeding," Johnson said. "We're now encouraging higher speed limits."

Rep. Sharon Marko (DFL-Cottage Grove) also opposed the bill, arguing it would be impossible to regulate in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. However, Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth) said he believes law enforcement would use common sense and would not enforce the measure during rush hour.

The bill would require that signs be placed every 50 miles along interstate highways to remind drivers to move to the right lane after they have passed a car. Tomassoni said the signs are a key part of the bill.

Current law provides for a petty misde-

meanor for drivers who travel in the left lane below the speed of other vehicles on the road. The bill also would carry the petty misdemeanor penalty.

Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls) said the bill is about more than just speed.

"It's how cars back up," she said. "It's a huge safety issue."

Funds for bus maintenance

The House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee approved a bill March 1 that would help fund upkeep on the metropolitan area's bus system.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), the bill's sponsor, said his proposal would increase the Metropolitan Council's bonding authority in the current biennium from \$36 million to \$52 million for transit expenditures.

During last session, the Met Council asked for \$52 million but the Legislature authorized \$36 million. Abrams said the bill would allow the council to sell bonds for the balance of the funds. The bus system also receives federal matching dollars.

Abrams said the bill would have a slight property tax impact — an average increase of \$1.20 on an \$120,000 home.

Art Leahy, general manager of Metro Transit, said that the additional money is needed for basic transit needs such as repairing and replacing buses and bus facilities.

The committee approved an amendment offered by Abrams that increased the bonding authority amount from \$52 million to \$55.4 million. The additional \$3.4 million would be used specifically on the Eagan and Burnsville Transit Hubs and the Southwest Station.

The Met Council is the regional planning organization for the Twin Cities area. It operates the metropolitan bus system, collects and treats wastewater and manages water resources, guides development, plans regional parks, and administers funds for affordable housing.

Rep. Ray Vandever (R-Forest Lake) asked Abrams if the funds could be used for modes of transit other than buses. Abrams said that the bill specifically prohibits the use of the funds for construction maintenance or operation of light-rail transit.

"This is a Met Council initiative," Abrams said. "It has nothing to do with light-rail transit. These are bus funds."

The bill (HF3530) was sent to the House Taxes Committee.

GRANTS FOR AC



Evelyn Hamre, 90, testifies before the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee on March 1 in support of a bill that would provide air-conditioning grants and appropriate money for publicly owned high-rise buildings for low-income disabled people and seniors.

Farm aid

Lawmakers are considering proposals that would provide aid to farmers

By DAVID MAEDA

Last year's \$70 million agricultural tax rebate was a substantial investment but did not make a significant difference to most farmers, an economics professor from the University of Minnesota told the House Taxes Committee on Feb. 29.

"The assistance was welcome but not critical to that many folks," said Steven Taff, an associate professor in the University of Minnesota's Department of Applied Economics. "It simply was not big enough to keep the wolf from the door."

Though a number of plans to increase agricultural aid and rebates are being tossed around, Taff suggests that the answer is eliminating the need for farmers to depend on government resources in the long term.

Along with officials from the Department of Revenue, Taff studied the effectiveness of last year's agricultural assistance program. The program allowed farmers to receive assistance of \$4 per cropland acre. The maximum payment was \$5,600.

According to the study, the state paid out a total of \$72.1 million to about 49,000 individuals and businesses involved in agriculture. The average payment was \$1,473.

Nearly 25 percent of the checks exceeded \$2,000 each. Close to 90 percent of the payments went to people with annual incomes of \$50,000 or less.

While the majority of Minnesota farms remain by most definitions small, Taff said there is a growing need to increase the size of farms to remain profitable.

He said most family farms in the state now rely on off-farm income to supplement their farm revenues, and they would fail without government assistance.

On average Minnesota farms received \$45,000 in various payments from the state and federal government.

"Government has put farmers in the black," Taff said.

He said the current Minnesota agricultural economy is no better than a year ago and little



Russ Bratsch, who farms 2,600 acres near Renville with his family, reads a statement in support of a bill that would provide tax relief to those who join forces to run one farm operation. His testimony came Feb. 29 before the House Taxes Committee.

has improved in the last 20 years. He also said that traditionally the condition of the state's agricultural economy is measured solely by commodity prices, which is not always the most accurate measurement to use.

Rep. Ted Winter (DFL-Fulda) said that while commodity prices are not the only indicator of a difficult farm economy, they are a good example of what is wrong. Winter said farmers would much prefer fairer prices for their commodities rather than continue to rely on government subsidies.

"We need to figure out something. The domestic value of commodities is too low," Winter said.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), the Taxes Committee chair, agreed with those sentiments.

"The farmers I know would much rather get \$4 per bushel rather than \$1.40 per bushel along with a government check," he said.

Abrams said that efforts last year to target the \$70 million assistance to those who needed it most failed because, despite efforts from all involved, there was no fair way to develop an adequate "means" test.

A current bill sponsored by Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) would be a repeat of last year's plan, but it would limit eligibility to farmers in counties that have been declared by the president as weather-related disaster areas. Those counties include Kittson, Marshall, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, and Roseau.

The committee will consider the bill (HF2743) as part of this year's omnibus tax measure.

Ron Anderson, a Hallock farmer, said that last year's program was helpful in paying off bills. He said he used his check to pay fuel bills without having to draw on his line of credit.

The committee is also considering bills for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill that would expand the number of people receiving assistance from last year's program.

HF2786, sponsored by Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls), would allow farms with multiple operators to receive up to \$5,600 per farmer. The \$5,600 cap approved last year was per farm regardless of the number of operators.

Russ Bratsch, who operates a farm in Renville County with his three brothers and father, said his family was penalized because members registered their operation as one farm. He said when it comes to filing taxes or filling out other legal documents, each member of the family is required to do so individually.

Another bill (HF3166), sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), would extend the filing deadline for last year's agricultural tax rebate until June 30, 2000.

"Many of those who contacted us about missing the deadline have circumstances where the need is some the greatest," Ozment said. "Those with a death in the family, illness, or are working several jobs. Not to cloud the issue because there is definitely the need out there." 🐾

Reviewing the Profile

House committee examines several measures to make the Profile of Learning more acceptable to teachers and students

By MIKE DELARCO

While the Senate wrestles with a House vote last month to place an indefinite moratorium on the maligned Profile of Learning, several House members from both parties have devised plans to repair the state's show-what-you-know initiative.

Ten bills designed to revamp, and, in some cases, replace the controversial portion of the state's Graduation Standards were presented, discussed, and considered by the House Education Policy Committee Feb. 24 and Feb. 29.

The committee will likely incorporate some of the desired changes into one bill. So far, the most likely vehicle seems to be a measure sponsored by Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel).

Ness' bill (HF3618) would significantly reduce the number of content standards students in grades K-12 would be required to meet under the Profile.

The idea behind the Profile of Learning was hatched 12 years ago in response to criticism that schools weren't doing enough to prepare students for college and the workplace. The aim in creating the Profile was to shift learning away from textbooks, lectures, and drill and move it toward experiments, teamwork, research, and independent projects.

Under the Profile, students are required to perform various tasks in many areas of study. An emphasis is placed on getting students out of their seats to do activities that force them

to think for themselves and have practical applications for life beyond school.

Shortly after the state's teachers started incorporating requirements of the Profile into lesson plans two years ago, however, complaints began to surface.

While pleased with the hands-on knowledge the Profile provides students, a growing number of teachers felt there was much to be improved before they could completely stand behind the measure.

A survey released a month ago by Education Minnesota found that most teachers don't care for the Profile of Learning. Slightly more than half of the 608 randomly selected teachers surveyed by telephone last fall want to change the state's controversial graduation rule, 39 percent want it abolished, and only 9 percent want to keep it as it is.

The results of the survey show that teacher response has changed very little since the Profile's implementation.

In early February, Minnesota's teachers union and state Department of Children, Families and Learning Commissioner Christine Jax both called for a temporary moratorium — likely two years — on enforcing the requirements of the Profile of Learning.

But some want more. Cheryl Moen, a teacher at La Crescent High School, told committee members Feb. 29 she supports the indefinite moratorium on the Profile until "all the bugs

could be worked out." In her district, Moen said, some students are opting to enroll in the post-secondary enrollment options program, which allows them to take college courses, simply to avoid the hassle the Profile is causing.

Education Minnesota co-presidents Judy Schaubach and Sandra Peterson have cautioned legislators that teacher frustration with the set of standards had reached a boiling point. The Profile, they said, could "collapse under its own weight" if changes are not made this year.

On Feb. 17, House members attached the amendment calling for an indefinite moratorium on the Profile of Learning to a bill related to basic standards testing. The bill was passed by a wide margin. (The Senate is not expected to go along with the House amendment.)

Brett Smith, an instructor in the Mahtomedi School District and Minnesota's 1999 Teacher of the Year, pushed for change at the Feb. 29 hearing, but advised legislators to take things gradually.

"Sometimes if we continually evaluate a process as it's still evolving, such as tasting a soufflé several times before pulling it out of the oven, our conclusion can be premature," Smith said.

Perhaps the most repeated complaint teachers express when discussing the Profile of Learning is that the amount of work required to have students complete all the standards is too taxing on a school-year workload.

Ness' bill aims to establish a timeline that is grade-level appropriate for school districts to implement six separate learning areas and would require that students graduating in the 2005-06 school year and beyond to comply fully with the Profile of Learning requirements in order to graduate.

Many teachers are also concerned about the amount of paperwork now required to track students' progress in completing the standard package.

Richfield School District Superintendent Barbara Devlin pushed for a uniform system for student record keeping in testimony before the committee. According to Jax, state officials are already trying to address that particular concern by providing computer software that can help instructors track progress.

Other plans proposed make exceptions to the Profile for charter schools, impose either a two-year moratorium or indefinite moratorium so certain conditions can be met, and otherwise address workload and paperwork issues. 🐛



Four education professionals air their ideas about what to do with the Profile of Learning. Each testified Feb. 29 before the House Education Policy Committee. They are, from left to right, Barbara Devlin, superintendent Richfield Public Schools, who asked to retain the Profile but make improvements, Cheryl Moen, a teacher from LeCrescent, who suggested a moratorium on the Profile, Herbert Parker, former teacher from Anoka, who also backed a moratorium, and Mahtomedi's Brett Smith, Minnesota Teacher of the Year, who suggested improvements be made in the Profile.

Tab fees and tax shifts

Governor's plans would cut tab fees for some and direct tax revenues for highways and mass transit

By CHRIS VETTER

License tab fees would be cut, motor vehicle sales tax revenue would be redirected, and a new multi-modal transportation fund would be created, under plans supported by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) is sponsoring two bills that contain the governor's main initiatives.

One bill (HF2891) features Ventura's request to remove motor vehicle sales tax proceeds from the state's general fund, sending 54 percent to the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund.

The revenue transfer would cover the cost of capping license tab fees at \$75 per vehicle — a proposal sought by Ventura.

The remaining 46 percent of vehicle sales tax revenue would be used to create new multi-modal transportation fund that would go for public transit and highway projects statewide.

The House Transportation Finance and Transportation Policy committees met jointly March 1 to discuss the measures.

The finance committee then voted to send a second Molnau bill (HF2005), containing the \$75 license tab cap, to the House Taxes Committee without a recommendation. No action was taken on the first bill.

Last year, the state collected about \$450 million in license tab fees. About 39 percent of Minnesotans pay the \$35 minimum fee, but some people pay more than \$400 for tabs.

Elwyn Tinklenberg, commissioner of transportation, explained that the governor believes it is wrong to charge more for one vehicle tab than another vehicle just because one is newer or more expensive. Tinklenberg compared the proposed tab rate to the flat fees for fishing or hunting licenses, which cost the same regardless of the type of equipment an outdoorsman uses.

Rep. James Clark (R-Springfield) suggested the governor should truly create a flat fee, rather than having tabs fees set between \$35 and \$75.

The revenue goes into the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund, which means the proposed

\$75 cap would create a hole in that fund, which is used for county and municipal state-aid highways.

Under current law, all sales tax revenue from vehicle sales goes into the general fund, where it pays for anything from schools to prisons. Ventura's proposal would use some of the money to off-set his reduction in tab fees.

The governor's plan also calls for citizens to vote on an amendment this fall that would constitutionally dedicate the 54 percent of vehicle sales tax — about \$291 million in 2002 — for the license tab reduction. HF2891 would make that dedication in statute, but the amendment would make it much more difficult to reverse.

The proposal to move vehicle sales tax to the highway fund is not new, said Fred Corrigan, executive vice president for the Minnesota Transportation Alliance. In fact, the Legislature passed a law in 1981 that sent 75 percent of revenue for highways, with the remaining 25 percent used for transit systems, Corrigan said.

The Legislature later repealed the law



Transportation Commissioner Elwyn Tinklenberg explains the governor's plan to cut license tab fees and redirect revenue from the sales tax on motor vehicles.

because of budget constraints, Corrigan said. However, if the law had stayed in place, Minnesotans would have generated about \$2.96 billion for highways and \$988 million for transit from 1990 to 2000, according to Minnesota Transportation Alliance estimates.

Tinklenberg told the committees about the wide array of projects that could be constructed from the proposed multi-modal fund.

He argued that the interstate freeways in the Twin Cities should have at least three lanes, no matter what traffic or roads are merging together or separating. He noted that some areas, such as the spot north of St. Paul where Snelling Avenue meets Interstate 694, have only one through lane, causing backups and delays around that intersection.


During the past year, Tinklenberg has traveled to several cities, such as St. Louis and Denver, to examine their transportation systems. He said some states that didn't address transportation funding are struggling to come up with funding now.

"They are all beginning to see what the failure to invest in infrastructure improvements has meant to their states," Tinklenberg said.

Nacho Diaz, Metropolitan Council transportation planning director, said the multi-modal fund could be used to construct park-and-ride sites and bus-only transitways or to purchase more buses and garages. The fund also could be used for rural road improvements, right of way preservation, or commuter rail.

The committee heard other proposals to redirect the motor vehicle sales tax.

Rep. William Kuisle (R-Rochester) proposed a bill (HF446) that would send 30 percent of the vehicle sales tax to the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund, with the remainder staying in the general fund. Kuisle's bill also calls for a constitutional amendment. The Transportation Finance Committee voted to send Kuisle's bill without recommendation to the Taxes Committee.

Another bill (HF3967) would modify the tab fee reductions differently than the governor's plan. Rep. Ray Vandever (R-Forrest Lake) favors providing a 50 percent credit for tab fees between \$35 and \$400. Money from the general fund would then be transferred to the highway fund to make up for the tab fee reduction. The Transportation Finance Committee voted to send the bill without recommendation to the Taxes Committee. 

An underground disaster

Milford deaths prompted calls for lawmakers to aid miners

By MICHELLE KIBIGER

In the midst of its heyday more than 75 years ago, iron mining in Minnesota suffered perhaps its greatest tragedy when the Milford Mine near Crosby flooded, killing 41 of the 48 men inside.

The February 1924 accident occurred when water and mud from nearby Foley Lake collapsed the earthen walls of the mine. Within minutes, water had completely filled the mine, trapping nearly all of the miners inside.

Immediately after the accident, public officials tried to determine who was to blame and whether anything could have been done to prevent the accident.

They were also concerned that the families left behind would be able to survive on the compensation benefits they received.

Benefits were paid out to the families with unprecedented speed, according to a January 1925 report of the State Industrial Commission.

However, the panel also called for a number of legislative reforms, including a suggestion that dependent children should be paid workers' compensation benefits at least until age 16. At the time, families of the miners killed would receive weekly benefits for children up to a cap of \$7,500 — only about 7 years of support.

The proposed reforms also called for area mine inspectors to meet periodically with the

their responsibilities.

But a call to action doesn't always receive a prompt response from the Legislature. Such was the case with the Milford mine disaster.

"The real cause of the disaster was the fact that imminence and danger from such a rush of mud was not recognized by anyone," the commission's report said.

The mine had recently been inspected, but the mine inspector found no obvious irregularities.

The Milford Mine, owned by the Whitmarsh Mining Company, was located on the Cuyuna Iron Range in the central part of the state. The youngest of the three active ranges at the time, the Cuyuna shipped its first ore in 1911.

After the accident, the Milford Mine was shut down for nearly a year as the mine was drained and the bodies of victims were recovered.

Though business operations were slowed by the accident, payments to families were swift.

According to the commission's report, 24 widows and 63 dependent children were drawing compensation within 30 days of the accident. Benefits ranged from \$12.10 to \$20 per week.

In addition, the paychecks of the 35 men who perished and left widows and children were distributed to the families within 48 hours of the accident.

"The dependents have all been assured of an independent livelihood at least until such time as older children of the families are able to assist in their support," the commission concluded.

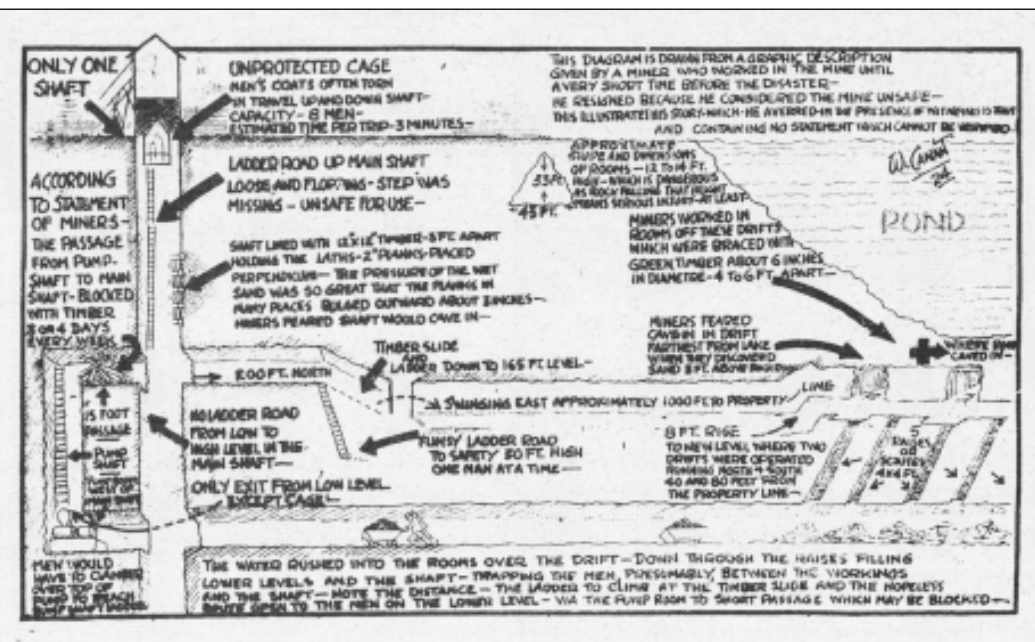
A total of \$300,000 was disbursed to families as a result of the accident, according to the report. In total, nearly \$1.8 million in workers' compensation benefits were paid during 1924.

However, commission members feared that young children, especially newborn babies, would not be provided for down the road.

"When these (newborn) babies reach 8, they'll still be dependents and benefits will cease," the report said.

The Legislature, which has revised workers' compensation laws several times since the 1924 incident, has since made provision for dependents to receive payments until they are

Continued on page 23



This diagram shows how the water from Foley Lake broke through sides of the Milford Mine and quickly filled its layers. In all, 41 men were killed in the mine collapse, the worst mining tragedy up to that time.

In the maelstrom of innuendo, rumor, and public outrage at the time, Governor J.A.O. Preus appointed a commission of mining officials to sort out the details. They determined no one could have anticipated the accident, the mine owners were not at fault, and ben-

State Industrial Commission and with area miners to discuss safety.

And the commission proposed that the Legislature appropriate \$5,000 annually for safety education and that county boards increase pay for mine inspectors to put it more in line with

Minnesota House of Representatives 2000 Members

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

Note: Room numbers are subject to change.

List as of March 2, 2000

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

Minnesota Senate 2000 Members

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

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

Minnesota House and Senate Membership

1 A • Rep. Jim Tunheim-DFL B • Rep. Tim Finseth-R Sen. LeRoy A. Stumpf-DFL	15 A • Rep. Al Juhnke-DFL B • Rep. Gary W. Kubly-DFL Sen. Dean E. Johnson-DFL	29 A • Rep. Jerry Dempsey-R B • Rep. Mike Osskopp-R Sen. Steve Murphy-DFL	43 A • Rep. Tom Workman-R B • Rep. Barb Sykora-R Sen. Edward C. Oliver-R	57 A • Rep. Jim Seifert-R B • Rep. Sharon Marko-DFL Sen. Leonard R. Price-DFL
2 A • Rep. Bernie L. Lieder-DFL B • Rep. Rod Skoe-DFL Sen. Roger D. Moe-DFL	16 A • Rep. Joe Opatz-DFL B • Rep. Jim Knoblach-R Sen. Dave Kleis-R	30 A • Rep. Fran Bradley-R B • Rep. Dave Bishop-R Sen. Sheila M. Kiscaden-R	44 A • Rep. Betty Folliard-DFL B • Rep. Jim Rhodes-R Sen. Steve Kelley-DFL	58 A • Rep. Joe Mullery-DFL B • Rep. Gregory Gray-DFL Sen. Linda I. Higgins-DFL
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6 A • Rep. Thomas (Tom) Bakk-DFL B • Rep. Thomas Huntley-DFL Sen. Douglas J. Johnson-DFL	20 A • Rep. Robert "Bob" Ness-R B • Rep. Tony Kielkucki-R Sen. Steve Dille-R	34 A • Rep. Steve Smith-R B • Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen-R Sen. Gen Olson-R	48 A • Rep. Bill Haas-R B • Rep. Alice M. Johnson-DFL Sen. Don Betzold-DFL	62 A • Rep. Lee Greenfield-DFL B • Rep. Wes Skoglund-DFL Sen. Carol Flynn-DFL
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10 A • Rep. Bud Nornes-R B • Rep. George Cassell-R Sen. Cal Larson-R	24 A • Rep. John Dorn-DFL B • Rep. Julie Storm-R Sen. John C. Hottinger-DFL	38 A • Rep. Tim Wilkin-R B • Rep. Tim Pawlenty-R Sen. Deanna L. Wiener-DFL	52 A • Rep. Satveer Chaudhary-DFL B • Rep. Barb Haake-R Sen. Steven G. Novak-DFL	66 A • Rep. Tom Osthoff-DFL B • Rep. Alice Hausman-DFL Sen. Ellen R. Anderson-DFL
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13 A • Rep. Torrey Westrom-R B • Rep. Doug Peterson-DFL Sen. Charles A. Berg-IND	27 A • Rep. Dan Dorman-R B • Rep. Rob Leighton-DFL Sen. Pat Piper-DFL	41 A • Rep. Alice Seagren-R B • Rep. Ken Wolf-R Sen. William V. Belanger Jr.-R	55 A • Rep. Harry Mares-R B • Rep. Betty McCollum-DFL Sen. Charles W. Wiger-DFL	
14 A • Rep. Steve Dehler-R B • Rep. Doug Stang-R Sen. Michelle L. Fischbach-R	28 A • Rep. Doug Reuter-IND B • Rep. Steve Sviggum-R Sen. Dick Day-R	42 A • Rep. Ron Erhardt-R B • Rep. Erik Paulsen-R Sen. Roy Terwilliger-R	56 A • Rep. Mark William Holsten-R B • Rep. Peg Larsen-R Sen. Gary W. Laidig-R	

Monday, Feb. 28

HF3904—Tomassoni (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
St. Louis County nursing home bed moratorium exception provided and money appropriated.

HF3905—Harder (R)
Taxes
S corporations federal tax treatment conformity provided.

HF3906—Sykora (R)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) social service child care pool created, intensive English as a second language (ESL) grants authorized, transition year family interrupted child care assistance provided, and money appropriated.

HF3907—Molnau (R)
Taxes
Department of Transportation Trunk Highway fund sales tax exemption provided.

HF3908—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Anatomical gift checkoff created for income tax returns and property tax refund claim forms, and money appropriated.

HF3909—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Levy limit exemption provided to cities not receiving local government aid.

HF3910—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Wage withholding taxes abolished and estimated tax payments authorized.

HF3911—Schumacher (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
County water implementation tax levy and base grant increased, local water planning and exotic plant control grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF3912—Stang (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School district capital loan pupil per grade condition eliminated.

HF3913—McGuire (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Citizenship promotion program continued and money appropriated.

HF3914—Workman (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Shorewood replacement service transit program authorized.

HF3915—Winter (DFL)
Taxes
Agricultural processing facility construction materials and equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF3916—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Sales tax rebate provided and money appropriated.

HF3917—Erhardt (R)
Commerce
Telephone and telecommunications companies required to notify neighboring landowners prior to equipping tower construction.

HF3918—Dempsey (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Minneapolis and Hastings veterans homes transitional housing programs established to assist homeless and disabled veterans.

HF3919—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Physician contested case hearings standard of proof modified, physicians provided information on investigation processes, board of medicine discipline procedures studied, and money appropriated.

HF3920—Davids (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Fountain tax increment financing district duration extension authorized.

HF3921—Koskinen (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Non-governmental pharmaceutical contracting alliance provisions modified, prescription drug price disclosures required, and money appropriated.

HF3922—Lenczewski (DFL)
Taxes
Specified contiguous commercial-industrial parcels property tax definition modified.

HF3923—Haas (R)
Ways & Means
Performance-based state budget study commission established and recommendations required.

HF3924—Knoblach (R)
Capital Investment
Public regional park grants authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3925—Tomassoni (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Northland learning center start-up grant authorized and money appropriated.

HF3926—Rhodes (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Minnesota Shubert arts and education center created in Minneapolis, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3927—Gunther (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Minnesota Technology, Inc. appropriation provided for Minnesota Project Innovation, Inc.

HF3928—Gleason (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Richfield airport impact tax zone expenditures reimbursed by the Metropolitan Airports Commission and federal law requirements repealed.

HF3929—Otremba (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Todd County nursing facility medical assistance rate adjustment provided and money appropriated.

HF3930—Dawkins (DFL)
Taxes
Capital region watershed district authorized to exceed levy limits.

HF3931—Holsten (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) police and fire fund survivor benefits provided for a specified spouse.

HF3932—Koskinen (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
Board of Technical Colleges established, authority transferred from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU), study required, and money appropriated.

HF3933—Tomassoni (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nursing home administrator option expanded.

HF3934—Mariani (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Transitional and affordable housing rehabilitated, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3935—Wenzel (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 482, Little Falls, full-day kindergarten programs appropriated money.

HF3936—Larsen, P. (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Metropolitan government task force created and recommendations required.

HF3937—Trimble (DFL)
State Government Finance
Marriage license fee reduced and distribution modified.

HF3938—Daggett (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Becker County tourism project grant authorized and money appropriated.

HF3939—Cassell (R)
Higher Education Finance
Part-time student grants-in-aid provisions modified.

HF3940—Mariani (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Early Childhood Family Education state aid increased and money appropriated.

HF3941—Daggett (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Solid waste management tax revenues use for management activities required.

HF3942—Jennings (DFL)
Commerce
Minneapolis hotels on-sale liquor dispensing exemption provided and extended hours for sale provided.

HF3943—Paymar (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Pedestrian control signal display periods prescribed, intersection right-of-way clarified, safety awareness campaign grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF3944—Ness (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
Farm marketing plan software developed and money appropriated.

HF3945—Ness (R)
Agriculture Policy
Agroforestry loan program established and money appropriated.

HF3946—Ness (R)
Taxes
McLeod County Courthouse construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF3947—Kuisle (R)
Agriculture Policy
Poultry producer mediation and binding arbitration options provided.

HF3948—Broecker (R)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Eritrean Community Center grant provided and money appropriated.

HF3949—Broecker (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Minor employee age certification alternative form provided.

HF3950—Broecker (R)**Crime Prevention**

Criminal and juvenile justice database access authorized for criminal defense purposes.

HF3951—Osthoff (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

St. Paul Civic Center Authority added to Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) privatization pension benefits.

HF3952—Ozment (R)**Ways & Means**

Community service injury claims against the state payments provided and money appropriated.

HF3953—Carlson (DFL)**Taxes**

Higher education expenses income tax subtraction and credit provided.

HF3954—Knoblach (R)**Transportation Policy**

Rail service improvement loan interest requirements established.

HF3955—Mullery (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Health maintenance organization medical directors required, liability established, annual utilization review requirements established, review criteria disclosure required, and practice of medicine definition modified.

HF3956—Mullery (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Medically necessary care defined for health plans.

HF3957—Hasskamp (DFL)**Taxes**

Golf course market value increases limited.

HF3958—Hilty (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Snowmobile trail grooming equipment expenses reimbursed with snowmobile grants-in-aid funds.

HF3959—Murphy (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

MinnesotaCare coverage purchase by small employers for eligible employees authorized and small employer alternative health benefit plan pilot project repealed.

HF3960—Nornes (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Policy**

Workers' compensation indemnity provision modified.

HF3961—Chaudhary (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district building lease levy expanded to include technology-related improvements.

HF3962—Westrom (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Metro Mobility transit system report required.

HF3963—Abeler (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Anoka authorized to issue an on-sale liquor license for the Lyric Arts Theater.

HF3964—Wilkin (R)**Commerce**

Comprehensive health association eligibility and coverage modified, and premium rates study required.

HF3965—Seagren (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district consolidation transition revenue program timeline clarified.

HF3966—Carruthers (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Hospitals, nursing facilities, and intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MRs) automatic annual inflation adjustments provided; and additional rate increase provided.

HF3967—Vandever (R)**Transportation Finance**

Passenger automobile registration tax credit provided.

Wednesday, March 1

HF3968—Workman (R)**Transportation Policy**

Interstate highway rights-of-way telecommunications access provisions modified.

HF3969—Bakk (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Beaver Bay authorized to impose an additional sales and use tax, and use of revenues specified.

HF3970—Fuller (R)**Higher Education Finance**

Bemidji State University American Indian history center construction deadline extended and money appropriated.

HF3971—Fuller (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Bemidji elected official allowable service credit purchase in the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) authorized.

HF3972—Schumacher (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

School district declining aid replacement of marginal cost funding provided, and metropolitan and Greater Minnesota districts equity revenue equalized.

HF3973—Kelliher (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Genetically engineered food labeling required for sale, and civil penalties and remedies provided.

HF3974—Paulsen (R)**Commerce**

Duluth authorized to issue an on-sale liquor license to the Lake Superior Center Authority.

HF3975—McCollum (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Annual environmental quality report to the public required.

HF3976—Jaros (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Public transit operating assistance provisions modified.

HF3977—Sviggum (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Post-secondary enrollment students district notification requirement modified.

HF3978—Reuter (Ind.)**Transportation Policy**

Marked interstate highways I-35W and I-394 high occupancy lane restrictions prohibited.

HF3979—Mares (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Independent School District No. 625, St. Paul, trades personnel authorized to elect an exclusion from Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) plan coverage.

HF3980—Mullery (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

At-risk youth out-of-wedlock pregnancy prevention grants established and money appropriated.

HF3981—Broecker (R)**Crime Prevention**

Court-imposed fines, fees, and surcharges studied.

HF3982—Rest (DFL)**Taxes**

Governmental subdivision levy limit adjustment appeals procedure provided.

HF3983—Skoglund (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Predatory offender registration law retroactive application provided and registration provisions modified.

HF3984—Paymar (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Mentally ill and punitively segregated inmates prison release practices studied, advisory task force created, and report required.

HF3985—Rukavina (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Taconite referendum fund payments to school districts increased, distributions modified, taconite relief area schools provided enhanced pairing cooperation and combination aid, and money appropriated.

HF3986—Pawlenty (R)**Civil Law**

State agency and statewide system use of public data on individuals restricted.

HF3987—Pawlenty (R)**Taxes**

Individual income tax adoption credit authorized.

HF3988—McGuire (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Presentence investigations authorized to be conducted after a guilty plea or conviction.

HF3989—Vandever (R)**Taxes**

Individual income tax marriage penalty credit modified.

HF3990—Rest (DFL)**Taxes**

Individual income tax personal and dependent exemption, and refundable child credit authorized.

HF3991—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Traumatic brain injury waiver study required.

HF3992—Mulder (R)**Taxes**

Lincoln County agricultural and homestead credit and adjustments provided, and money appropriated.

HF3993—Molnau (R)**Transportation Finance**

Trunk highway system improvements provided, bonds issued, gasoline tax rate adjusted annually, and money appropriated.

HF3994—Van Dellen (R)**Transportation Policy**

High-occupancy vehicle lane use by other vehicles required.

HF3995—Abeler (R)**Higher Education Finance**

University of Minnesota Department of Psychiatry early riser program appropriated money.

HF3996—Finseth (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Taking bear with dogs authorized.

HF3997—McGuire (DFL)**Civil Law**

Combined jurisdiction program established.

HF3998—Skoglund (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Metropolitan Transit police search warrants authorized, restricted use of part-time peace officers eliminated, and unlawful interference with a transit operator crime modified.

HF3999—Clark, K. (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Ovarian cancer screening health plan coverage required.

HF4000—Pawlenty (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Hennepin County light-rail transit spending voter approval required.

HF4001—Hilty (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Family service collaboratives appropriated money for coordinator and director salaries.

HF4002—Rest (DFL)
Taxes
Individual income tax dependent exemption authorized and working family credit increased.

HF4003—Murphy (DFL)
Taxes
Cloquet authorized to impose an additional sales and use tax.

HF4004—Haake (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School district pupil units modified.

HF4005—Gerlach (R)
Taxes
Indoor youth hockey arena construction materials sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF4006—Greenfield (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Temporary census employee income excluded from public assistance eligibility determinations.

Thursday, March 2

HF4007—Rest (DFL)
Taxes
Failure to pay tax civil penalty modified.

HF4008—Smith (R)
Civil Law
District court appellate jurisdiction eliminated after statutory appeal period.

HF4009—Goodno (R)
Taxes
Local government aid payments to cities increased.

HF4010—Jennings (DFL)
Taxes
Ski area machinery and equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF4011—Rifenberg (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Small school enhanced equity revenue component added to general education revenue.

HF4012—Holberg (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Lakeville All Saints campus improved, Lakeville area arts center established, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF4013—Westfall (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
Agroforestry loan program established and administered by the rural finance authority, and money appropriated.

HF4014—Chaudhary (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Grade six pupil units increased and revenue reserved for young adolescent programs.

HF4015—McCollum (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Regional treatment center cemetery grave marker numbers replaced with names of individuals.

HF4016—Larsen, P. (R)
Education Policy
Teacher training no interest loan program established, rulemaking provided, and money appropriated.

HF4017—Koskinen (DFL)
Civil Law
Motor vehicle registration federal data privacy regulation conformity provided.

HF4018—Winter (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Freedom to Farm: Congress memorialized to repeal and rewrite the Freedom to Farm Act.

HF4019—Trimble (DFL)
Commerce
Exclusive liquor store wine tastings authorized and restrictions specified.

HF4020—Molnau (R)
Transportation Finance
Intergovernmental cooperative facilities loan fund established, and transportation revolving loan fund and state trunk highway construction projects appropriated money.

HF4021—Reuter (Ind.)
Commerce
Sunday sales of motor vehicles prohibition not to apply to processing orders via the Internet.

HF4022—Jennings (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Pine City nursing facility property-related per diem payment rate increased.

HF4023—Juhnke (DFL)
Transportation Policy
State highway routing consent requirement extended to include specified towns.

HF4024—Knoblach (R)
Taxes
Local government aid to eligible towns temporarily increased.

HF4025—McElroy (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Board of Boxing sunset provided, federal conformity provided, and money appropriated.

HF4026—Finseth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Drainage projects external funding sources authorized.

HF4027—Gunther (R)
Commerce
Cosmetology and barbering regulation merged under one board, and name changed to the board of barbering and cosmetologist examiners.

HF4028—Anderson, B. (R)
Taxes
Buffalo additional sales, use, and excise taxes authorized, and bonds issued for the purposes of health and education center improvements.

HF4029—Howes (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Federal Dam sewer project completed and money appropriated.

Continued from page 18

18, and sometimes longer if the child is a college student or is disabled.

Indemnity and medical payments under Minnesota workers' compensation equaled \$732 million in 1998, according to the state department of labor and industry. Those figures do not include the special compensation fund or total system costs.

As a result of the accident, mining officials began to examine the contemporary mining practices. In the commission report, officials said mining in swampy land posed tremendous danger. They suggested that extra precautions should be taken before mining operations are conducted under any swamp.

Though state laws were enacted to make sure open mines were properly fenced and safeguarded, it does not appear state legisla-

tors addressed the commission's other concerns raised by the Milford disaster. A search of law books for the sessions in the years immediately following the accident do not show any specific mining safety measures.

In 1988, a law requiring that county boards pay for the safety expenses for mine inspectors went on the books.

Safety standards are governed in large part by the federal government now. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, which created OSHA, requires various inspections for the safety and welfare of both employees and the public.

In addition, a 1977 federal law creating the Mine Safety and Health Administration requires the individual mining companies to conduct safety training for new miners and

provide a refresher course for all other employees each year.

Minnesota industry leaders and mine inspectors also conduct various kinds of public information sessions about mines and mine safety whenever requested.

Today, only the Mesabi Range, which stretches through Itasca, St. Louis, and Lake counties in northeastern Minnesota, has active iron ore mines. Both the Vermilion and Cuyuna ranges were abandoned nearly 30 years ago, and many of the old mines on those ranges are state parks or recreation areas today.

The industry on the Iron Range is seeing some new growth. Last session, the Legislature approved \$20 million in funds for a steel mill project. 🏭

Schedule is subject to change.

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Legislature's Web site.

MONDAY, March 6

7:30 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF3048 (Nornes) New medical assistance case-mix system based on federal minimum data set transition time lines provided; and education, training, and report required.

HF3188 (Tingelstad) Special transportation services medical assistance reimbursement study required.

HF3212 (Tingelstad) Home care and personal care provider transportation expense reimbursement studied.

HF3064 (Jaros) St. Louis County nursing home renovation approval deadline extended and rate setting modified.

HF3193 (Fuller) Beltrami County Hospital construction moratorium exception provided.

HF1769 (Abeler) Senior citizen drug program eligibility expanded, name changed to prescription drug program, and prescription drug patient assistance programs information provided to physicians.

HF537 (Boudreau) Complementary and alternative health care freedom of access act adopted.

Tentative: HF3450 Health and Human Services part of the deficiency bill.

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: To be announced.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF3697 (Larsen, P.) Emergency motor vehicle dealers provided licensing requirement exemption.

HF2995 (Fuller) DWI; driving while impaired crimes and provisions recodified and simplified. HF3200 (Stanek) Driver's license photograph access allowed to businesses for fraud prevention purposes.

HF3091 (Tomassoni) Motor vehicles driven in the right-hand lane requirement clarified, exceptions provided, and money appropriated.

10 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF2945 (Sykora) Safe place for newborns; immunity and anonymity provided for leaving unharmed newborns at hospital emergency rooms, and procedures established.

HF3103 (Sykora) Excluded adult foster care provider right to seek licensure established, tribal licensing agencies provided access to criminal history data, and county agency tort liability licensing exception clarified.

HF3613 (Holberg) Claims against the state limited relating to losses involving the operation of a recreational vehicle on a trunk highway right-of-way.

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.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: HF3046 (Holsten) Resident and nonresident hunting and fishing license fees modified.

Note: There will be no meeting on Wednesday, March 8.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: University of Minnesota Medical School presentation.

HF3092 (Opatz) Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) issued revenue bonds aggregate principal amount increased, and bond requirements clarified.

Additional bills to be added.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF3120 (Abeler) Charter schools and nonresident districts not to receive referendum equalization aid.

HF3763 (Abeler) Area learning center establishment criteria modified.

HF3162 (Buesgens) Charter school sponsors expanded to include charitable organizations,

and parents included in charter school board majority.

HF3800 (Seagren) Charter school provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF3098 (Leppik) School district training and experience revenue phaseout restricted.

HF3585 (Biernat) K-12 education finance appropriations provided.

HF2155 (Vandever) Elementary school supplemental literacy program grants provided and money appropriated.

HF2737 (Solberg) Municipalities and veterans' organizations authorized to donate to all public school programs and facilities.

HF2311 (Winter) Independent School District No. 417, Tracy, levy authority provided.

HF2312 (Winter) Independent School District No. 417, Tracy, operating debt reduction grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF3965 (Seagren) School district consolidation transition revenue program timeline clarified.

HF3359 (Ness) Uniform minimum length of school year established.

HF2753 (Skoe) Three additional days of student instruction mandate funding provided and money appropriated.

HF3961 (Chaudhary) School district building lease levy expanded to include technology leasing and technology-related improvements.

Property Tax Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

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

HF3453 (Daggett) Economic development property tax exemption time period extended.

HF3922 (Lenczewski) Specified contiguous commercial-industrial parcels property tax definition modified.

Additional bills may be added.

Note: There will be no meeting on Wednesday, March 8.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: HF2760 (Abeler) Adults with disabilities pilot programs reinstated and money appropriated.

HF3104 (Sykora) Churches and religious organizations authorized to operate child day care programs, and adherence to group and family day care rules required.

HF2959 (Sykora) Experienced child care aides authorized to work without direct supervision for part of the day.

HF3730 (McGuire) Child care staff retention initiative created and money appropriated.

HF3913 (McGuire) Citizenship promotion program continued and money appropriated.

HF3906 (Sykora) Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) social service child care pool created, intensive English as a Second Language (ESL) grants authorized, transition year family uninterrupted child care assistance provided, and

money appropriated.
Discussion of forecast and targets.

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: To be announced.

3 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

5 p.m. Departure

Joint JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE/ FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

Depart from State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Dan McElroy, Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: Tour to Minneapolis homeless shelters.

TUESDAY, March 7

7:30 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: HF3226 (Nornes) Nursing home survey process procedure developed.
HF3477 (Mulder) Speech language pathology services medical assistance reimbursement clarified.
HF3626 (Mulder) Psychologist supervisory and disciplinary requirements modified.
HF3342 (Mariani) Foster care agency and foster parent requirements for children who rely on medical equipment to sustain life or monitor a medical condition provided.

8 a.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: HF3584 (Lindner); SF3354 (Novak) Manufactured homes limited dealer license requirements clarified.
HF3285 (Lindner); SF2812 (Higgins) Wage payment provisions modified, and employers prohibited from charging employees or applicants for background checks and specified training.
HF3146 (Skoe); SF2994 (Moe) Tribally owned housing and housing development projects subject to shelter charges.
Bills may be added.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: HF3029 (Dempsey) Per diem cost of housing juveniles to be shared by counties and the Department of Corrections.
HF3422 (Dempsey) Delinquent juveniles and juveniles convicted of crimes confined at same

facility, and per diem cost of confinement set at Minnesota Correctional Facility - Red Wing.
HF3346 (Stanek) Criminal and juvenile justice information policy group membership modified, technology infrastructure improvements authorized, and money appropriated.
HF2503 (Carruthers) Misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor offenses provided increased maximum fines.
HF1571 (Harder) Covenant marriages provided.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkle
Agenda: HF3000 (Seifert, M.) Administrative rules sunset provided, governmental operations committees authorized to formally object to rules, proposed rule reviews modified, and rules task force created.
HF2745 (Stanek) DWI; repeat DWI offenders provided felony penalties, and incarceration and intensive probation supervision sentencing required.
Other bills will be added.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: HF2830 (Clark, K.) Criminal penalties enhanced for pimps and patrons of juvenile prostitution, programs established to train officers relating to prostitution and to provide shelter and counseling to youth at risk, and money appropriated.
HF3319 (Jennings) Driver education programs combined with public safety responsibilities, automobile liability judgment satisfaction regulated, ignition interlock pilot program repealed and driver's license renewal provisions modified.
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: SF2857; HF3134 (Ozment) Metropolitan Mosquito Control Commission authority to enter specified state lands limited.
SF4; HF1070 (Howes) Resident lifetime game and fish licenses provided, trust fund established, fees imposed, and report required.
SF3283; HF3555 (Westerberg) Snowmobile metal traction device sticker requirement civil enforcement provided.
Note: Agenda items not completed will be heard on Thursday, March 9 at 10 a.m. in 10 State Office Building.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: HF3043 (Abrams) Tax information sample data study provided and specified tax preparers authorized to file electronically.
HF3087 (Abrams) Nonprofit motor vehicle purchases and leases sales and use tax, and motor vehicle sales tax exemption provided.

HF3593 (Dorman) Solid waste management tax rates reduced and automatic adjustment provided.
HF3620 (Rest) Property tax refund amounts adjusted.
HF3702 (Harder) Federal alcohol fuel credit subtraction from individual income and corporate franchise taxes authorized.
HF3709 (Rukavina) Independent School District No. 2154, Eveleth-Gilbert, joint recreation board tax levy authorized.

Note from the speaker's office

In order to accommodate those representatives who wish to attend their precinct caucuses, there will be no House committee meetings from 12 noon on Tuesday, March 7 to 12 noon on Wednesday, March 8. Also, there will be no House committee meetings on Saturday, March 11.

12:30 p.m.

Anoka County Delegation

546 State Office Building
Chrs. Rep. Kathy Tingelstad,
Rep. Satveer Chaudhary
Agenda: To be announced.

WEDNESDAY, March 8

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth
Agenda: HF1142 (Rostberg) Animal cruelty provisions modified, and criminal penalties imposed.
HF3482 (Juhnke) Department of Agriculture principal offices required to be located outside the metropolitan area.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: Committee omnibus bill.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peg Larsen
Agenda: To be announced.

3 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

Immediately Following Session

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Room to be announced
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: To be announced.

4 p.m.

CIVIL LAW

500S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: HF47 (Bishop) Domestic abuse victim civil cause of action provided.
HF1267 (Pawlenty) Economic loss arising from the sale of goods provisions established related to the Uniform Commercial Code.
HF3997 (McGuire) Second Judicial District combined jurisdiction program established.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF3286 (Knoblach) Respite care for family adult foster care providers legislative proposals developed.
HF2967 (Seifert, J) Health care facilities specified employees wage increase provided and money appropriated.
HF2837 (Boudreau) Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) program use required to verify immigration status of applicants for child care assistance and human services assistance.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF3674 (Svigum) Student discipline reasonable force by teachers and other district employees authorized.
HF2629 (Tingelstad) K-12 educational facilities indoor air quality standards provided.
HF3451 (Mulder) Special education program contracts between private facilities and education entities provided.
HF2653 (Smith) Public school student conduct policy components modified.
HF2817 (Sykora) Number of children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) who are taking amphetamine prescription drugs determined, and money appropriated.
HF3542 (Kuisle) School district property tax equity provided and money appropriated.
HF3745 (Mulder) Independent School District No. 404, Lake Benton, fund balance penalty reimbursement grant authorized and money appropriated.
HF3716 (Otremba) Independent School District No. 2170, Staples-Motley, fund transfer authorized.
HF2709 (Koskinen) Reduced class size and full-day kindergarten programs provided increased funding, and money appropriated.
HF3815 (Mahoney) School district crime-related costs levy increased.
HF1804 (Folliard) Licensed K-12 teacher staff development training opportunities and additional salary provided.
HF3925 (Tomassoni) Northland Learning Center start-up grant authorized and money appropriated.
HF3831 (Schumacher) School district small school revenue created, formula provided, and money appropriated.

6 p.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: To be announced, if needed.

THURSDAY, March 9

7:30 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF2519 (Bradley) MinnesotaCare notice period reduced for persons ineligible due to income limits and private health insurance coverage information requirement expanded.
HF3537 (Bradley) Downsized or closed nursing facilities special rate adjustment process provided, and budget neutrality required.
HF2713 (Rest) Funeral acts and services regulated, and pre-need arrangement requirements established.
Others to be announced.

8 a.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: To be announced.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Sherry Broecker
Agenda: To be announced.

8:30 a.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: HF2500 (Krinkie) Light-rail transit project contract requirement language modified and usual state procurement laws explicitly required.
HFXXXX (Krinkie) State Government Finance bill.
Other bills will be added.

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: HF3380 (Pawlenty) Dakota County integrated criminal justice information system pilot project created and money appropriated.
HF3553 (Holberg) Minnesota Center for Crime Victim Services battered women's shelter per diem guidelines established.
Review of the Gang Strike Force 2000 Report to the Legislature.
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: SF3443; HF3692 (Kuisle) Feedlot permit provisions modified, manure applicator education and training requirements provided, and administrative penalty order requirements expanded.
SF751; HF849 (Haake) Minor and intermediate

use airports defined for metro expansion and upgrade purposes, and reliever airport sound abatement council established.
SF1279; HF730 (Rukavina) State land acquisitions limited in counties having 50 percent or more public land ownership.
Note: If necessary, the committee will recess and reconvene after session in the Basement Hearing Room.

TAXES

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF3757 (Abrams) Patent, trademark, and copyright drawings and documents sales and use tax exemption provided.
HF3896 (Abrams) Base blocks used in metalcasting sales and use tax exemption provided.
HF2608 (Westerberg) Telecommuting expenses income and franchise tax credit provided for employers.
HF3459 (Kelliher) Minneapolis downtown library construction materials sales tax exemption provided.
HF3946 (Ness) McLeod County courthouse construction materials sales tax exemption provided.
HF3915 (Winter) Agricultural processing facility construction materials and equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: HF3844 (Ness) Consolidated agriculture finance bill.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: To be announced.

COMMERCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: HF1333 (Daggett) Wood sale contracts regulated.
HF2973 (Davids) Financial institution loan charges and payments regulated, and technical changes provided.
HF2974 (Davids) National Association of Insurance Commissioners model legislation conforming state statute changes provided.
HF3610 (Goodno) Health care patient protections provided and medical clinical trials insurance coverage required.
SFXXXX (Paulsen) Omnibus local liquor bill.
HF3041 (Leppik) Paint ball guns sale, rental, discharge, and possession regulated; and criminal penalties imposed; and remedies provided.
Other bills to be announced.

3 p.m.

The House meets in Session.

7:30 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: HF3129 (Goodno) Medical assistance income standard increased.

HF3247 (Goodno) Nursing facilities authorized to place licensed beds on layaway status and medical assistance reimbursement adjusted.

HF3128 (Goodno) Noncompliant Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) recipient sanctions and program eligibility requirements modified.

HF3150 (McElroy) Dakota County Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) diversionary assistance pilot project established and money appropriated.

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF2745 (Stanek) DWI; repeat DWI offenders provided felony penalties, and incarceration and intensive probation supervision sentencing required.

HF3559 (Molnau) Transit system grants authorized for the public transit subsidy program, metropolitan area transit operations, rolling stock and intelligent transportation system technology, and transit hubs; and money appropriated.

HF3548 (Molnau) Commuter rail funding restricted.

HF3791 (Vandever) Trunk highway fund expenditures for light rail transit purposes prohibited.

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

10 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: HF2610 (Boudreau) Criminal vehicular operation definition expanded.

HF3950 (Broecker) Criminal and juvenile justice database access authorized for criminal defense purposes.

Other bills to be announced.

Note: The Crime Prevention committee will continue meeting in the Basement Hearing Room until the agenda is completed.

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: HF3357 (Folliard) School guidance and counseling incentive grant program established and money appropriated.

HF3637 (Bishop) Deferred state building maintenance financed with state budget surplus.

HF3478 (Bakk) Cook County higher education project appropriated money.

Additional bills to be added.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF3201 (Seagren) Special education funding deficiency additional revenue authorized, and money appropriated.

HF3893 (Seagren) Special education base revenue modified and money appropriated.

HF3061 (Mares) Intermediate school districts authorized to sell and issue bonds under specified conditions.

HF3313 (Kielkucki) School district equity revenue definition modified and money appropriated.

HF3912 (Stang) School district capital loan pupil per grade condition eliminated.

HF3828 (Solberg) General education revenue isolation index modified.

HF3935 (Wenzel) Independent School District No. 482, Little Falls, full-day kindergarten programs appropriated money.

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.



Eritrean-Americans from the Twin Cities area rallied on the Capitol steps Feb. 29 to call attention to the need to stop the Eritrean-Ethiopian border conflict.

When the 1999-2000 Humphrey International Fellows representing 15 countries spent a day at the Capitol, a revealing fact for some of them was how easy it is to gain access to state government.

As they toured the Capitol, one of the fellows, Fernando Batistuzzo from Brazil remarked, "Some of us cannot believe how open the state buildings are and how easy it is to talk to lawmakers."

The visiting Brazilian scholar, Batistuzzo, and his international colleagues from places such as Russia, Myanmar, Gaza, Eritrea, Peru, and Russia were reminded that Minnesota continues to be a true reflection of democracy. It is a model government executed by the U.S. Constitution back in 1787.

It is a government "by the people and for the people," including the people's right to assemble.

Reflections

On any given day when the Minnesota Legislature is in session, large numbers of groups and individuals fill the halls, members' offices, and conference rooms of the State Office Building and the Capitol.

The Capitol serves as state government's focal point and universal meeting place for the people of Minnesota; therefore it's natural for many people to come to the Capitol to demonstrate or to be heard.

Likely, a reason for the major increase in numbers of people who visit is an awareness or education about their right to personally participate in the legislative process. In the first two months of this year alone, 10,400 people have taken tours through the Historical Society's Capitol Tour Program, no doubt thanks to courses of study for students and the likelihood they'll see a high-profile governor.

More and more people are participating in state government, while others are making their cause known through their right to assemble.

Since early January, groups like the 75 members of the Minnesota Firemen's Association, 100 representatives of the Min-

nesota Farm Bureau, 700 members of AFSCME, 17 students from Valley Middle School in Apple Valley, and over 20 other special groups came to lobby.

Others came to voice their concerns through demonstrations and protests. During February, 500 members of the Minnesota State College Students' Association marched to the Capitol steps to protest tuition cuts, and support funds for building repairs. Also, some 1,300 people marched in support for the family farm.

Last year, eight protesters chained themselves to marble columns in the rotunda and to each other in opposition of the re-routing of Highway 55.

Some demonstrations can be a cause for concern to Capitol Security, but most are peaceful. Such was the rally by 500 Eritreans for Worldwide Peace and one by 75 individuals that rallied as the Coalition for Battered Women and the Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

Whether unruly or amicable, more and more Minnesotans are involved in lawmaking or having their voices heard through their right to assemble. Their presence is welcome.

— LECLAIR G. LAMBERT

MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
175 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55155-1298

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE: STEVE SVIGGUM
MAJORITY LEADER: TIM PAWLENTY
MINORITY LEADER: THOMAS W. PUGH

MINNESOTA INDEX

Crime in decline

Number of crimes reported in Minnesota, 1998	191,197
Crime rate (per 100,000 people)	4,046.5
Percent decline from 1997	8.3
Number of violent crimes reported, 1998	14,656
Violent crime rate (per 100,000)	310.2
Percent decline from 1997	8.2
Murders	121
Murder rate (per 100,000)	2.6
Crime rate per 100,000 people in Iowa, 1998	3,500
Percent of decline from previous year	8.3
Crime rate per 100,000 people in North Dakota, 1998	2,681
Percent of decline from previous year	1.1
Crime rate per 100,000 people in South Dakota	2,624
Percent of decline from previous year	19.1
Crime rate per 100,000 people in Wisconsin	3,543
Percent of decline from previous year	3.7
Crimes in Minnesota's metropolitan areas, 1998	150,528
Crimes in cities outside metro areas, 1998	23,333
Crimes in rural areas, 1998	17,336
Crimes in Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, 1998	132,433
Violent crimes	11,285
Murders	99
Crimes in Rochester metropolitan area, 1998	3,311
Violent crimes	308
Murders	1
Crimes in St. Cloud metropolitan area, 1998	4,662
Violent crimes	247
Murders	0
Violent crimes known to police on University of Minnesota-	
Twin Cities campus, 1998	12
Property crimes	951
Violent crimes known to police on University of Minnesota-Duluth campus, 1998	0
Property crimes	117

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 1998.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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1-800-657-3550

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