

A NONPARTISAN PUBLICATION   ★ ★ ★

# SESSION Weekly

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In this issue:

HOUSE TAX PLAN ANNOUNCED,

ENVIRONMENT FUNDING PASSES, DALAI LAMA TO VISIT, AND MORE

HF2498-HF2508

# Session Weekly

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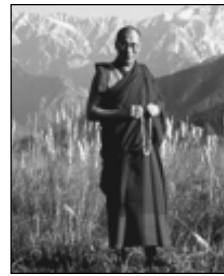
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On the cover: Daffodils bloom near the west wing of the Capitol, marking another fine spring day. The blooming of the flowers marks the unofficial beginning of spring for legislators and staff, and also means the end of the legislative session is fast approaching.

—Photo by Andrew Von Bank

# Keeping more coin

House tax plan reduces property tax rates for many residents, provides sales tax rebate, but no expansion to services

By DAVID MAEDA

The House Taxes Committee approved a \$1.56 billion omnibus tax bill May 2 that members from both sides and officials from the Ventura administration agreed would provide major reforms to the state's property tax system.

HF2498, sponsored by Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), incorporates Gov. Jesse Ventura's proposal to eliminate the state-determined general education levy while also establishing a statewide property tax on commercial industrial and seasonal recreational property.

But the bill does not include the governor's proposal to expand the state's sales tax to services.

Abrams said although HF2498 is admittedly a "Republican tax bill," he did his best to "listen to minority concerns, as well as the governor's."

"The challenge ahead of us is to be able to accommodate everybody's strong feelings and have a bill that is good for the state of Minnesota," he said.

At the core of the tax reform in the bill is a panoply of property tax changes.

Nearly all property classes would receive a rate reduction under the measure. On commercial industrial property valued up to \$150,000, the tax rate would be reduced from 2.4 percent to 1.5 percent. The rate on property valued at more than \$150,000 would see a reduction from 3.4 percent to 2.0 percent.

Homeowners too would see a property tax reduction in the bill. Currently the class rate for residential homestead property is 1 percent on the first \$76,000 and 1.65 percent on amounts greater than \$76,000. The bill would lower the tax rate to 1 percent on all residential homestead property.

In an attempt to address the state's lack of affordable housing the bill makes a major reduction in the tax rate on apartment property.

Currently the tax rate on rental property varies. For most properties the rate is 2.4 percent. For property in qualifying small



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

**House Speaker Steve Sviggum announces the House tax plan during an April 30 news conference in the Rotunda.**

cities, the rate is 2.15 percent for buildings with four or more units and 1.65 percent for buildings with less than four units. The rate for qualifying low-income housing is 1 percent.

Existing apartment buildings with four or more units would receive a phased in tax reduction from 1.5 percent for 2002 taxes, to 1.25 percent for taxes payable in 2003, and 1 percent starting in 2004 and thereafter. Apartment buildings constructed after June 30, 2001 would be taxed immediately at the 1 percent rate.

According to an April 30 tax simulation report provided by the nonpartisan House Research staff, commercial industrial properties statewide would receive a 15.4 percent property tax cut in 2002. Residential homestead

properties would see a 18.2 percent decrease, while agricultural homestead property taxes would be reduced by 27.3 percent. The state rate for regular apartments would be cut by 33.1 percent.

Jack Horner, representing the Minnesota Multi-Housing Association, praised the rental rate reduction as a milestone in tax reform.

"This represents new attitudes and new ways of thinking about property taxes," he said. "It's essentially about fairness and treating people whether they are homeowners or tenants, the same."

Horner said rate reductions would encourage building of more apartment complexes and the additional supply of rental units would be "the best friend of renters."

Rep. Mark Gleason (DFL-Richfield) disagreed, saying a rate reduction for apartment owners did not guarantee tenants would see any rent reductions.

He said the bill would establish three classes of taxpayers — those that own their own homes, those who own homes and additional property such as cabins or businesses, and those who own no property.

"This is dishing out huge benefits to people who own the most property," he said. "It is a good example of 'trickle down' economics."

Gleason offered an unsuccessful amendment that would have increased the property tax refund amount available for renters.

Among the bill's other major provisions is a repeal of the MinnesotaCare provider tax and the premium tax on nonprofit health plan companies. Under the proposal revenue sources of the state's health care program for low-income people would be replaced by dedicating tobacco settlement payments into the health care access fund.

Abrams told the House Ways and Means Committee May 2 that eliminating the provider tax would fulfill an "eight-year quest" of the House.

The bill would require health care providers to lower rates reflective of the savings resulting from the elimination of the taxes and document their compliance with the rate reduction requirement.

Currently the provider tax rate is set at 1.5 percent and is scheduled to increase to 2 percent starting Jan. 1, 2002 if no changes in the law take place.

Businesses would see a change to a couple



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Revenue Commissioner Matt Smith watches as members of the House Taxes Committee debate an amendment that would modify the education credit during the committee's May 2 hearing.

of longstanding tax laws.

Abrams said the last remaining accounting maneuver leftover from budget shortfalls in the past two decades would be remedied in the bill by repealing the June accelerated sales tax payment.

Under current law retailers with at least \$120,000 in annual sales tax collections must pay 62 percent of their estimated June sales tax liability two business days before June 30. In all other months they are required to pay the taxes by the 14th of the following month.

The June accelerated tax was established in the early 1980s when the state was facing budget shortfalls. The state fiscal years end each June, and in order to shift more money into the current fiscal year the payment from merchants was shifted.

The 2000 omnibus tax bill lessened some of the tax burden on state retailers by eliminating the accelerated payment requirement on excise taxes and reducing the percentage due on sales and use tax from 75 percent to 62 percent.

The cost of the shift would be around \$154 million during the biennium.

In an attempt to encourage businesses to maintain a base in Minnesota, the bill also would change the ratio of taxes paid by corporations. Most corporations now use a three-factor tax formula, based 75 percent on sales and 12.5 percent each on income and property. The new formula would be based 90 percent on sales in 2001 and 100 percent in 2004.

The bill also includes many additional income tax subtractions and expansion of existing credits.

Continued on page 19



## Occupational outlook

1939 report recommends aggressive campaign to draw more industries

Acknowledging a need to improve Minnesota's long-range economic situation, the state Senate formed a commission in 1937 to investigate economic trends. The commission returned two years later with a recommendation to the Legislature that it encourage more industries to make their home in Minnesota.

The Senate determined that agriculture, which supplied employment for one-third of Minnesota workers, could not support a greater proportion of the population. Therefore, "industries must be expanded and increased in Minnesota in order for the state to grow and develop," according to *Minnesota Industries: Its progress and development*, a report by the commission.

For analyzing industrial trends, the commission divided occupational employment into two groups: extractive and creative, and distributive and service.

The former includes agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, manufacturing, and the mechanical trades, then sometimes referred to as the "wealth-creating" group, the report states. The latter, dependent on the first group, includes transportation, trade, clerical, professional, public service, and domestic and personal service.

In 1930, about 53 percent of employed Minnesotans were in the extractive and creative group, while nearly 47 percent were in the distributive and service group. The commission concluded in the report that if the state "does not want to rely solely on increasing employment in the distributive and service groups, the place to look is in manufacturing, forestry, fishing, and mining."

Comparing the position of Minnesota's leading types of industries to the whole industry picture, the report revealed several trends at the time: that a great number of Minnesota industries were engaged in food and drink production with a national

market for their products and that meat packing had climbed to first position in production among other states in 1937, while flour milling, along with canning and preserving, had dropped in its ranking from previous years.

The four leading industrial counties at that time were Hennepin, Ramsey, St. Louis and Dakota. Leading cities were Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth and Winona.



Minnesota meat packing, such as that performed here at the Swift and Company plant in South St. Paul in 1937, had climbed to first in production among other states.

At a meeting of the Minnesota Resources Commission, the report says, industry representatives were requested to list the effect of certain factors on their industry. While "tax burdens" received high marks for being "excessive," few checked the "reasonable" box.

More favorably, the categories of "available power and fuel" and "basic raw material" also received an "excessive" rating. "Restrictive legislation" was deemed "unnecessary" by a majority.

Overall factors gathered by the industry representatives stated as "properly engaging the state's attention" include: transportation costs, labor conditions, and the development of new uses for the state's raw materials.

After evaluating industries in other states, the commission concluded that competition was getting stronger every year. Using data marking industrial trends, the commission submitted recommendations to the Legislature to study and report upon those factors with the wish that it would "result in the adoption of intelligent policies."

Attitude, the commission determined, is of utmost importance when attempting to create new employment for a healthy industrial environment.

Said the report, "Probably nothing could have greater effect upon our industrial future than a frank appreciation of what we have and an understanding of what we must do to attain our greatest possible development."

(T. STAHL)



★ **AGRICULTURE****Lien clarifications**

A measure clarifying agricultural liens was signed into law by Gov. Jesse Ventura April 30.

The House unanimously passed the bill, sponsored in that body by Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), April 24. The Senate did the same one day earlier.

Officials have called existing law concerning agricultural liens confusing and contradictory. Liens against crops and livestock can be of several types — the most important of which are liens to ferriers, livestock breeders, threshers, veterinarians, agricultural production inputs, landlords, and planting crop owners.

However, a problem with current lien law is that a number of these liens each make the claim of having a higher priority than all others have. The bill, which adopts recommendations made by the Agricultural Lien Task Force of the Business Law Section of the Minnesota State Bar Association, prioritizes the order priority of liens against crops and livestock to eliminate such confusion.

The law will also repeal a large portion of agricultural lien law and proposes coding for new language removing ambiguities and providing more uniform procedures recording liens.

Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

The law takes effect July 1, 2001.

HF285\*/SF339/CH57

★ **ARTS****Arts board gains funding**

The Minnesota State Arts Board has received a \$5 million boost from its original allocation of \$11 million less than the governor's recommendation.

Rep. Philip Krinkie (R-Shoreview), chair of the House State Government Finance Committee, first proposed \$15 million compared to Gov. Jesse Ventura's recommendation of \$26 million. In the final version of the committee's omnibus bill (HF218), sponsored by Krinkie, the arts board received just over \$16 million.

During the bill's April 27 hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee, Rep. Dan

McElroy (R-Burnsville) proposed an amendment to add \$5 million during the 2002-03 biennium to the arts board's grant program, for which Krinkie had allocated \$10 million less than the governor. The amendment was successful, bringing total allocations for the Arts board up to \$21 million.

HF218 had also initially moved the Management Analysis Division from the Department of Administration to the Office of Strategic and Long Range Planning, but an amendment moved the division back to the department.

The bill awaits action on the House floor.

**'Grace' stamp sought**

A resolution urging the United States Postal Service to create a postage stamp reproducing a famous photograph produced by a Minnesotan was signed April 26 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

In the photograph, an elderly man sits pensively with bowed head and folded hands at a table containing a pair of spectacles on top of a Bible, a bowl of gruel, a loaf of bread, and a knife.

Eric Enstrom shot the famous image in his studio in Bovey in 1918. As the black and white photograph entitled "Grace" became more

popular, Enstrom's daughter Rhoda Nyberg began hand painting the prints in oil.

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey), sponsor of the measure, said the print became so popular that Enstrom eventually sold the copyright to the Augsburg Publishing House.

The resolution was carried on behalf of a group of citizens in Grand Rapids and Bovey.

At a March 22 hearing of the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee, Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) said the painting is displayed in his grandparent's dining room, as well as his own. Seifert said when he saw the bill on the agenda, he was unaware that the name of the work was "Grace" and that the bill dealt with one of his favorite paintings.

The Senate sponsor was Sen. Bob Lessard (Ind-Int'l Falls).

HF1391\*/SF1318/R3

★ **BANKING****New financial institution provisions**

A new law sponsored by Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) makes technical changes to laws regulating financial institutions.

Gov. Jesse Ventura signed the law April 30. McElroy carried HF1084 on behalf of the

**BIG BANG THEORY**

PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Keith Allison, a second lieutenant in the New Ulm Battery, in the number four position, fires an original 1856 six-pound field piece to celebrate the seventh annual "Freedom Day" on the front lawn of the Capitol May 1. Sergeant Wardell Lueck, right, takes the number one position.

Department of Commerce. The House passed the measure by a 134-0 vote; the Senate by a 63-0 vote.

Under current law, financial institutions may invest in property and buildings for its own use if the total value is less than 50 percent of its existing capital stock and surplus, without approval of the commissioner. The institution may increase that to 75 percent with approval of the commissioner. The law changes the 75 percent to 100 percent. This section is effective May 1, 2001.

Unstaffed after-hours drop boxes are no longer treated as separate branch offices of the bank, even if they are not within 1,500 feet of the main office or branch. This section is effective Aug. 1, 2001.

The law includes two provisions for state-chartered banks: they are no longer required to file stockholder lists annually with the commissioner; and those that do not have federal deposit insurance no longer must file stockholder lists annually with the county recorder. The first provision takes effect Aug. 1, 2001; the second became effective May 1.

Prior to the approval of the commissioner, banks or trust companies may now invest 50 percent, instead of 25 percent as it was formerly in law, of a bank's or trust company's stock or surplus in a subsidiary. The law also changes the definition of a subsidiary from 50 percent ownership to 20 percent ownership. This section is effective May 1.

Mortgage originators are now required to keep copies of advertisements they use for 26 months. Also, the time frame for a disclosure to a mortgage loan customer changes from 72 hours to three business days. The first provision becomes effective Aug. 1, 2001; the second is effective May 1, 2001.

The Senate version of the bill was sponsored by Sen. James Metzen (DFL-South St. Paul). HF1084\*/SF1066/CH56

## BUSINESS

### Halal provisions signed

A new law creating the same protection for food prepared according to Islamic law as currently exists for kosher foods was signed into law by Gov. Jesse Ventura April 30.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) sponsored the measure, which passed the House April 23 by a 132-1 vote. It was approved 61-0 by the Senate April 18.

After the law takes effect Aug. 1, 2001, it will be illegal to serve, sell, or expose for sale food falsely represented as Halal, or prepared in accordance with Islamic law, known as sharia. The bill's prohibitions are identical to the

provisions protecting the Jewish community from food falsely labeled or improperly prepared as kosher.

Matthew Ramadan, an Islamic authority known as an Imam, explained to the House Agriculture Committee in January that, "Halal is basically a word that means lawful, or legal." He said Muslims are required to humanely treat animals intended for human consumption.

For example, animals are not to be kept in a place where they can observe other livestock being slaughtered, butchers must insure animals not see the knife with which they are to be slain, and animal caretakers are required to provide water and other comforts for animals before slaughter.

Sen. Linda Higgins (DFL-Mpls) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF149\*/SF505/CH54

### MRS. MINNESOTA



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Woodbury resident Kelly Jahner-Byrne, Mrs. Minnesota 2001, sings the National Anthem at the beginning of the House session May 3.

### Auto dealer franchises

Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a bill defining unfair trade practices by automobile manufacturers, distributors, or factories into law April 30.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) sponsored the measure, effective Aug. 1, 2001, to define as unfair the practice of refusing to allow a dealer to transfer a dealership to a qualified transferee of the dealer's own choosing.

The House passed the bill 132-0 on April 19, and the Senate passed it April 26 by a 63-0 vote.

McElroy told the House, "Under current law, manufacturers can exercise a first right of refusal and essentially take away a transaction from a willing buyer and a willing seller."

The new law will allow manufacturers to prohibit the sale of a dealership if the transferee is not a person of good moral character or doesn't meet the franchisor's existing standards. Dealers could not exercise their right to refuse a deal if the ownership transfer were proposed among family members or involved a dealership manager with at least four years experience.

Under the new law, denials of requests to transfer ownership must be delivered to the dealer within 60 days after the manufacturer receives an application requesting an ownership transfer. Existing law gives 60 days after the manufacturer receives all information it needs to evaluate the transferee.

Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

HF779\*/SF823/CH62

## CHILDREN



### Funding level controversy

The House approved the family and early childhood education finance bill (HF1515) May 3 on a close 69-64 vote.

Most criticism leveled against the \$544 million bill focused on what opponents said was missing — money. Repeatedly, lawmakers expressed their dismay that children's issues were underfunded.

"We have to have better targets," said Rep. Greg Gray (DFL-Mpls). "If we really believe we can make a difference in kids' lives, we have to stop talking about it and do something about it."

The target budget, which was established by the House Ways and Means Committee, was the same as the base appropriation recommended by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), the bill's sponsor, said the committee tried to preserve what was working, provide for unmet needs, and meet

the challenge of staying within budget.

Children and family support services make up almost 70 percent of the bill's budget. This includes early childhood education, such as Head Start and School Readiness, as well as childcare programs.

In one of the bill's more controversial proposals, 15 percent of the Head Start allocation would be taken away to provide grants for innovative early childhood programs. Gray offered an amendment that would put that money back into Head Start.

"To siphon money from Head Start for nebulous programs when we have money available is unwise," Gray said.

"Throughout the state there are great disparities in the availability of early childhood programs," Sykora said. "We're trying to allow unserved areas to be served."

Gray's amendment failed on a 66-66 vote.

Rep. Nora Slawik (DFL-Maplewood) proposed an amendment that would have bolstered Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) in 2004-05 by \$20 million.

Much of the discussion on her amendment focused on policy questions inherent in making budgetary commitments in advance.

"This amendment might be good politics, it is not good policy," said Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall).

"These are value choices that are very difficult," said Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester). "We have a zero sum game, we have to balance the budget."

Slawik's amendment failed 67-65.

Other concerns with the bill centered on the distribution and focus of after-school programs and the bill's approach to funding childcare programs.

"This is a woefully inadequate budget," said Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights). "If we do not invest early, we will pay for it later on. This bill does not reflect the priorities that we as a society, we as a state, should make."

Minnesota is ranked as the best place in the country to raise kids, according to Sykora. "We have a lot to be proud of. We have a balanced bill. With no new dollars available, we were creative with what we had."

The House Ways and Means Committee approved the bill May 1. It also approved an amendment, sponsored by Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), to reduce fraud in the childcare system.

That measure would redirect childcare payments from parents directly to providers. It is estimated to cost about \$20,000 annually.

"It's time this state takes a stand and says it's not going to condone fraud anymore in the system," Haas said.

He said in the current system, some counties pay parents directly, and they are expected to pay the childcare providers. Fraud investigators told the House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee earlier this session that there is a problem with some parents saying they've paid the provider, while the provider says they have not been paid.

"We don't know how much of this there might be in the system," Sykora said. "We want to be sure there's integrity in the system."

She said fraud investigators typically find about 10 percent fraud in welfare, but she did not believe it would prove to be that high in childcare.

"So we're saying we're not going to trust parents," Solberg said. He said he thought teaching people how to budget their money was one way to help them get off welfare.

The bill awaits action in the Senate.

## ★ CRIME

### House passes judiciary measure

The House passed a significantly longer judiciary finance bill April 30 — it expanded from about 120 to 320 pages after a stop in the House Ways and Means Committee — but the bottom line is still the same.

The bill, which passed by a 107-21 vote, would allocate about \$1.3 billion to various criminal justice agencies in the state.

But it also contains several hefty policy procedures.

The measure would create a felony drunken driving penalty for people with four convictions within 10 years, it would provide continued funding for the CriMNet integrated statewide criminal justice information system, and the bill would require the state to develop a model anti-racial profiling policy. It also includes funding to train officers regarding racial profiling and to initiate a public information campaign about how to file a complaint.

"It helps cops on the street enforce the law and enhance public safety," said Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), sponsor of HF351 and chair of the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

According to House budget targets, the bill is about \$33 million below the governor's recommendations for these programs.

Several items were added to the bill since it left Stanek's committee, including tougher provisions for dangerous animals, changes to the domestic violence shelter per diem allocations, and civil family law provisions. Meanwhile others were removed, such as requirements that health professionals report suspicious "wounds" from substance abuse or alcohol-related accidents to law enforcement.

The bill would provide salary and benefit increases for court employees and public defenders, would support the per diem reduction plan begun by the Department of Corrections, would provide \$27 million for the CriMNet program begun through a law during the 1999-2000 biennium, and would make several technical changes to drunken driving law provisions.

Racial profiling provisions would require the state to establish a model policy for law enforcement to use, and the bill would allocate \$400,000 for training. Another \$100,000 is included in the bill for the public relations campaign.

The bill would not require mandatory reporting of data or gathering officers' badge numbers. What it would mandate is that all agencies report their number of complaints to the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer

### SPECIAL REQUEST



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

**Gloria Nihart from Stewartville brought her sign with a message and a picture of her son, who experiences delays in his cognitive abilities, to the steps of the Capitol May 3 to show support for continued special education funding.**

Standards and Training and the disposition of those complaints.

Rep. Gregory Gray (DFL-Mpls) proposed an amendment that would have required the law enforcement agencies in the state to collect data regarding the race/ethnicity and gender of drivers in traffic stops, the reason for the stop, whether the officer knew the race/ethnicity of the driver prior to the stop, and the law enforcement agencies' codes.

Gray's original bill also would have required that officers' badge numbers be recorded on reports. That provision was not part of his amendment, however.

During debate, Gray claimed that, while Stanek's anti-racial profiling proposal was admirable, it would not result in reducing or eliminating cases.

The amendment failed by a 52-78 vote.

In addition, Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) proposed an amendment that would have reduced the blood alcohol concentration for drunken driving offenders from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent. Though many members stood to support the amendment, including Stanek, they also said it wasn't the appropriate venue for the measure.

Stanek successfully amended the 0.08 standard to another bill in his committee April 25. That bill awaits action in the House Ways and Means Committee.

The judiciary finance bill, as passed by the House, also includes tougher standards for dangerous dogs, requiring them to be destroyed in certain circumstances. The bill would also allocate \$3.1 million to the Minnesota Center for Crime Victims Services in the Department of Public Safety to reimburse domestic abuse shelters for their per diem costs. The shelters are predicted to have a \$6.5 million shortfall by the end of 2002.

The bill now awaits action in the Senate.

## ★ EDUCATION

### Crosswinds granted funds to finish

This fall, students at Crosswinds magnet school might get new desks and lighting fixtures in their newly completed building.

An amendment to allocate \$1.7 million to finish completing the new St. Paul magnet school scheduled to open this fall was one of several amendments incorporated into the House K-12 Education Finance omnibus bill (HF82) during its May 1 hearing before the House Ways and Means Committee.

The bill, which would allocate a total of \$8.7 billion over the 2002-03 biennium for education in Minnesota, is sponsored by Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington).

The Crosswinds school was funded in the 2000 bonding bill at less than its request. If the school does not receive the additional funding in this non-bonding year, other options include private funding or short-term borrowing.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) sponsored the amendment. "I don't think it's good public policy to have a school building completed, programs ready to go, children ready to move into the building, and have it not be habitable," he said.

The appropriation would be subtracted from the base budget of the Department of Children, Families and Learning, specifically money set aside for consultants, McElroy said.

Rose Hermodson, assistant commissioner of government relations at the department, said the loss of funds would "significantly impact" the department. She said they are still trying to recover from cuts in previous years, as well as prepare for additional responsibilities proposed in the bill that would be assigned without any fiscal appropriations.

The committee also adopted an amendment by Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover) that provides a definition of a high-performance, environmentally sustainable school. She sponsored a bill (HF1534) earlier this session that would have allocated \$500,000 for two pilot projects for such schools to explore "great possibilities, especially in the energy-savings area," she said.

Through the amendment, she hopes that schools built in the future and those that are renovated use the goals listed in the

definition to "reduce the long-term life-cycle building costs of schools; reduce the energy costs of schools; (and) improve the indoor air quality of schools."

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) offered an amendment that says school districts may develop curricula that introduces students to various careers, but "must not require any curriculum, instruction, or employment-related activity that obligates an elementary or secondary student to involuntarily select a career, career interest, employment goals, or related job training."

"We shouldn't be dictating careers to young people at an early age, but we certainly should be offering career choices to young people," Dawkins said.

The amendment was adopted.

The bill now moves to the House floor.

### Deadline moved up

The deadline for submitting applications for temporary teaching licenses has been bumped up from Aug. 1 to July 1, under a new law signed May 2 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) sponsored the law in the House, which passed the measure by a 127-0 vote.

The earlier date will give the Board of Teaching, which reviews the applications, additional time before the school year begins. It will also provide additional time for the Department of Children, Families and Learning to process the licenses.

### PETITION DRIVE



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Petitions containing 11,000 signatures from around the state are released from the second floor of the Rotunda May 1 by members of the grass roots lobbying group Our Kids Our Schools. The petitions encouraged legislators to increase K-12 funding by \$400 per student.



The new date in law also applies to accepting applications for personnel variances. Furthermore, the law instructs the Board of Teaching to amend its rules to conform with the July 1 date.

The law is effective for the 2001-02 school year and later.

Sen. Leo Foley (DFL-Coon Rapids) sponsored the bill in the Senate, which passed it by a 61-0 vote.

HF1192\*/SF1979/CH68

## ELECTIONS

### Redistricting principles pass

The House approved a resolution May 1 that would establish the principles by which any House redistricting proposal must be drawn.

The resolution passed on a straight party line vote of 69-64.

Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie), the chair of the House Redistricting Committee and House sponsor of HF2488/SF1326\*, said the proposal reflects what the committee learned during its process. The Senate approved the bill April 19.

Paulsen said the House committee had a "much more deliberate approach" than its Senate counterpart, including 14 hearings, with several in Greater Minnesota. The committee took testimony on rural concerns and issues of different minority populations in the state.

The concurrent resolution, he said, is a different approach than was used in 1990 and would allow the governor to sign off on the principles.

In an April 26 hearing of the resolution, the Redistricting Committee adopted a delete-all amendment to the Senate bill that modifies some of the criteria.

Both versions of the bill provide that legislative districts must be substantially equal in population. The Senate version would permit a deviation of 2 percent between districts. The House version would limit the population differences to 0.75 percent.

The House language also specifies that the ideal population of a House district would be 36,713 with the ideal Senate district being 73,425. The House bill specifies the ideal population for a congressional district to be 614,935. The Senate bill does not state ideal population figures.

Several unsuccessful amendments were offered on the floor by DFL members that would have reinstated the Senate language into the bill.

Rep. Gene Pelowski Jr. (DFL-Winona) offered an amendment that would have restored

the Senate's 2 percent deviation figure. He said there already are cases where there is a known undercount and the larger deviation number would allow a redistricting plan to correct obvious errors in the census count.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) said redistricting plans should stick to the census figures as much as possible and that allowing greater deviations would open the process up to "mischief making."

Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul) said case law allows states a deviation range of up to 10 percent. He said a greater concern is not to "carve up" communities and neighborhoods "for the sake of a neat mathematical deviation."

Before the final vote Pelowski said Paulsen should be praised for conducting a "fair and forthright" redistricting process but that the bill was a "partisan document."

"There's not a line in this resolution we (DFL members) can say is part of what we did," Pelowski said.

Paulsen responded the resolution would help ensure that redistricting proposals are based on the "one person one vote" principle.

"This resolution gets us closer to a fair plan for all of Minnesota."

The bill now returns to the Senate for review and possible re-passage.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Mercury thermometers restricted

The sale or free distribution of mercury thermometers manufactured after June 1, 2001 will be banned beginning in 2002, following Gov. Jesse Ventura's signature of a new law April 26.

The measure, sponsored in the House by Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea), said exceptions will be made for a few situations in which the U.S. Department of Agriculture requires the use of mercury thermometers, in specified climate control systems, and in cases where mercury thermometers are used to calibrate other thermometers.

For most uses, accurate alternatives to mercury thermometers are readily available.

Mercury is very toxic, and widespread environmental contamination can occur from a miniscule amount of the substance. According to experts, the amount of mercury in a household medical thermometer, about .75 to 1 gram, is enough to prompt officials to call a fish advisory on a lake.

Sen. John Marty (DFL-Roseville) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

The law will take effect Jan. 1, 2002.

HF274\*/SF70/CH47

## ETHICS

### Complaint considered

An ethics complaint filed against a House member must have its probable cause hearing by May 15. That was the word from the House Ethics Committee at its April 27 meeting.

Four members filed an 11-count complaint against Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) regarding his leasing of two buildings to a charter school for a rate more than \$23,000 per month.

"Representative Abeler has, on numerous occasions, taken actions on items as a public official, whereby Charter School Building Lease Aid has been increased," the complaint states. Abeler is a member of the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

Signing the complaint were Reps. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls), Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls), Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), and House Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul).

It says Abeler voted five times in favor of providing increased building lease aid to the school, to pay off its lease with the lessor, which in this case he was. The complaint says Abeler "betrayed the public trust" and violated "accepted norms of House behavior" for failing to disclose he had "an immediate interest in a question before the body."

Abeler did not attend the meeting.

Most of the discussion among committee members centered on the process to be followed now that the complaint has been filed.

The next process will begin with a probable cause hearing, which must occur within 21 days of the receipt of the complaint by the committee chair, Rep. Roxann Daggett (R-Frazee). She received the complaint April 24.

At that hearing, if a majority of the four committee members "fails to find the facts more probably true than not" the complaint is dismissed. If that does not occur, a hearing to take and evaluate the evidence and make a final determination will occur.

Daggett plans to give each side equal time to give their presentation and respond to questions. "We want to be fair and thorough," she said.

After the hearing, Daggett was asked if this process would be complete by the time the House must adjourn May 21. "My goal is to have the meetings and cover all of the issues and when it gets done, it gets done," she said. There is no timeline to complete the process.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) recommended the committee find someone with knowledge of conflict of interest laws, such as an ex-judge, to aid in the process.

"I'd like to know what a legal conflict is," he

said. "We need clarification." He rhetorically asked if it's wrong to have farmers voting on agricultural finance issues or lawyers voting for judiciary finance measures.

The committee was to submit a list of names to Daggett for consideration. "If I were Rep. Abeler, I'd want the committee to be fully knowledgeable," said Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls), a committee alternate.

## FAMILY



### Clarification signed

Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a law April 26 that would make terminology changes to existing marriage dissolution law statutes.

Sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), the measure will replace "custodial parent" with the terms "parent," "obligee," or "parent with whom the child resides." It also replaces "noncustodial parent" with either the first two terms or "parent with whom the child does not reside."

Part of an overall effort to streamline and simplify certain civil portions of law, the changes are intended to make the process easier to understand, officials say.

The changes are effective Aug. 1, 2001.

The House passed the bill by a vote of 126-1 on April 17. It passed the Senate 57-0 April 20. The Senate version was sponsored by Sen. Sheila Kiscaden (R-Rochester).

HF1260\*/SF1332/CH51

## HEALTH



### Medical review change

On April 26, Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law that will change the frequency with which physicians must review the prescribing activities of physician assistants.

Previously, state law has required that physicians review all prescribing, dispensing, and administering of drugs and medical devices done by delegated physician assistants on a daily basis. The new law will change the frequency to weekly.

According to the measure, sponsored in the House by Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), the physician and physician assistant must have a written agreement spelling out the process and schedule for the review.

The bill passed 133-0 in the House April 2 and 56-0 in the Senate April 20.

Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

The new law will take effect Aug. 1, 2001.

HF1160\*/SF1127/CH49

## BIG, BAD BAND



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

House members were treated to music from "Ruth Adams' World's Most Dangerous Polka Band" during a session recess May 2. The band was on hand to kick off National Older American Month.

## Ventura issues first 2001 veto

The first red mark of the session from Gov. Jesse Ventura came April 30 when he vetoed a bill regarding the Edvest program.

The program allows accounts to be created for a designated beneficiary who will attend college in the future. Families with \$80,000 or less in income are eligible to receive back up to 15 percent (maximum \$300) of their annual contribution in the form of a state grant.

Sponsored by Rep. Rob Eastlund (R-Isanti), HF550 would have extended the time for adopting rules for the Edvest savings program by nine months. The program cannot begin operation until the rules are adopted.

The bill was originally passed by the House March 19, and was re-passed April 24 after consideration of a Senate amendment that would have excluded assets in the fund from the state's general fund thereby making them not subject to state appropriation. The bill was sponsored in the Senate by Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato). The Senate approved the bill April 20.

The original 18-month provision for beginning the program expired in 1999 as officials from the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office were working on aspects of the program and overlooked the

time enactment clause.

"I want to emphasize that my veto relates to the process, not the policy," Ventura wrote in his veto letter to House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon). "I do support the implementation of the Edvest program and its excellent goal of encouraging and supporting saving for higher education. However, I believe the program should begin as soon as possible. Rather than extending rule-making authority for up to nine months, I encourage the Legislature to take the steps necessary for immediate implementation prior to the adjournment of this year's legislative session."

Ventura expressed concern that annual appropriations of \$1.5 million to the general fund have been cancelled for three years, and there are no assurances this year's appropriation will be used.

"I appreciate and share the Legislature's support for this program, and encourage expedited legislative action so this savings plan can begin this spring," Ventura wrote.

In early February, Eastlund said that more than 2,000 people had already expressed an interest in the program. Officials anticipate the first appropriations will be made next year for people who enroll in the program by the end of 2001.

HF550\*/SF954/CH58

## ★ HIGHER EDUCATION

### Spending bill passes

The full House passed an amended higher education finance bill April 30.

By a 68-60 vote, the bill (HF2489/SF2343\*), sponsored by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), was passed. The House voted to include the House language in the Senate file, which was sponsored by Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan).

The House bill calls for \$2.83 billion in spending, including \$1.27 billion to the University of Minnesota and \$1.24 billion to Minnesota State Colleges and Universities for the 2002-03 biennium. New spending totals \$165 million with \$93.9 million for MnSCU and nearly \$64 million for the U of M.

Additionally, the bill calls for the university to receive \$23.1 million for the Academic Health Center.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) refuted the idea raised by some DFLers that this bill cut money. "The amount of money (in this bill) for new higher education spending is 6 percent overall and 7 percent for MnSCU and the university. It's not exactly chump change."

When approved by the Senate April 26, the bill called for \$283 million in new funding, including \$138 million for the university and \$130 million for MnSCU. The bill is headed for a conference committee to work out the differences.

In addition to Leppik's amendment, seven others were offered on the bill, with four receiving approval.

They included a model for how MnSCU must distribute its appropriations, a plan to distribute excess MnSCU reserves to the campuses, a plan to give unused money from the Edvest state grant program to MnSCU and the U of M in fiscal year 2001, and statutory language regarding Edvest.

Edvest allows families to invest money now for a person who will attend college in the future.

Amendments to expand the nursing program at North Hennepin Community College, renegotiate reciprocity agreements so no non-Minnesota student pays a lower tuition rate than a state student at a Minnesota school, and require the chairs of higher education finance committees to report on progress being made to improve the access and delivery of higher education were also offered but failed.

Although no amendment was offered to remove tobacco money from the bill, it was a bone of contention among those on different sides of the aisle.

The bill calls for approximately \$23 million

from the earnings on investments of the two endowments established with state funds from the state tobacco settlement. That money goes to the university's Academic Health Center.

"They say that politics makes strange bedfellows," said Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth). "This bill shows the Republican House caucus is in bed with the tobacco industry."

He said that House Republicans are forcing members to "choose between stopping youth from smoking and a great medical school in the Twin Cities. We can't have both."

Pawlenty took offense at Huntley's comments.

"The notion that this was somehow driven by tobacco interests is bunk," he said. "This decision had nothing to do with tobacco interests and all to do with rebuilding and stabilizing the medical infrastructure in the state."

## ★ INDUSTRY

### Gas station franchisee rights

The sunset date for a provision that allows gas station owners additional rights to the land they occupy is extended, under a new law signed April 26 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Under the laws effective immediately, the expiration date of May 5, 2001, is now July 1, 2002. The measure, passed in the House by a 131-0 vote, was sponsored by Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin).

Last year was the first time franchisors were required to give franchisees an opportunity to purchase their stations.

Often, gas stations are operated by franchisees who lease, rather than own, their locations, and the law passed in 2000 required that before the franchisor who owned the property could sell it to a new franchisor, the operator of the station had to be given an opportunity to purchase it.

The law continues to provide a sunset date instead of incorporating the provision into permanent law due to controversy between franchisors and franchisees over the amount of flexibility each can retain.

Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) carried the legislation in the Senate, which passed the measure 57-0.

HF323\*/SF914/CH48

## ★ LAW

### Real estate clarification

A provision intended to, in the words of Rep. Eric Lipman (R-Lake Elmo), "make more sensible, service-oriented, fair, and understandable" a provision of real estate law was signed into law April 26 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Lipman, the sponsor of the measure in the House, explained to the House Civil Law Committee in February that there are two systems regulating real estate title law: abstract, in which a private third party, such as a

## DAY OF PRAYER



PHOTO BY SARA KIRK

Sara Renner, from left, Kangza Kong, Jodie Sellers, and Dan Adler, all from Heart of the Cities worship band, participate in the National Day of Prayer on the lawn of the Capitol May 3.

lawyer, makes determinations regarding the chain of real estate ownership over several sales and Torrens law, in which a government agent makes those determinations.

According to Lipman, the bill "streamlines" the Torrens system by allowing single owners of multiple tracks of land, such as a housing developer, to file a single declaration creating covenants, conditions, and easements. Under existing law, owners of multiple properties must file separately for each particular property.

Rick Little, Hennepin County deputy examiner of titles, told the committee that registrars will lose revenue but will experience a decrease in workload.

"They're happy with that," he said. He predicted the bill would be "very well-received in the real estate community."

The bill, which was unanimously approved in the House March 5, also clarifies the Attorney General's responsibility in cases in which the state is the defendant in Torrens law matters. In the future, the Attorney General may either choose to represent the state or may refer a case to a county attorney. Currently, the Attorney General must refer such cases.

The Senate version was sponsored by Sen. Thomas Neuville (R-Northfield). The Senate passed the measure unanimously April 20.

The bill is effective April 27, 2001 but preserves actions pending on that date or started before Feb. 1, 2002.

HF239\*/SF170/CH50

## ★ RECREATION

### New horse track law

A new law signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura April 30 will ease employment restrictions at the state's horse racing track.

Under previous law, people seeking employment in horse racing where pari-mutuel betting was allowed had to obtain a class C license. Those that had been convicted of a felony were prohibited from obtaining the license.

The new law modifies that restriction to those who have a felony of record.

Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), who sponsored HF995, said the restriction prohibited those who were convicted of a felony but later had the conviction overturned on appeal, or those who completed their sentence, from working at the track.

Another provision of the new law increases the legal amount of an anti-inflammatory drug that a test blood sample from a horse can be allowed to have under the medication rules of the state's racing commission.

The law allows 5 micrograms per milliliter

of blood as the maximum level for drugs such as phenylbutazone. That particular drug is commonly used to treat laminitis, a chronic foot ailment among horses. The previous law allowed 3 micrograms.

The bill passed the House by a 120-12 count April 18 and the Senate April 25 by a 58-5 margin.

Sen. David Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm) was the Senate sponsor.

The new law is effective May 1, 2001.

HF995\*/SF1214/CH59

## ★ TRANSPORTATION

### Spending bill passed

After hearing the fewest proposed amendments to a finance bill this session, the House passed the omnibus transportation finance bill May 2 by a 68-65 vote.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska), chair of the House Transportation Finance Committee, sponsored the House version of the bill, HF2189/SF2340\*. The House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee voted to include the House language in the Senate file, which was sponsored by Sen. Dean Johnson (DFL-Willmar).

Lawmakers amended into the bill a provision requiring the Department of Transportation to turn off interior lights in parts of its headquarters in St. Paul when no one is working. Exceptions are made for energy efficiency, security, or safety reasons.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) proposed the amendment, telling the House that he has noticed the building often has lights on late at night and on holidays when very few, if any, people are still working.

"Turn off the lights," he said.

The bill reached the floor after the House version passed the House Ways and Means Committee April 26.

In that committee, Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) successfully sponsored an amendment to delete possibly the most contentious provision of the bill that would have created "Choose Life" license plates and distributed money to organizations purporting to assist pregnant women who promise to offer their children for adoption.

The bill passed the floor only after extended criticism from DFL members, who characterized it as shortsighted and internally inconsistent.

House Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) described it as a "cul-du-sac" for transportation funding. "This goes back to the 50s and 60s for transportation policy in this state," he said.

Members were especially critical of a plan within the bill that would create special taxing districts to fund light-rail project operating costs. "We need a fair way, not a punitive way, to pay for LRT operating expenses," said Rep. Dan Larson (DFL-Bloomington).

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) pointed out that the bill failed to offer funds for expanding transit services in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. She said the Metropolitan Council "met and exceeded our goals" for expanding service, but that "now we're cutting their funding."

Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar) said Republicans were "putting all their eggs in the tax cut basket" at the expense of Greater Minnesota transit. He said a transit system in his district would be put at risk by the funding, which amounted to only one-fourth of the needed funds.

Molnau answered that a proposed constitutional amendment would guarantee an additional \$165 million per year for transportation funding. She said DFL members had failed to take the opportunity to constitutionally dedicate funds while they held the majority in both the House and Senate.

"We've done that," she said.

### Handlebar height unrestricted

Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a law April 30 that repeals a section of state law regarding motorcycles.

The law, sponsored in the House by Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), removes from law a provision that made it illegal to operate a motorcycle with handlebars extending above the operator's shoulders when the operator is seated with both feet on the ground.

That measure passed the House April 5 by a 126-4 vote. It passed the Senate 59-4 April 25.

Workman told the House that the motorcycling community endorsed the repeal, and predicted there would be no negative impact resulting from the change.

Sen. Grace Schwab (R-Albert Lea) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

The provision is effective Aug. 1, 2001

HF1383\*/SF1598/CH60

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## Taking a hit

Environment and natural resources finance bill passes the House with less funding for PCA, dismantling of OEA

By MARY KAY WATSON

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (PCA) seemed to be the loser in the budget battle May 1 as the House considered an Environment and Natural Resources finance bill that would allocate to the agency \$12 million less than Gov. Jesse Ventura recommended and eliminate 93 jobs, 70 of those due to inflation and federal funding cuts.

"The PCA is in a transition period," said Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee and sponsor of the bill (HF766/SF2351\*). "It will not be able to complete the transition until the way it is funded is changed." A study of the PCA's funding mechanisms is included in the omnibus bill.

The House passed the bill on a vote of 102-31. The Senate passed its version of the bill, which was sponsored by Sen. Leonard Price (DFL-Woodbury), with a substantially larger spending target, April 26.

The bill will now move to conference committee to iron out the differences between the two versions of the bill.

The two-year, \$746 million funding package, of which \$349 million is general fund money, would be spread over a number of agencies, including the Pollution Control Agency, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

"I wish this bill was as good for air and water as it is for hunting and fishing," said Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls). "It's way unbalanced."

Holsten disagreed vehemently, citing several projects included in the bill: the restoration

of clean water partnerships, county cost share grants, funding for the Minnesota River Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and the \$7 million clean-up of the Pig's Eye dump in St. Paul.

"We put the available dollars in the field — on the water," he said.

Another sore point in the bill was the provision dismantling the Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA) after 2002, with its duties delegated to several other agencies, including the PCA.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) offered an amendment that would retain the agency. "This agency is a major actor in the state's efforts to reduce and recycle," Hausman said. "Unlike the PCA, no one is accusing the OEA of being in disarray."

Holsten said eliminating the office would "help reduce waste by eliminating the duplication among agencies."

Hausman's amendment failed.

Funding for research into deformed frogs would also be discontinued in the environment bill. Minnesota led the way in the mid-1990s by beginning to study the curiously deformed frogs found in a southern Minnesota stream.

An amendment offered by Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls) would have funded the frog research program, moving it to the division of ecological services in the DNR.

"Frogs are an indicator species," Wagenius said. "There is something fundamentally wrong out there, we need to find out what it is."

Holsten said research into frog deformities

should be led by federal, not state, agencies. "It's about priorities," he said. The amendment was narrowly defeated.

On April 27, the House Ways and Means Committee expunged a proposal from the bill that would have transferred a piece of property from Hennepin County to Eden Prairie for \$1 to use as a park. Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) sponsored an amendment that would effectively keep the property, known as Birch Island Woods, as open space. Workman's amendment was approved.

The Ways and Means Committee also removed from the bill a plan that would give a citizen advisory committee more say in allocating the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Members of that committee challenged Holsten and Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee, for their plan to shift the responsibility for choosing environmental projects from the Legislature to a citizens' group.

"Turning responsibility over to a citizen committee is the same as throwing the whole thing out the window," said Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina).

Ozment said Minnesota is one of the few states where the Legislature controls a citizen trust fund. "This plan is consistent with the Environmental Trust Fund's purpose at its establishment," he said.

Currently, a citizens' committee comprised of 11 members appointed by the governor acts in an advisory capacity to the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) in determining how trust fund money (about \$49 million for 2002-03) is to be allocated.

Ozment revised the rejected plan and offered it to the House as an amendment to the finance bill. The plan would confer on the

Continued on page 19



The House passed its omnibus environment and natural resources finance bill May 1, including funding for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program along the Minnesota River, pictured above.

PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED



# Hello Dalai!

Tibetan spiritual and political leader is scheduled to address the House and Senate May 9

By DAVID MAEDA

**W**ith committee deadlines come and gone and much of the legislative activity now devoted to long hours of floor debate on various omnibus bills, lawmakers have barely had time to exhale.

But on May 9, partisan debate and marathon sessions will give way to a breath of fresh air with a visit from one of the world's most esteemed leaders.

As part of his visit to the Twin Cities, the Dalai Lama will deliver a joint address to the House and Senate.

Along with sharing his message of compassion and respect for human rights, the exiled Tibetan spiritual and political leader's — and

Lamas are manifestations of the Buddha of compassion known as Bodhisattva.

According to reference materials, the process of discovering the rebirth of a reincarnated lama can be elaborate and exacting, particularly in the selection of a Dalai Lama, which has many political implications.

The rebirth may take place at any time, from days to years, following the death of the previous lama. The state oracle at Nechung is consulted for the whereabouts of the newly born Dalai Lama. Remarks made by the Dalai Lama before his death are frequently accepted as indications of a favored place for rebirth, as are any unusual signs that are observed during his death or during a birth thereafter.

Often two or more candidates are subjected to a critical physical and mental examination, which includes recognition of personal belongings handled by the previous lama. In case of doubt, lots may be drawn.

After selection, the young child is given extensive monastic training from an early age. During the years of search for and education of a newly incarnated lama, a regent is ap-

pointed to rule in his stead.

Dhondrub, the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, was renamed Jetsun Jamphel Ngawang Lobsang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso, which translated, means "Holy Lord, Gentle Glory, Compassionate, Defender of the Faith, Ocean of Wisdom."

Buddhism has a long tradition of being the state religion of Tibet, dating back to the second century and being perpetuated by many of the historical leaders of the country.

The current Dalai Lama became the political leader of Tibet at age 16. After a Chinese

invasion and his ensuing escape and exile to India in 1959, he has governed and taught 125,000 Tibetan refugees leading them in the ancient Buddhist rituals.

Since 1967 he has visited 46 different countries with his first visit to the west in 1973.

Christine Sasseeville, the Legislative Coordinating Commission's international affairs coordinator, said she was contacted in June 1999 by the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans about a potential visit from the religious leader.

Sasseeville said it took about a year for the legislative leaders to give approval. Due to his worldwide popularity, the Dalai Lama's schedule is booked a year in advance.

Since getting approval, a committee has met on a regular basis to plan out the details of the visit. Sasseeville said the Dalai Lama's people have been "very gracious" and have stressed he is "a simple Buddhist monk."

The theme of the visit to Minnesota is "Compassion and Peace in a New Century."

Sasseeville said each member from the House and Senate received a ticket to invite one guest and response has been tremendous. She said news of his visit has generated "lots of excitement" and many inquisitive phone calls.

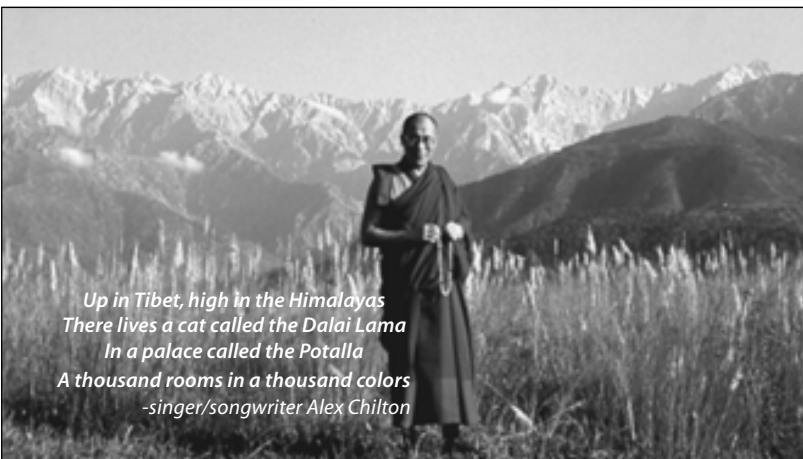
This will be the Dalai Lama's second appearance before a state legislature. In 1998 he delivered an address to the Wisconsin State Assembly in Madison.

In that speech he referred to himself as "another human being like anybody else."

He went on to deliver a message about compassion and achieving happiness through inner peace.

"Spirituality does not necessarily mean religious faith. But spirituality rather means the day-to-day practice of the basic messages of various religious traditions that manifests in the good qualities of a human being like a good heart, a compassionate heart, a sense of caring for others, a sense of commitment, patience, tolerance and contentment," he said.

In its decision to award the Dalai Lama its 1989 Peace Prize, the Nobel Commission's citation read, "The Committee wants to emphasize the fact that the Dalai Lama in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet consistently has opposed the use of violence. He has instead advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people." 🙏



*Up in Tibet, high in the Himalayas  
There lives a cat called the Dalai Lama  
In a palace called the Potalla  
A thousand rooms in a thousand colors  
—singer/songwriter Alex Chilton*

PHOTO FROM THE WEB SITE [HTTP://WWW.DALAILAMA.COM/HTML/CONTENTS.HTML](http://WWW.DALAILAMA.COM/HTML/CONTENTS.HTML).

**His holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama will address the Legislature May 9 as part of a visit to the Twin Cities. The visit is intended, in part, to raise money for the Tibetan Cultural Center. For more information on his visit, see [www.DalaiLamaMinnesota.org](http://www.DalaiLamaMinnesota.org).**

1989 Nobel Peace Prize winner's — visit in part is intended to help raise money for a Tibetan Cultural Center of the Twin Cities.

The Twin Cities metropolitan area is currently home to North America's second largest Tibetan population, with approximately 900 Tibetans living in the area. Only New York City has a larger population.

Born July 6, 1935 as Lhamo Dhondrub, the Dalai Lama was recognized by the state oracle at age two as the reincarnation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama. According to Buddhist beliefs the Dalai

# Master mergers

Major pieces of legislation will now move to the next step in legislative deliberation: the conference committee

BY JONAS M. WALKER

**A**fter much research, lobbying, drafting and redrafting legislation, and a path through committees reminiscent of Odysseus' journey home, a passing vote in the House can seem like a triumphant entry into paradise for a bill's sponsors and supporters.

Likewise, fervent opponents beat their breasts, decrying the injustices about to be wrought upon the state and people by the unwise or irresponsible bill their colleagues pass.

Despite the acclaim and disdain final floor votes may incite, the real work of enacting legislation is not over.

After winning House and Senate approval, a bill often requires a conference committee, where members of each body hammer out differences in the passed versions. Although legislators often agree on the original versions of bills, different committee structures, caucus memberships, and legislative personalities can yield significantly different House and Senate versions.

If both bodies pass identical legislation, the Chief Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate takes the bill straight to the governor. Otherwise, a conference committee is charged with the responsibility to produce a final version that must earn approval of both bodies before the bill is presented to the governor.

When a conference committee is necessary, the Speaker of the House and the Senate leadership caucus each appoint three or five members of their respective bodies. Conferees are selected to uphold the position of their respective bodies, but have some latitude to reach a mutually acceptable compromise.

Although conventional wisdom dictates that a bill's chance of success increases as it passes through more committees, bills in conference committees face significant hurdles.

First, the very fact a bill is referred to a conference committee testi-

fies to its controversial elements. Were it mild or its impact purely local, it would not likely engender sufficient opposition to prevent its approval by both bodies.

Second, most conference committees work in the waning days of the legislative session. With deadlines looming, difficult legislation may be abandoned in favor of less controversial efforts. Time permitting, each side makes some compromise and the conference concludes with conferees hoping the final version will be acceptable to a majority of members in either body.

The members from each body vote

separately within the conference committee. The committee then makes a "report" only after a majority of House members and a majority of senators agree to a finalized version.

House rules require that the member presenting the conference version to his or her body "disclose all substantive changes" made by the select group.

The body that first passed the original legislation must be the first to pass the conference committee report. The bodies may only accept the report and pass the compromise, or reject the changes and send the bill back to conference committee. Each body also has the option of appointing a new conference committee to produce a new compromise. Neither body may amend the report.

Though conference committee hearings are open to the public, they often occur at late hours or operate on indefinite schedules, making it difficult to inform the public regarding a meeting schedule.

Critics charge that conference committees neglect minority perspectives and nullify the democratic process that each body employs in drafting and passing legislation. Gov. Jesse Ventura, for example, has suggested that a unicameral legislature would have no need for conference committee haggling after a bill's passage.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) "adamantly" opposes unicameralism, explaining that legislation is better when two bodies contribute different perspectives. "The House is faster, younger, more entrepreneurial; the Senate is more hierarchical. I had a bill that got better every time it was amended by the bodies," he said.

McElroy suggested legislation could benefit from the wisdom of each body but avoid unnecessary delay and the potentially sully image of conference committees by adopting some reform. He said 24 states have reduced their reliance on conference committees by either abolishing them or reserving their formation "for really big deals."

New York, for example, "shuttles" bills between its two bodies, accepting amendments only on the Assembly and Senate floors. Other states, such as Iowa and Wisconsin, take up legislation drafted by regular standing committees made up of lawmakers from each body.

Until lawmakers deliberately amend procedure, or until the House and Senate pass more pieces of legislation that are identical, conferees will continue to play a crucial but often invisible role in moving legislation from a body to the governor's desk. As McElroy said, "conference committees are a fact of life in a bicameral system."



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

**Action in both the House and Senate will shift to more and more conference committees, appointed to work out disagreements between the bodies, as the legislative session wanes.**

# Minnesota House of Representatives 2001 Members

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

Note: Room numbers are subject to change.

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

## Tracking new laws, vetoes

Once a bill has passed both the House and Senate in identical form, it's ready to be sent to the governor for consideration. The governor, who has several options when considering a bill, can:

- sign the bill and it will become law;
- veto the bill;
- line-item veto individual items within an appropriations bill;
- or do nothing, which can have two different effects. The timing of these actions is as important as the actions themselves.

In the first year of the biennium, the important thing to remember is that the governor has three days from the time of "presentment" to veto a bill. If the governor

doesn't sign the bill within this time frame, it will become law with or without his signature. (Sundays are not counted in the three-day time limit, but holidays are.)

Only on appropriations bills can the governor exercise the line-item veto authority. This option allows the governor to eliminate the appropriation items to which he or she objects. As with all vetoes the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is within three days after the governor receives the bill.

A two-thirds vote of the members in each house is needed to override a veto. But because only the governor can call a special

session of the Legislature, anything vetoed after the Legislature adjourns is history — at least until the next year.

The governor's veto authority is outlined in the Minnesota Constitution (Article IV, Section 23).

This information is also available on the governor's Web site ([www.governor.state.mn.us](http://www.governor.state.mn.us)). Select the "Legislative Initiatives" link, then click on "Legislative Log 2001."

Key:

CH=Chapter; HF=House File; SF=Senate File

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
Res.1	219	258*	Resolution requesting a ban on the importation of certain steel products.	3/15/01	
Res. 2	670	647*	Resolution memorializing the President and Congress to fund 40 percent of special education costs.	4/6/01	
Res. 3	1391*	1318	Resolution for postage stamp of Eric Enstrom's "Grace" photograph.	4/26/01	
1	34	28*	Teacher licensing under current licensure rules.	1/16/01	
2	421*	460	Energy assistance program federal fund expenditure authorized.	2/2/01	
3	213	201*	Physicians assistants infection control continuing education requirements repeal.	2/15/01	
4	181	43*	Adult foster care license capacity age requirement and maximum admissions variances.	2/28/01	
5	817	376*	City contract limit increases.	3/2/01	
6	106*	47	Minnesota agricultural education leadership council permanent members authorized.	3/8/01	
7	656*	231	Revisor's Bill.	3/15/01	
8	80*	79	Coon Lake water level control.	3/16/01	
9	393*	155	Ramsey County and City of St. Paul employees allowed equal competition for county jobs in city-county departments.	3/16/01	
10	357	289*	Alcohol and drug counselors licensing requirements modified.	3/16/01	
11	487	433	Townships health, social, and recreational services contracts amounts increases.	3/21/01	
12	320*	399	Property casualty insurance agents surplus lines insurance procurement authority.	3/29/01	
13	1016	509*	City and county obligations payment by electronic transfer or credit card authorized.	4/6/01	
14	368	63*	Stearns County Highway 55 bridge designated as Old St. Anne's pass.	4/6/01	
15	243	346*	Trusts; uniform principal and income act modified, and antilapse law clarified.	4/6/01	
16	556*	756	Federal law enforcement officers authorized to exercise arrest powers in MN under specified circumstances.	4/9/01	
17	416	400*	Hokah authorized to vacate roads if necessary due to extensive damage.	4/9/01	
18	1046	991*	Notifies schools of student possession of drug paraphernalia.	4/11/01	
19	172	9*	Authorizes cities to provide housing assistance for volunteer firefighters or ambulance personnel.	4/11/01	
20	64	971*	Repeals law prohibiting itinerant carnivals.	4/11/01	
21	394	327*	Repealing statutes concerning castrating animals running at large in a town.	4/11/01	
22	466	972*	Repeals law prohibiting endurance contests.	4/11/01	
23	252	570*	Repeals obsolete rules.	4/11/01	
24	37	480*	Repeals obsolete traffic regulations.	4/13/01	

\*The legislative bill marked with an asterisk denotes the file submitted to the governor.

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
25	57*	27	Certain crimes against children named disqualifying offenses for school bus drivers' licenses.	4/13/01	
26	245	225*	Allows licensed peace officers to determine necessity of patient restraints.	4/13/01	
27	790	702*	Modifies requirements for the Bluffland trail system.	4/13/01	
28	1951	1204*	Regulates the use of HIV and bloodborne pathogen tests.	4/13/01	
29	994	883*	Establishes hospital waiver or variance request procedure.	4/13/01	
30	47*	39	Unemployment benefits to certain LTV employees extended.	4/11/01	
31	116	274*	Respiratory care practitioner advisory council sunset delayed; athletic trainer registration cancelled for nonrenewal.	4/24/01	
32	501	283*	Conservation officer enforcement activity comparison prevented from use in performance evaluation.	4/24/01	
33	1455	1435*	Designer selection board provisions modified.	4/24/01	
34	453	319*	Discharge of judgements against bankruptcy debtors regulated.	4/24/01	
35	424	456*	Mental retardation waiver recipients authorized access to respite care in certain facilities.	4/24/01	
36	275*	210	Nursing facilities closure medical assistance cost savings projection prohibition.	4/24/01	
37	125*	104	Dentist licensure requirements modified for applicants trained in a foreign country.	4/24/01	
38	949*	771	Allows for a smaller newspaper to serve as the qualified newspaper for smaller communities.	4/24/01	
39	387	142*	Increases the membership of the State Council on Black Minnesotans.	4/24/01	
40	828	741*	Hennepin County employees granted disaster volunteer leave.	4/24/01	
41	1747	1780*	Itasca County chemical dependency demonstration project rule exemption extended.	4/24/01	
42	1634	1460*	Duty to warn law applied to social workers, and social workers allowed to form professional firms.	4/24/01	
43	1404	1709*	Exempts towed implements of husbandry from tail lamp requirement.	4/24/01	
44	867*	646	Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District provisions modification and clarification.	4/24/01	
45	2119*	1915	Charitable organization report filing requirements modified.	4/24/01	
46	253	249*	Repeals obsolete health and human rules.	4/26/01	
47	274*	70	Mercury thermometer sales restricted.	4/26/01	
48	323*	914	Motor vehicle fuel franchisees transfer rights provision expiration date removal.	4/26/01	
49	1160*	1127	Physician assistants prescribing medication review provisions modified.	4/26/01	
50	239*	170	Real estate provisions modifications.	4/26/01	
51	1260*	1332	Child support and custody provisions terminology neutralization.	4/26/01	
52	1467	1419*	Payment bonds claims notices requirements modification.	4/26/01	
53	1637*	1790	Repeals provisions requiring hawkers and peddlers to obtain a license.	4/30/01	
54	149*	505	Regulates sale and labeling of Halaal food, meat or poultry products.	4/30/01	
55	1159*	857	Local bridge replacement and rehabilitation and Gillette Children's Hospital addition prior funding modifications.	4/30/01	
56	1084*	1066	Omnibus financial institutions and banking bill.	4/30/01	
57	285*	339	Agricultural liens regulation provisions modification and consolidation.	4/30/01	
58	550*	954	Higher education services Edvest office rulemaking authority extended.		4/30/01
59	995*	1214	Horse racing license application and medication provisions modifications.	4/30/01	
60	1383*	1598	Motorcycle handlebar height restrictions repealed.	4/30/01	
61	525*	1604	Multimember agency members compensation conditions modifications.	4/30/01	
62	779*	823	Motor vehicle dealer franchise transfer practices modification.	4/30/01	
63	1219*	1617	State fund mutual insurance company state involvement elimination.	4/30/01	
64	1889*	1831	Uniform Partnership Act of 1994 transition issues regulated.	4/30/01	
65	967*	876	Permits schools to sponsor potluck events.	5/2/01	
66	1151*	1187	Modifies penalty provisions for psychologists.	5/2/01	
67	1188*	1045	Fire training exercise ash disposal regulated.	5/2/01	
68	1192*	1979	Teachers temporary limited licenses and personnel variances application acceptance and issuance timelines.	5/2/01	
69	1522*	1421	Full-time nursing home administrator requirements modified.	5/2/01	
70	1681*	1622	State employment technical and housekeeping changes; civil service pilot project extension.	5/2/01	



Continued from page 4

Taxpayers would be allowed a subtraction for 50 percent of capital gains on qualified stock held for more than five years. The stock would have to be in a qualified business that has jurisdiction to collect Minnesota sales tax or voluntarily agrees to collect state sales tax.

The bill would also eliminate the \$2,000 per family limit on the K-12 education credit and would allow a second earner subtraction for married couples for the working family credit.

For the third year in a row many Minnesotans would receive a rebate check in the fall. The bill would provide \$856 million for a sales tax rebate of the state's budget surplus.

Former House Speaker Dee Long, representing Minnesotans for an Energy Efficient Economy, said the bill contained "an historic amount of good environmental policies." She pointed to a number of provisions including a sales tax exemption for the purchase of energy efficient products, and a sustainable forest incentive that gives landowners who implement forest management plans an annual incentive payment.

Gary Carlson, representing the League of Minnesota Cities, raised a few concerns. He spoke against a proposed reinstatement of levy limits and a provision establishing a reverse referendum mechanism that would allow voters to overturn local government levy increases.

Carlson said elected local officials should be allowed to make decisions on budgets, and that ultimately they are accountable to the voters come election time.

Department of Revenue Commissioner Matt Smith said that overall the bill meets of governor's goal for tax relief and reform. He said the bill lives up to the governor's philosophy of limiting the overall growth in spending and called the property tax reform provisions "very good."

The bill does incorporate the governor's plan to make school funding a state responsibility. Under the bill, school districts would no longer levy local property taxes. The state would collect the taxes and redistribute them to school districts based on an established formula.

Districts would still be allowed to conduct referenda upon local taxes, under the bill. A provision in the K-12 education omnibus bill would raise the cap currently placed on levy referenda.

In addition to agreeing to the governor's reform of school funding in the state, Smith said the bill goes beyond the governor's proposal in class rate reductions as well as proposals to eliminate property taxes to pay for transit operations and state takeover of court costs.

Smith said the governor's administration still believes the state will need to address the changing nature of the economy in its sales tax



## Healthy prescription

### Iowa tries medication management

During 2000, the state of Iowa established a "pharmaceutical case management" program that would create physician and pharmacist care teams to monitor Medicaid patients at high-risk for taking their medications safely and effectively.

A pilot program similar to Iowa's is currently under consideration in the Minnesota Legislature.

Drug interactions can be costly. As people age they are more likely to take a variety of medications, sometimes prescribed by different doctors. Frequently, patients are unaware that the medications they are taking, when combined, might actually be detrimental to their health.

Studies have found that when a pharmacist is involved in monitoring a patient's medication, the individual can often take fewer medications and get better results. Not only is this better for the patient, it is better for the bottom line of the health care system.

That's what Iowa is testing.

The colleges of public health, medicine and pharmacy at the University of Iowa are working together to measure the clinical and financial impact of the program. They are required to submit their final report to the Iowa Legislature by Dec. 15, 2002.

The state did not fund the actual research but did fund reimbursement to participating physicians and pharmacists of up to \$75 for each patient assessment.

The Iowa project focuses on high-risk individuals because previous research has shown they are the most likely to benefit from this team approach to medication management.

Physicians and pharmacists team up to provide this care. The physician prescribes medication and establishes treatment goals. The pharmacist follows up, providing feedback between a patient's visits to the physician regarding compliance, side effects, and the progress toward treatment goals.

Pharmacists who participate in these teams must complete professional training in patient-oriented care and pharmaceutical case management. Physicians do not need special training.

The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists refers to this partnership between physicians and pharmacists to manage drug therapy as "collaborative drug therapy management."

Other states using some form of management include California, Florida, Michigan, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Kentucky.

(M.K. WATSON)

policies and the shift from an economy based on goods to an economy based on services.

Abrams asked Smith if the governor would veto the tax bill because it didn't contain the administration's proposed extension of the sales tax on to services.

Smith said the governor would look at all the omnibus bills to determine whether there was structural balance in the Legislature's spending and taxing proposals before deciding whether to sign any of the bills into law.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) said that although he was voting against the bill, it contained several good provisions and he thought the bill would make Minnesota's overall tax structure more progressive.

Dawkins said Abrams deserved praise for the bill's "historic, milestone changes" to the state's tax system.

The measure was approved by the Ways and Means Committee May 2, and now moves to the House floor.

Continued from page 13

LCMR the responsibility for establishing policies and on the citizens' committee the responsibility for selecting the projects that fit those policies.

"I hope this doesn't degrade the authority of the LCMR," said Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester), who said he could accept the reworked proposal, though he didn't "see the need for the change." The amendment was approved.



Editor's Note: As the House meets in session every day, items in the major spending bills may change from this edition of *Session Weekly*. For daily news updates, read *Session Daily* online at <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/sdaily/sdaily.htm>.

## Monday, April 30

### HF2498—Abrams (R)

#### Taxes

Omnibus tax bill providing a sales tax rebate, property tax reform, tax rate modifications, and appropriating money.

### HF2499—Davids (R)

#### Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development

Telephone solicitation calls to consumers at their place of business prohibited.

### HF2500—Larson (DFL)

#### Crime Prevention

Criminal justice information system improvements provided including fingerprinting, collection of aliases, and suspense file reporting, and money appropriated.

## Tuesday, May 1

### HF2501—Solberg (DFL)

#### Capital Investment

Itasca County school-to-work technology center non-state match requirement modified.

### HF2502—Knoblach (R)

#### K-12 Education Finance

Debt service equalization aid program enhanced and maximum effort capital loan program modified.

## Wednesday, May 2

### HF2503—Smith (R)

#### Education Policy

Education Quality and Teacher and Principal Protection Act adopted regulating liability of employees of educational entities.

### HF2504—Gerlach (R)

#### Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Public employees required to fund a portion of state-paid annual health insurance premium costs.

### HF2505—Seifert (R)

#### Redistricting

Redistricting; congressional redistricting plan adopted for use in 2002 and thereafter.

## Thursday, May 3

### HF2506—Abrams (R)

#### Taxes

Minnesota Bond Allocation Act update and modifications.

### HF2507—Opatz (DFL)

#### Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Resolution memorializing the governor to declare a flood emergency in Benton County.

### HF2508—Kalis (DFL)

#### K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 2860, Blue Earth Area Public School, boiler replacement grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

# COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

MAY 7 - 11, 2001

## MONDAY, May 7

9 a.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

## TUESDAY, May 8

9 a.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

15 minutes after session

#### TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

## WEDNESDAY, May 9

11 a.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

## THURSDAY, May 10

9 a.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

15 minutes after session

#### TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

## FRIDAY, May 11

9 a.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

## LOOKING AHEAD . . .

## FRIDAY, June 8

4 p.m.

#### Regent Candidate Advisory Council

Room 41 Dunwoody Institute

Minneapolis

Chr. Nedra Wicks

**Agenda:** Discussion/evaluation of the 1999-2001 cycle of activities; questionnaire results; discussion of implications of the 2001 legislative activity on regent candidate recruitment and council activity; and recommendations for the 2001-2003 cycle of activities. Committee reports: ad hoc committee on voting procedures; and nominations committee. Election of officers. Other business.

Call, visit, watch, log on . . .

## Legislative information is plentiful, accessible, and free

Keeping track of what's happening at the Minnesota Legislature has never been easier. The latest technology is being used in all areas of communication.

And while the traditional methods such as visiting the Capitol and calling on the telephone are still useful and easy ways to get the information you need, the newest technological methods on television and the Internet have made your choices better than ever.

### A new, improved Web site

Since the Legislature's World Wide Web site went online in 1996, more than 46 million hits have been received. During the 2000 session alone, the site was receiving more than one million hits on the busiest days.

During that time, users commented on the positives and negatives of the site. In response to those remarks, an interim committee of legislative staff looked at ways to enhance the online information — making it even more useful. As a result, the Web site was redesigned and the new format was launched during the fall of 2000.

Accessing information using your fingertips and a mouse begins by directing your browser to <http://www.leg.state.mn.us>, the Legislature's main page.

The site layout has been updated to make it visually simple but also easy to navigate. More advanced users can use drop-down menus to get to the information, while traditional hyperlink text is also available.

A mere click of a mouse button takes a user to both the House and Senate main pages. Easy access is also provided to other areas, including: member information, committee information and schedules, Minnesota Statutes, Session Laws and Rules; joint legislative departments and commissions; youth pages; general information; legislative district information; and employment opportunities.

One of the more popular options is the bill tracker. From the House and Senate pages, users can read any bill and track its status through the legislative process. For those not familiar with the legal language used to draft bills, easy-to-understand summaries are also



Through the Legislature's Web site, the public can access information including bill descriptions and status, committee meeting schedules and agendas, and weekly publications of both the House and Senate.

available. Bills can be searched by number, keyword, or author.

The site is also interactive — links are provided so a user can easily contact a legislator by e-mail.

Both the House and the Senate sites also offer Internet streaming video of floor sessions and selected committee hearings. The service features unedited, live and recorded coverage of the Legislature. To watch events unfold, get the free Windows

Media Player plug-in viewer.

Information is available on the House Television Services Web site at <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hvtv/htvserve.htm>. Archived footage of House committee meetings and floor sessions is also available.

### You've got mail

Constituents with e-mail service can now receive daily and weekly committee schedules from both the House and Senate without having to request them each day.

The schedules, updated daily, give specific information about which committees are meeting on a particular day, the time and location of the meeting and general topic agendas for the meeting. Schedules are also available in advance for constituents interested in testifying at a hearing.

To receive the House committee schedule, send an e-mail message to [join-houseschedule@ww3.house.leg.state.mn.us](mailto:join-houseschedule@ww3.house.leg.state.mn.us) or fill out the subscription form at <http://ww3.house.leg.state.mn.us/scripts/lyris.pl?join=houseschedule>.

House schedules are also available on the Web site at <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/schedule/index.htm>.

To receive a Senate schedule, e-mail a



E-mail is an increasingly common way for constituents to contact their legislators. Lawmakers regularly respond to signed messages, and they prefer that correspondents include their full names and addresses.

message to [listserv@senate.leg.state.mn.us](mailto:listserv@senate.leg.state.mn.us). Leave the subject line blank and in the body of the message type: **subscribe sen-schedules**.

### Come on down

Technology is a wonderful asset for governmental information, but the best way to find out what's happening at the Capitol is to witness it in person. A good place to begin your visit is at the House Public Information Office, located on the first floor of the State Office Building directly west of the Capitol, in Room 175.

The office has a series of informational and educational publications designed to make the legislative process understandable and accessible for all.

Office staff can quickly determine in which House and Senate district you live and provide you with the name, office number, phone number, and e-mail address of your representative and senator.

Daily and weekly committee schedules are available at the office, as are issues of the newsmagazine *Session Weekly*, a free publication covering weekly House activities during session. Be sure to sign up for the publication and have a thorough weekly wrap-up mailed directly to your home. Likewise, *Senate Briefly*, which covers weekly Senate activities, is available by stopping at Senate Information in Room 231 of the Capitol.

### Pick up the phone

A wealth of information is also available via the telephone. The House Public Information Office can answer general questions regarding the legislative process and who your legislators are. They can also connect you to other offices for additional information. Call the information office at (651) 296-2146 or toll free at 1-800-657-3550.

You don't need to leave home to obtain



A committee hearing room in the State Office Building features interactive television technology through which lawmakers can communicate with people at more than 80 sites around Minnesota.

copies of House bills, either. Simply call the House Chief Clerk's Office at (651) 296-2314 and they'll mail you a copy of any bill. If you don't know who sponsored a bill or what a particular bill's House File number is, call House Index at (651) 296-6646. They can also tell you the status of a bill as it is traveling through the process.

If you have a concern about a pending bill or a policy issue, call your legislator.

You may also access a voice version of the House committee schedule by calling (651) 296-9283.

For similar information in the Senate, call (651) 296-0504 or toll-free at 1-888-234-1112.

### Tune in

Television coverage of the Legislature has been available since 1996. In the Twin Cities metropolitan area, tune in to KTCI-TV, Channel 17. Coverage is included throughout Greater Minnesota on more than 30 cable providers' services. Check with your local cable system for availability. All broadcasts are closed-captioned and schedules are available from House Television Services. Call (651) 297-1338.

Live coverage of floor sessions and committee hearings is provided throughout the day, and taped coverage is played between live proceedings.



Since 1996 House Television Services has provided coverage of action on the House floor and selected committee hearings on Channel 17 and local cable systems.

### Frequently used Web links

Legislature's main page:  
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us>

*Session Weekly* on the Web:  
<http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/swkly.ssi>

To search the Legislative Web site:  
<http://search.state.mn.us/leg/>

North Star government information:  
<http://www.state.mn.us/mainmenu.html>

Governor's office:  
<http://www.mainserver.state.mn.us/governor/>

Legislative Reference Library:  
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/lrl.htm>

Revisor's Office:  
<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/revisor.html>

Legislative Links to the World:  
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/links/links.htm>

### Frequently called numbers

House Information:  
651-296-2146  
1-800-687-3550

Senate Information:  
651-296-0504  
1-888-234-1112

Chief Clerk's Office:  
651-296-2314

Office of Secretary of the Senate:  
651-296-2344

## Constitutional Officers

### Governor

**Jesse Ventura**  
130 State Capitol  
75 Constitution Ave.  
St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-3391

### Lieutenant Governor

**Mae Schunk**  
130 State Capitol  
75 Constitution Ave.  
St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-3391

### Attorney General

**Mike Hatch**  
102 State Capitol  
75 Constitution Ave.  
St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-6196

### Secretary of State

**Mary Kiffmeyer**  
180 State Office Building  
100 Constitution Ave.  
St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-2803

### State Auditor

**Judith H. Dutcher**  
Suite 400  
525 Park St.  
St. Paul 55103 ..... (651) 296-2551

### State Treasurer

**Carol Johnson**  
303 Administration Building  
50 Sherburne Ave.  
St. Paul 55155 ..... (651) 296-7091

## Where to find information

### House Public Information Office

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

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

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

## Reflections

Our country's national symbol, the American or Bald Eagle, appears on just about everything that is official state government or U.S. property.

There is more to the eagle than meets the eye. No ordinary robin, blue jay, or English sparrow, the eagle is a patriotic emblem steeped in Greek mythology and Native American lore, and it serves for some as a spiritual symbol of strength and accomplishment.

There is something about eagles that fascinates people. Maybe it's the eagle and Apollo — a multi-faceted Greek deity — influencing prophecy, music, and medicine. Maybe it's just an eagle's intense stare or amazing eyes that can see a potential food source a mile away.

Or maybe it's when eagles spread their 6-foot to 8-foot wingspan as they majestically soar on wind currents high above the State Capitol building or near their nesting sites along the Mississippi River.

One thing is for sure, just about every flagpole in every public building, VFW lodge, or American Legion hall across the country is topped by a replica of the country's patriotic symbol. Also, most Native Americans hold the eagle in high reverence as the "chief of all birds."

Eagles have inspired religious songs, the name of a rock-n-roll band, and the high-toned honor Boy Scouts can attain.

Even State Capitol architect Cass Gilbert and the artists he commissioned found them to be of importance. If the count is accurate, at least 40 representations of eagles exist in the Capitol — not counting those on flagpoles and floor lamps.

Twelve are found guarding the outside

dome. Two eagles in the House chamber hold in their talons the dates Minnesota was founded as a territory in 1849 and established as a state in 1858. Five more are found on the chamber ceiling arches, and one each inside Rooms 211 and 214 above the page's desk and the front desk.

Another 20 are displayed as artwork, bronze figures, or stained glass on most floors of the building and the skylight above the circular stairs.

For all their popularity and respect, eagles almost became extinct due to wanton killing by people and by eating prey poisoned by DDT and other chemicals. But the population is on the rise again.

The eagle's recovery is a conservation success story that began in the 1960s in the state's Chippewa National Forest by the U.S. Forest Service.

Thanks to organizations like the University of Minnesota Raptor Center, the Department of Natural Resources Nongame Wildlife Program, and others, the eagle is almost past the "threatened" list, with the possibility of once more being commonplace.

Eric Bergeson, a former House Educational Programs assistant and a weekly contributor to the local newspaper in Fertile, Minn., recently wrote about a bald eagle he sighted near the Red River Valley. "It was as grand as any animal I have ever seen. My visit with the bald eagle made me glad somebody, somewhere, sometime, stuck up for the grand birds when they were down and out."

—LECLAIR GRIER 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

### Trawling time

Minnesotans who fish each year, in millions .....	2.3
State rank in the sales of fishing licenses per capita .....	1
Cost for an individual fishing license, in dollars .....	18
Husband-wife combination license, in dollars .....	26
Number of fish species in Minnesota .....	156
Acres of fishing waters, in millions .....	3.8
Number of rivers and streams .....	6,564
Miles of rivers and streams .....	92,000
Miles of fishable streams .....	15,000
Trout streams .....	1,900
Number of fishable lakes .....	6,000
Number of lakes in Minnesota larger than 10 acres .....	11,842
Size of largest lake (Red Lake), in square miles .....	451
Number of Mud lakes .....	201
Long lakes .....	154
Rice lakes .....	123
Mugwump lakes .....	1
Number of state fish hatcheries .....	17
Walleye .....	12
Trout .....	5
Walleyes stocked per year, in millions .....	2.3
Trout, in millions .....	1.5
Muskellunge .....	31,500
Number of walleye rearing ponds .....	225
Number of northern pike spawning areas .....	19
Walleye fish bag limit for 2001 .....	6
Northern .....	3
Perch, daily and in possession .....	20,50
Pounds of sport fish harvested annually, in millions .....	35
Annual sport fishing expenditures in the state, in billions of dollars .....	1.9
Pounds of commercial fish harvested annually, in millions .....	4.5
Amount annually spent on electronic fish finders and other angling equipment, in millions .....	67
Bait, in millions .....	50
Lures, lines, and other tackle, in millions .....	34
Number of businesses selling minnows .....	1,800
Dollars generated annually, in millions .....	42
Ratio of recreational boats to people .....	1:6
State rank .....	1
Number of lakeside resorts .....	1,169

Sources: North Star — Minnesota Government and Information Services ([www.state.mn.us](http://www.state.mn.us)), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For general information, call:  
**House Information Office**  
(651) 296-2146 or  
1-800-657-3550

To obtain a copy of a bill, call:  
**Chief Clerk's Office**  
(651) 296-2314

To find out about bill introductions or  
the status of a specific bill, call:  
**House Index Office**  
(651) 296-6646

For an up-to-date recorded message  
giving committee meeting times and  
agendas, call:  
**Committee Hotline**  
(651) 296-9283

The House of Representatives can be  
reached on the World Wide Web at:  
<http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us>

Teletypewriter for the hearing impaired.  
To ask questions or leave messages,  
call:  
**TTY Line (651) 296-9896 or**  
**1-800-657-3550**

Check your local listings to watch  
House committee and floor sessions  
on TV.

**Senate Information**  
(651) 296-0504  
1-888-234-1112

**Senate Index**  
(651) 296-5560

This document can be made available in alternative  
formats to individuals with disabilities by calling  
(651) 296-2146 voice, (651) 296-9896 TTY, or  
(800) 657-3550 toll free voice and TTY.