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In this issue:

THE .08 DEBATE, FELONY DWI

NEW MAJORITY WHIP, COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT HISTORY

Session Weekly

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On the cover: A combination of sun cast glittering shadows and wispy cirrus clouds made for a nice view from the Capitol Jan. 4. Temperatures the whole week rose into the mid-30s.

—Photo by Sara Kirk

The .08 debate

Legislators mull the prospect of lowering the legal limit for blood alcohol concentration

BY JONAS M. WALKER

The Minnesota Legislature may increase penalties this session for what many consider the most common crime in the state: drunken driving.

Among the top two issues for likely debate are lowering the legal blood-alcohol level from .10 percent to .08 percent and instituting a felony-level penalty for multiple drunken driving offenses.

The House Crime Prevention Committee heard testimony Jan. 9 from government officials and advocates on the issue of Minnesota's legal response to people who drive under the influence of alcohol.

Millie Webb, national president of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), testified in favor of Minnesota changing the legally drunk blood-alcohol concentration from .10 percent to .08 percent.

"If all states were at .08 percent, we could prevent 500 deaths and thousands of injuries each year," she said. "Time lost in doing so equals lives lost."

Though Webb's primary focus was the .08 issue, she also addressed felony-level drunken driving penalties. The two issues are inextricably intertwined, since lowering the blood-alcohol level may increase the number of offenders in Minnesota jails — even before a felony penalty would.

Lowering the blood-alcohol limit would also change the current debate regarding felony DWI because it creates a new variable to factor into jail and prison impact projections.

MADD supports the actions of the 38 other states that have felony penalties for DWI. Under existing law in Minnesota, a drunken driver faces no more than a gross misdemeanor, no matter how many prior convictions that person has.

A further proposal supported by MADD would mandate that liquor stores register beer kegs to aid in tracking and prosecution of alcohol-related crimes. Some states have already instituted these conditions.

"You have got to have incarceration, restitu-

tion and rehabilitation," Webb said. "We need to be consistent across America to see a decrease."

Additionally, the state risks losing federal transportation money by 2004 if it does not adopt the .08 limit.

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) asked the MADD representatives their opinions regarding placing convicted drunken drivers in minimum security facilities equipped with enhanced treatment options. Minnesota MADD Legislative Chair Lynne Goughler responded favorably to the idea, saying that the first priority for MADD is to "take away the bottle and the car."

felony level penalty is appropriate.

Scoggin recalled that the House passed a bill last year making the commission of four DWIs in 10 years a felony. That provision went to conference committee, but before the bill became law, it was changed to require the working group to study the issue. The move to study the issue further was due in large part to concerns that the state court and corrections systems would be overwhelmed by the increased number of felons.

According to Scoggin, the cost to Minnesota taxpayers would depend upon the ratio of two numbers that define a felony: the number of prior convictions and time frame in which those convictions could have occurred, known as the "look-back" period.

For example, if the number of prior convictions were set at four and the look-back period were 10 years, Scoggin's report indicates that



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

Millie Webb, national president of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, shows members of the House Crime Prevention Committee a picture of her daughter, Lori, who was killed, along with her 19-month-old nephew Mitch Pewitt, by a drunken driver in 1971. Webb urged members to lower the blood-alcohol level to .08 percent during her testimony Jan. 9.

Paul Scoggin, representing the Minnesota County Attorney's Association, discussed a report prepared by the House DWI working group that addressed specific legal issues such as the number of prior offenses within a 10-year time period that should occur before a

1,317 Minnesota drivers would have been felons by 1998. Increasing the number of convictions to five within the same time period would have affected only 511 drunken drivers.

Scoggin commented that laws creating new felonies can be misleading because judges retain

discretionary sentencing power regardless of the Legislature's apparent intent. In Minnesota, convictions lead to two-part sentences: a length of time, and a ruling as to whether the sentence will be executed or stayed.

For instance, a DWI felon could be sentenced to a number of months in prison, but may be required to receive treatment and perform community service in lieu of actually serving time. Scoggin told the committee that all forms of felony DWI now under consideration by the Legislature would favor a stayed sentence.

The DWI working group reports that it was told that long-term supervision, both before and after treatment, increases the likelihood for successful management of chronic offenders.

Scoggin made a point of emphasizing two messages from law-enforcement officials: that there are some chronic offenders who must be kept off the roads and that sheriffs urge the Legislature to fund the local costs associated with felony DWI.

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield), committee chair, agreed, saying, "We don't want (local officials) to be burdened by the state."

Dennis Benson, deputy commissioner with the state Department of Corrections, testified that although jails and workhouses are now filled above capacity, his department was prepared to meet the additional burden of incarcerating DWI felons.

Although Tuma said that most legislators don't think drunken drivers require extensive state oversight, Benson's testimony indicated that DWI felons would likely be housed in the state's medium security prisons at Faribault or Moose Lake. Benson further noted that those who would need to be incarcerated likely would have some sort of prior criminal background.

Responding to some members who said they felt lower-security prisons and treatment options were more appropriate than full-scale secure incarceration, Benson said the department has a wide spectrum of treatment options at its facilities.

Such options would likely meet the approval of MADD members and other advocates of the plan to create a felony DWI penalty. "These people don't know they have a problem with alcohol," commented Webb during her testimony.

Kenn Rockler, executive director of the Wine, Beer, & Spirits Federation of Minnesota, opposes the move to .08 BAC limit.

"If I believed that .08 would save lives, I couldn't in good faith oppose it," he said.

Rockler discussed briefly the difference between presumptive and *per se* blood-alcohol concentration limits; the first assumes that someone with a certain BAC level is too intoxicated to drive. He said that Minnesota law already allows an impaired driver to be prosecuted under the presumptive standard at a .04 percent concentration.

IT'S A FACT



Sign of the times

Pro sports pumped millions into metro economy, says 1964 report

In 1964, Minnesotans were experiencing a relatively new phenomenon in the state's economic structure — the professional sports team.

The early 1960s brought two professional sports teams to the state that are still here today — the Minnesota Twins and the Minnesota Vikings.

While the history of professional sports in the state was still new in 1964, officials with the Metropolitan Sports Area Commission, which oversaw the day-to-day operations of Metropolitan Stadium, prepared a report to evaluate how much money fans were spending in the Twin Cities area.

The report, entitled "The Economic Impact of Major League Sports on the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area," used personal interviews with Twins fans, a random survey of season ticket holders, and an economic analysis of expenditures in the Twin Cities related to the two professional sports teams.

It showed the teams made a significant impact on the area. But it also indicated that the world of professional sports has changed tremendously over the past 35 years.

Take a look at the Twins and Vikings of 1964. That year, Twins outfielder Tony Oliva was named American League Rookie of the Year, leading the league in several batting categories. That same year, teammate Harmon Killebrew led the league with 49 home runs.

One year later, the team would capture the pennant and make its first World Series appearance.

The Vikings would tie for second in the National Football League's Western Conference in 1964, the team's first winning season. Later, under the leadership of head coach Bud Grant, the team would head to four Super Bowl appearances.

According to the report, those teams drew fans that added millions of the dollars to the Twin Cities economy.

The survey indicated that the average fan residing in the Twin Cities area in 1964

expected to attend 10.5 Twins games. Out-of-town Twins fans made the trip for an average 3.7 games. The Twins were among the league leaders for overall attendance that year at 1.2 million fans.

Out-of-town fans spent an average of \$15.90 each for hotel accommodations, \$6.98 for food and beverages, and \$7.37 for gas and oil while in the Twin Cities.

In 1964, the Twins' payroll was around \$1.2 million, which was comparable to the other nine teams in the league. The 2000 Twins had the lowest payroll in all of Major

League Baseball with \$17 million.

The report concluded that the total identifiable expenditures surrounding the Twins and Vikings in 1964 was around \$14.5 million. Further, the report said that the figure was the beginning of a process that "creates a long spending chain which may make the total local effect at least \$29 million in terms of incomes and \$72.5 million in sales volume."

In addition, the report determined that there might be truth to the claim that people would spend their money elsewhere in the Twin Cities without the two teams, but there was no solid proof.

The report also claimed that the teams brought psychological benefits, as well. The metropolitan area and the state gain in confidence and standing, and the Twin Cities are identified as "big league." The teams marked the city as a major metropolitan center, attractive to business and industry.

Since then, both the Twins and the Vikings moved from the old Met and play their games in the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome in downtown Minneapolis. In recent years, both the Twins and the Vikings have requested public financing for a new stadium, saying they cannot compete over the long term with the Metrodome's limitations.

(D. MAEDA)



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

The Twins and Vikings called Met Stadium home from 1961-1981.

★ AGRICULTURE

Field trip possibilities

With no legislation before it on Jan. 10, members of the House Agriculture Policy Committee set forth its plan for the 2001-2002 session, including a list of places members may visit.

Among those places members mentioned the Minneapolis Grain Exchange, the Pillsbury Company, stockyards in South St. Paul, and one of Minnesota's still-operating breweries.

In other action, Department of Agriculture Commissioner Gene Hugoson took a few minutes to introduce key members of his staff and to invite members to visit his department.

Committee Chair Tim Finseth (R-Angus) welcomed committee members by complimenting them on their previous work together. "We did a pretty good job of keeping partisan politics out of this room. I hope very much to continue that," he said.

Then Finseth held his gavel upright for dramatic effect and reminded members of their august responsibility. "You may not respect me, but we all have to respect this," he said. "We need to preserve and respect this."

Finally, a number of members suggested the committee meet with its Senate counterpart to head off the need for any conference committees that may likely arise before the session concludes.

★ BUSINESS

Progress for minority groups

Sending a message of hope for better times, while expressing confidence of progress in their communities, Minnesota minority group leaders presented overviews and updates about their organizations to House Jobs & Economic Development Finance Committee Jan. 10.

The leaders specifically addressed sustaining businesses, providing insurance options and development of business loan programs.

Ilean Her, executive director of the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, said the group attempts to create an environment of success for their community.

"Many Asian-Pacific's are willing to take the risk of starting a business," she said, and the council looks for solutions on how to sustain businesses and get them to grow.

Employment concerns in the Chicano-

Latino community, says Ytmar Santiago, director of the Chicano Latino Affairs Council, lie in finding full-time jobs so they will be eligible for medical insurance.

"Chicano Latinos come into the state and take lower-end jobs, which are usually part-time, so they work two or three of them and have no health care," Santiago said.

According to the organization's most recent biennial report, the number of Hispanic children without health insurance in 1995 was 26.8 percent, close to twice the amount of white children (13.4) and black children (15.3) not covered.

Santiago also said his group is making an effort to better businesses in greater Minnesota, but progress lags because there is only one greater Minnesota liaison on the council.

With one-half the Indian population in Minnesota living in poverty, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council has established a large business loan program, which the council is working to market.

"We need Indian citizens to become business people," said Joseph Day, executive director of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. The program has awarded 95 loans totaling more than \$2 million since 1981, according to the group's 2000 annual report.

Day added that he has been pleased to see the state Department of Health "aggressively" working with tribes in the state during the past 12 months.

Minority leaders talked about the value of validating people in their communities.

Lester Collins, director of the Council on Black Minnesotans, said part of his organization's mission is "making citizens of this state know how important it is to be counted."

Referring to several

black leaders in the Twin Cities, Collins said that despite poverty and difficult circumstances, "an individual can make a significant contribution to their community."

Her, of the Asian-Pacific council, echoed Collins' words.

"Our goals are to strengthen our communities, strengthen the state of Minnesota," Her said. "But before you can get people involved, you have to empower them."

★ CHILDREN

Environmental health study

The House and Senate Environment & Natural Resources Policy committees met

Danger sign

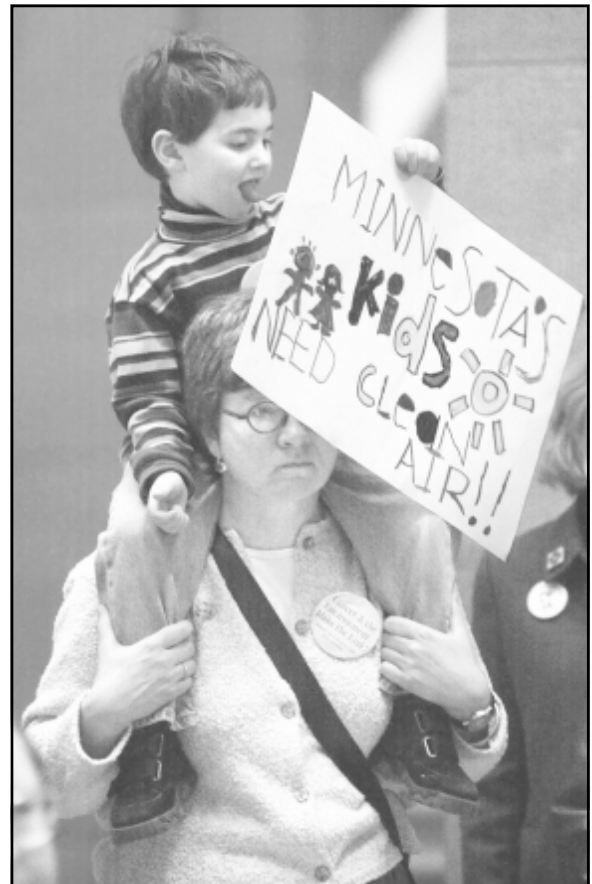


PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

Catharine Reid, St. Paul, holds her 4-year-old son Charlie Rich during a rally in the Rotunda for the reduction of dangerous air pollution in Minnesota. The rally was sponsored by the Sierra Club and a coalition of 12 other local environmental groups that released a 16-page package, "Danger in the Air," making several recommendations to clean up Minnesota's air.

together Jan. 9 to learn more about children's environmental health issues.

At the meeting, Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), chair of the House committee, announced the formation of a joint task force on children's environmental health.

The area of environmental health, which primarily examines the links between chronic illnesses and environmental factors, is one of the most important emerging issues in public health today, said Jan Malcolm, commissioner of the state Department of Health.

Amid growing concern that children may be at higher risk for certain illnesses than adults, the department is seeking to intensify its research and policy efforts in issues of children's environmental health.

"We recognize that children may have different susceptibilities to environmental hazards," said Pat Bloomgren, director of the department's Environmental Health Division.

Children's rapidly growing bodies are physiologically different from adults, and their behaviors expose them to more environmental hazards than adults, she said. For example, it has been known for some time that neurotoxins such as lead and mercury damage children's developing nervous systems.

There is a need for better tracking of chronic illnesses to determine which ones have environmental triggers, said Bloomgren, citing the Pew Environmental Health Commission Report released during the fall of 2000. The report charged that America faces an "environmental health gap." Scientists need tracking data to identify sources of chronic illnesses before they can prevent them.

Asthma is one of the priority illnesses the state Health Department wants to track. Especially prevalent in core cities, asthma causes 30 percent of all school absenteeism, said Bloomgren.

"The area of environmental health is one that compels us to work well together across agencies," Malcolm said. This collaboration may at times make for strange bedfellows.

As an example, said Bloomgren, "The Department of Health seeks to protect the public from the hazards of the environment, whereas the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) seeks to protect the environment from the actions of the public."

CRIME



Preparing offenders for the outside

Boot camp is not just for the military in Minnesota.

The Challenge Incarceration Program gives nonviolent adult inmates an opportunity to prepare themselves for successful reintegration into

Faces of the homeless



PHOTO BY JENNY J. DEAN

Amy Gavel of St. Paul and Nicole Fernley from Australia view an exhibit in the State Capitol of children's faces, representative of the 3,000 children that sleep in homeless shelters every night in Minnesota. The exhibit was organized by the Affordable Housing Initiative of St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, Minneapolis and was displayed from Jan. 3-10.

society and reduce the risk of re-offending.

Beatrice Hawkins was one of two former inmates who completed the program, and shared their experience with the House Crime Prevention Committee Jan. 11.

"I'd been to prison three times and didn't get the message to be a law-abiding citizen," she said. "At boot camp I learned discipline." Sentenced for a controlled substance crime, Hawkins also got treatment during her time at the camp, something she was not getting behind bars.

The program, which serves a maximum of 90 offenders at one time, including up to 15 women, is often referred to as boot camp because of its rigorous agenda.

An inmate must have 48 months or less remaining on their sentence to be eligible. The type of crime committed may prohibit an inmate from participating. Eighty percent of those in the program committed drug offenses.

Divided into three phases of at least six months each, offenders take treatment-oriented classes, participate in restorative justice work crews, and later take part in a community-supervised release program.

Lou Stender, warden at the Moose Lake/Willow River facility, said the program is a gamble for inmates. Those who fail to complete all three phases receive no credit for time spent in the program, and are returned to incarceration to complete their original sentence.

At the meeting, concerns were raised about the program by Ramsey County Attorney Susan Gaertner and Dakota County Attorney Jim Backstrom.

While both say they like the program, they are concerned about a number of things, including notification measures of an inmate's possible enrollment, having no veto power over the Department of Corrections decision to allow an inmate into the program, and that this program can run amok of the truth in sentencing guidelines.

"When I get a sentence for someone, I expect them to serve it," Gaertner said.

John Tuma (R-Northfield), committee chair, asked Sheryl Ramstad Hvass, state Department of Corrections commissioner, to put together a proposal to address issues raised by Backstrom and Gaertner. That plan could be addressed at a meeting in the next few weeks.

"I want this resolved because this is a good program," he said.

EDUCATION



Teacher licensure examined

A plan that would allow certain teacher candidates to forgo new licensure requirements that affect graduates beginning in 2001 passed the House by a unanimous 131-0 vote Jan. 11.

The first bill to pass the House in the 2001 session, HF34/SF28* was initially approved by the House Education Policy Committee Jan. 5.

Members suspended the rules on the floor Jan. 11 and passed the Senate version, which is identical to the House version, upon its first reading in the House.

Under the bill, sponsored by Rep. Marty

Seifert (R-Marshall), people who were enrolled in accredited teacher coursework by Jan. 1, 2000 would be eligible to complete the program under old licensure rules with a deadline of Sept. 1, 2003 to apply for licensure.

Seifert said the Legislature had directed the Minnesota Board of Teaching to revise teacher licensure requirements in Minnesota, but the new requirements did not include permission for certain students to be grandfathered in under old rules.

Michael Tillman, executive director of the Board of Teaching, appeared at the committee meeting to tell representatives that the board unanimously endorsed the proposal.

"The last thing we want to do is place obstacles in the paths of students who are preparing to be teachers for our schools," Tillman said.

The Education Policy committee also received written testimony from a Southwest State University student who, if the bill does not pass, may have to take additional courses, costing him thousands of dollars more in tuition and delaying his graduation.

Seifert said students who would qualify under the bill to graduate with the old requirements attend school part-time or have taken time off. He believes that most students are halfway through their teacher prep programs.

The 2003 deadline gives them three years to complete one to two years of work, Seifert said, and he pointed out that some courses required aren't offered on a regular basis.

Officials estimate an additional \$9,000 in extra tuition costs per student at a public institution if the bill does not pass, and close to \$20,000 at a private institution.

ELECTIONS



Quartet recommended to board

The House Government Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee voted Jan. 10 to recommend confirmation of four nominees to the state's Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.

The board is responsible for administering registration, disclosure, and enforcement programs to ensure that the state's government ethics laws are met. The board also provides financial information about public officials to the public.

Three of the nominees, Shirley Chase, Wilbur Fluegel, and Donald Roggenbauer have previously served on the board. Their confirmation is to affirm reappointment to the board. Gov. Jesse Ventura nominated the fourth, former state Sen. Allan Spear (DFL-Mpls), to fill a seat vacated by former congressman Tim Penny.

State law requires that two former legislators be board members, but they must support different political parties.

Spear, who served in the Senate from 1972 until December 2000, including the past eight years as president, said he didn't have technical expertise on the board's responsibilities, but that as a former legislator he would bring some practical experience.

Although as a lawmaker Spear did not author any campaign finance bills, he was involved in the process of passing those bills. And as a candidate, he knew firsthand some of the frustrations of the complex filing requirements that he and his campaign treasurer struggled with.

Chase, an attorney from Little Canada, said she brings the perspective of a concerned citizen to the board. She has never been a member of a political party nor has she ever served as a lobbyist.

Roggenbauer is a private investigator and security consultant from Maple Grove. Fluegel, who has chaired the board since 1998, is an attorney based in Minneapolis.

The nominees need the "advice and consent" approval from three-fifths of the members in both the House and Senate before their confirmations are complete.

FAMILY



Web site offers information

Members of the House Family and Early Childhood Education Committee heard presentations about a number of resources available to families at its meeting Jan. 8.

Among those resources is a Web site, specifically designed for family and early childhood issues, maintained by the state Department of Children, Families & Learning.

Available on the Web site is information regarding:

- Childcare providers
- Early childhood educators
- Early childhood family education coordinators
- Early childhood screening coordinators
- Early childhood special education coordinators
- Interagency early intervention committee chairs
- School readiness coordinators
- Parent educators
- Parents, and
- Others interested in the health and development of young children and their families.

To view the site, point your browser to <http://cfl.state.mn.us/ecfi>

GAME & FISH



Greedy anglers beware

A current of outrage surged through the Jan. 11 meeting of the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee as members heard a presentation on gross game and fish violations in Minnesota.

"I'm so mad about this thing," said Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), who plans to sponsor a bill that would increase penalties for overlimit violations. "People are out there hunting and fishing — and stealing from the people of Minnesota."

Graphic evidence of fish violations was presented by Tom Chapin, a Department of Natural Resources conservation officer with 29 years of experience in the field. He showed photos of "wanton" disregard for state law, including 186 walleye taken by one angler and 360 sunfish taken by another.

Overlimit violations are among the most difficult and time consuming for conservation officers to detect and enforce, according to the DNR. They can have drastic effects on at-risk wildlife populations and are disabling to fish and wildlife management efforts.

Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) said he believed some people may innocently keep too many fish, and an education program for anglers might be useful.

"We don't want to go after gross offenders and end up getting grandma and grandpa," agreed Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), committee chair.

"There is no ignorance of the law in these cases. They know exactly what they're doing," said Chapin, whose 800 square mile conservation district includes 60 lakes. "In every case of gross overlimits the intent was there."

The first question those apprehended ask after paying their fine, Chapin said is "Can I fish again tomorrow?" and, regrettably, I have to say 'yes.'"

Haas said he wants to put some teeth in the law, increasing penalties for gross violations. Suggested penalties include license revocation, restitution of resources, confiscation of equipment, seizure of motorboats and motor vehicles, and custodial arrest.

"The message we want to get out is, 'We have an excellent resource for you to enjoy but don't abuse it,'" Haas said.

HEALTH



Back to class

School was in session for members of the House Health & Human Services Policy and Finance committees Jan. 10 as they received a quick course in "Insurance 101" from

John Gross, director of health care policy at the Minnesota Department of Commerce.

The complexities of the health insurance marketplace became apparent as Gross detailed an individual's options ranging from private coverage (either individual or employer funded) to no coverage at all.

Regardless of the health care vehicle, Gross said a loss of health insurance coverage need not be a fiasco because state law has provided "stepping stones" to extend that coverage. "People always have an option," Gross said. "The problem is sticker-shock, because terminated employees have to pay for their share as well as their former employer's share."

In addition to protecting people from a sudden loss of insurance coverage, Minnesota offers a variety of government-sponsored health care coverage options. Currently, about 23 percent of the state population is covered under these public programs and about 5 percent has no health insurance. The likelihood of being uninsured is higher for people of color, low-income people, and rural people, according to department statistics.

Despite escalating health care costs and premiums, health care spending in Minnesota is 12 percent lower than in the United States as a whole. There are a number of reasons for this, according to Scott Leitz, director of the Health Economics Program of the Department of Health, including the fact that the population of Minnesota tends to be much healthier than that of other states.

While health care costs have increased across the board, they have risen fastest in the areas of prescription drugs, which rose by 15.8 percent from 1997 to 1999, and outpatient care, which rose by 12.5 percent during the same period. On average, health care costs during that period rose by 8.5 percent.

It is these rising costs together with past losses that have driven the increases in premiums over the past few years, Leitz said.

Overall health care spending in Minnesota has stabilized at approximately 13 percent of the state's economy, which is a smaller share of the economy than in other states.

Public health disparities

A joint meeting of the House Health & Human Services Finance and Policy committees Jan. 8 focused on the health needs of the public.

"I believe public health is one of the best bargains of government. It is government's 'silent success,'" said Jan Malcolm, commissioner of the state Department of Health.

Since 1900, life expectancy in Minnesota has increased by almost 30 years. Twenty-five of those years have been gained due to public

health efforts, not medical technology, according to Malcolm.

Public health is not the same as health care, she explained. It is not health care for the poor or the indigent. In fact, it is not about individual health care at all, but about the health of a population.

Minnesota has been at the top of the chart — consistently first or second — in any analysis of public health. The state is especially distinguished in the area of preparedness to respond to emerging health threats, according to Malcolm.

An example is the rapid identification of, and response to, the recent E. coli outbreak. "We will never know the number of deaths and serious illnesses that were prevented," she said.

Despite Minnesota's strong reputation, the state has serious disparities based on racial, ethnic, gender, and rural-urban differences, she said. For example, Minnesota has the nation's worst disparity in infant mortality when comparing its white residents with African-American and American Indian populations.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), chair of the Health & Human Services Finance Committee, asked why these disparities exist. Among the reasons Malcolm cited are differences in access to health care, health behaviors, and concentrations of poverty. Goodno said he hoped "we'll do more than talk" about the issues this session.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), chair of the House Health & Human Services Policy Committee, agreed. "This is a blight on an

otherwise strong record for Minnesota," he said "We need to address it."

Malcolm pointed out that eliminating disparities in health outcomes is one of the department's primary goals. The Minnesota Department of Health is "committed to being part of the solution for the future," she said.

HIGHER EDUCATION



MnSCU at a crossroads

The 35 institutions in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities are at a crossroads and where they go all depends on the financial support the system gets from the Legislature.

Such was the message from MnSCU Chancellor Morris Anderson at the Jan. 10 meeting of the Higher Education Finance Committee.

He said leaders within the MnSCU system have spent "a lot of time" in the past six months determining what higher education costs will be and deciding if the system should be status quo or be a leader.

Anderson said the MnSCU budget request, expected to be presented early next month, will enable the system to be competitive with any in the nation. "We want to be a leader," he said as he told committee members it is up to them to allocate funds so the system can move in that direction.

Anderson spent much of his presentation speaking about what was done with bonding funds from the past year and other positives

Former speaker

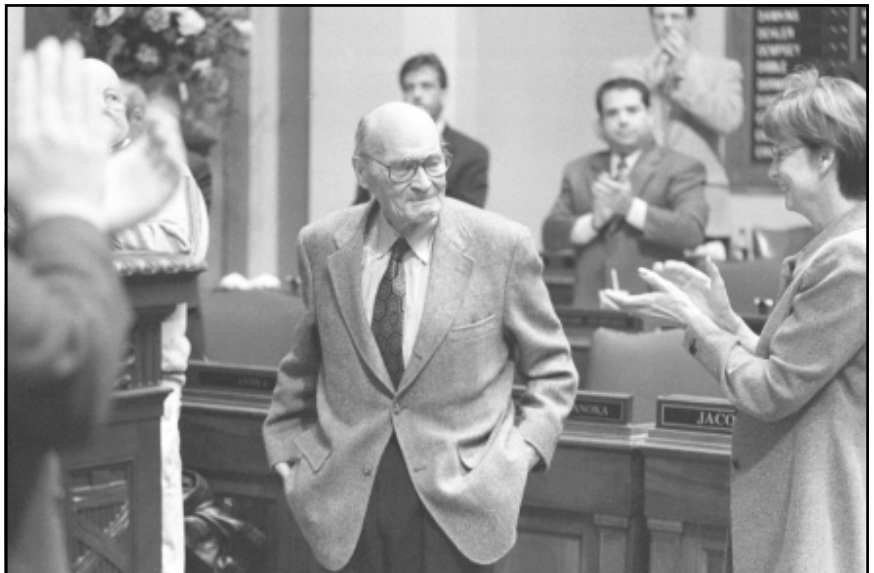


PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

House members and staff welcome former House Speaker Lloyd "Dux" Duxbury to the House floor Jan. 11. First elected to the House in 1950, he was elected speaker in 1963 and was re-elected in 1965, 1967, and 1969. Duxbury was a very colorful presiding officer and is still quoted by colleagues.

about the MnSCU system.

Of the \$131 million in the 2000 bonding bill, Anderson said new libraries have opened at Winona State University, Bemidji State University and St. Cloud State University, a library is under construction at the Minneapolis Community & Technical College, and new buildings and major remodeling are taking place on 20 campuses.

Anderson said having top facilities is important because it attracts top students, who in turn benefit the state. "For every \$1 in net state spending, MnSCU generates a return of \$5.75 to the state's economy," he said.

He said that enrollment is now at a six-year high, with more than 117,000 students 2000-2001 year. "One of every two students attending college in Minnesota attends an MnSCU institution," Anderson said.

Stadium not U of M priority

University of Minnesota president Mark Yudof told the House Higher Education Finance Committee Jan. 8 that an on-campus stadium will not be part of the university's capital campaign request.

The response came after Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) asked Yudof about what some believe could become a hot topic in the 2001 session, especially if the university and Minnesota Vikings team together.

Yudof said the issue frustrates him because, as much as he enjoys on-campus football, other areas have priority. "The idea of putting a stadium ahead of students is something I do not buy into," he said. "No part of our capital campaign is for a stadium."

"If you somehow came up with an extra \$100 million, I'd probably put it in the academic health center or the medical school," Yudof added. He said the university would oppose money coming off the university's budget request and going towards a stadium.

The stadium issue was the highlight of a one-hour informational meeting that focused on accomplishments and needs at the university's four campuses (Crookston, Duluth, Morris and the Twin Cities). University representatives are expected to present a formal budget request of more than \$200 million later this month.

On the positive, Yudof said that 2000 was a record year for sponsored research when more than \$455 million in grants were received, a 25 percent increase from 1999. He further noted that faculty requests for research funding totaled \$1.18 billion, the first time that mark has topped \$1 billion. Expenses also reached a record-high of \$376 million.

The problem, he said, is that the departments need to grow to keep those numbers growing. For example, he would like to see an

increase in medical school staffing of 80 people. Noting that two-thirds of physicians in the state were trained at the university, Yudof said, "What is done on our campuses benefits the state as a whole."

Yudof said he believes if the Legislature continues to approve money for the university, others will as well. Yudof noted that the 'U' ranked 18th in private support in 1999 with \$162 million, but expects that number to increase because of a capital fund-raising campaign, that has seen almost 64,000 gifts. "People think this is a good place to invest," he said.

HUMAN SERVICES



Individuals come first

Department of Human Services Commissioner Michael O'Keefe told members of the House Health & Human Service Finance and Policy committees at their joint Jan. 9 meeting that despite its size and complexity the department is dedicated to serving the individual client.

"We focus on people, not programs," O'Keefe said.

The state's largest agency, with a \$6 billion budget for the year 2000, the Department of Human Services provided the following services last year:

- Health coverage for 500,000 people;
- Income support for 41,000 families a month;
- Food stamps for 95,000 households, an average of 211,000 individuals per month;
- Child support for more than 270,000 children;
- Out-of-home care, including foster care, emergency shelters, group homes, and residential treatment facilities for almost 19,000 children; and
- Mental health services for 3,300 persons in communities and 600 in state facilities.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), chair of the committee, called the array of services "mind-boggling."

Among the areas that fall within the domain of the department is long-term care.

The agency plans to release a report on Jan. 18 about long-term care in Minnesota. The results of that report will be on the agenda for the committee this session.

O'Keefe said the department is successful not only because it has a dedicated work force, but also because it makes use of an array of technology. He said the current challenge facing the agency is that its technological systems are often incompatible.

To effectively deal with its goal of moving

more services to the local level, O'Keefe testified, "We need to upgrade technology so our systems talk to each other."

INDUSTRY



Web access for all

Delivering high-speed Internet access to areas of Greater Minnesota will be a major issue for the House Regulated Industries Committee this session.

Legislators had many questions for Minnesota Department of Commerce representatives during their Jan. 8 presentation of a plan likely to be introduced as a bill this week.

Despite making much progress in telecommunications at the state level, Commerce Commissioner Jim Bernstein stressed the importance of the Legislature taking more action in 2001.

"If the Legislature does nothing this year, Minnesota will fall further behind," he said.

Committee Chair Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville) agreed and asked representatives to seriously think about the future of the state.

"We should consider what will happen if we pass no bill this year," he said.

Setbacks in Internet service access put rural Minnesotans at risk of not keeping up with today's markets and retaining a competitive edge in business, therefore possibly worsening the decreasing population problem in those areas of the state.

Bernstein said he believes getting services to greater Minnesota is an imperative initiative. "We're looking at a market-based approach for high-speed access where communities desire it," he said.

As of now, high-speed Internet access is generally not available in greater Minnesota.

Department officials talked about introducing wireless services to rural areas, a technology that could possibly skip the cable modem step, going from phone lines to no lines.

"Wireless may be a good solution for less populated areas," said Jack Reis, Commerce Department project manager.

State officials favor wireless and cable solutions because the industries are not regulated.

"There are some things at the state level we can do to encourage wireless competitions," said Anthony Mendoza, telecommunications division deputy for the department.

This year's budget recommendation has not yet been released, but Mendoza said the numbers will be lower than the previous request. Wolf said he and the chair for the corresponding committee in the Senate have been working together since last session on finding ways to expand the revenue base.

Bernstein said the Legislature will soon have

to reach a conclusion regarding the next step in telecommunications for Minnesota.

"There's no question about it — it's going to be part of the future."

TAXES



Taxing Internet purchases

Minnesota will lose an estimated \$219 million in sales tax revenues in 2003 because of sales made over the Internet, the House Taxes Committee was told in a Jan. 9 hearing.

In a presentation made by the non-partisan House Research Department, committee members were told that the growth of sales over the Internet is causing a number of sales tax related issues as Minnesota and other states attempt to grapple with that growing component of the economy.

Because of precedents established in several court cases, the state currently cannot require businesses to collect sales tax unless the business has a physical presence in the state. Thus, a retailer with a store in Minnesota charges 6.5 percent more on the same product than an online store with no physical presence in the state.

Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) pointed to a recent personal shopping experience that showed there are inconsistencies regarding what sales tax certain businesses are collecting from their customers.

McElroy purchased a computer for his business and was charged sales tax on the item, but a personal computer for his home use purchased from the same out-of-state online company was not charged sales tax.

There have been several national attempts to address the issue.

In 1998 Congress passed the Internet Tax Freedom Act that imposed a three-year moratorium on new Internet taxation. As part of the act, Congress established an Advisory Commission on Electronic Commerce to address the issues related to Internet taxation.

However, the act did not include a moratorium on taxing Internet sales as has widely been reported, only on taxing sales to Internet access. This has led to a number of problems as Internet providers, cable, satellite, and telephone companies merge their services.

Jennifer Engh, an assistant commissioner with the Department of Revenue, said that the department is working on the issue. Recently, the department has received a number of inquiries about what taxes are to be collected when a buyer purchases an integrated package that includes Internet access bundled with cable and telephone services.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), committee chair, said the issues involved will be among many the committee will hold further hearings on this session.

Apologies offered for mix-up

During the summer of 2000, tens of thousands of Minnesotans received rebate checks from the state. But errors made by the Department of Revenue meant that checks were sent to many who were not eligible.

Department of Revenue Commissioner Matt Smith told the House Taxes Committee Jan. 11 that his department takes full responsibility for the mistakes that were made and decisions that were made afterward to rectify the problems.

Smith said more than 33,000 Minnesotans who were not eligible for the 2000 sales tax rebate received checks totaling more than \$2.9 million. Of that amount, more than \$1 million is yet to be recollected.

In order for the rebate to be automatic so taxpayers would not have to file additional forms in order to qualify, the department used information provided by the United States Social Security Administration. Smith said that some of the records received did not include the person's date of birth. He said the department then used outside sources in an attempt to determine which of those people should be sent a check.

That led to a programming error within the department that resulted in more than 22,000 minors receiving a rebate check they were not entitled to. The department also erred in sending out checks to children whose parents have died or are disabled and to people whose spouse died that otherwise would have been eligible for the rebate.

Smith said the department then decided to send out letters to those who had received rebates in error.

"We felt we had little choice," Smith said. "The law is very clear about eligibility requirements."

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), committee chair, was critical of Smith's decision to try and re-collect the money without first consulting with lawmakers to determine the best way to deal with the situation.

Abrams said there now is no good solution to the problem of the 11,000 minors who, through no fault of their own, will find out when they get a job or apply for a future rebate or refund that they owe the state money.

"In retrospect it was a big mistake and I'd like to offer a public apology," Smith said.

A tab tax tussle

Last spring the Legislature broke a deadlock by agreeing to an arrangement between the House, the Senate, and the governor to divide the \$525 million state surplus three ways — thus allowing each side to determine how to use one-third of the money.

At a Jan. 11 hearing, members of the House Taxes Committee expressed concern that one side of that three-way arrangement turned out to be larger than the rest.

The governor used his portion of the surplus to fund a reduction in the state's motor vehicle license registration fees and, ultimately, to help fund a high speed busway linking downtown St. Paul and the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

But confusion caused by the way the law was written meant that the cost of reducing license registration fees was more than expected.

The effective date of the law change was July 1, 2000. However, existing state law allows drivers a 10-day grace period into the following month to display their new tabs. The department sends out renewal notices six weeks before the expiration date.

The confusing and overlapping dates led to a class action lawsuit filed against Department of Public Safety Commissioner Charlie Weaver last summer as those with tabs that expire in June thought they should also be eligible for the reduced rates.

The state decided to settle the suit, agreeing to send out 124,000 refunds to drivers at a cost of \$11.7 million. Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), chair of the committee, said because of the situation, the arrangement reached last session now means that the deal is now "One-third, one-third, one-third plus \$11.7 million."

Department of Revenue Commissioner Matt Smith said that an opinion issued by the state Attorney General Mike Hatch indicated that although the intent of the law was clear, the language of the law was not, lending credence to the belief that the state could not prevail in court.

Abrams was critical of the decision to settle the lawsuit without seeking another legal opinion. He also said it should be the governor, and not the Legislature, that should address the resulting hole caused in the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund caused by the settlement. (Money from that fund was used to pay for the settlement.)

Smith said the governor's proposed budget this session will likely include \$11.7 million to cover the settlement's costs.

Abrams said the unanticipated additional cost was another reason that the one-third, one-third, one-third arrangement did not establish a good precedent for future sessions.

"This was a mistake brought about by a unilateral legislature," he said.

Highlights continued on page 23

Testing fairness

Student accountability assessments for Title I draw criticism from House members

BY THERESA STAHL

Legislators questioned officials from the state Department of Children, Families and Learning (CFL) and school administrators about assessing students and schools during the Jan. 9 and 11 meetings of the Education Policy Committee.

Some representatives were skeptical of the methods by which students were evaluated.

"I'm concerned that we only rely on a test and not other methods," said Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville).

The tests, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs), are being used to meet accountability requirements under Title I, a federally funded program that provides additional funds to schools with children who need assistance in meeting reading and math standards.

The assessments currently test only third- and fifth-grade students, and legislators wondered if the tests are providing accurate information of students' progress.

"It seems to me we're dealing with flawed system standards," said Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton). "If you really look at it, MCAs are not measuring achievement. This is unfair to children of Minnesota and unfair to teachers."

"I have serious questions about the program," said Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake). "We should be looking at what happened in first and second grade just to see if (the test results are) accurate or could be more refined."

Dr. Mark Davison, from the Office of Education Accountability at the University of Minnesota, recommended testing students from one year to the next using two forms of a test, one of which includes "anchor items" that are of the same level of difficulty.

"A system should have multiple indicators" of students' achievement, Davison said. Tests, he said, should provide a step-by-step look at student performance and progress instead of an overall assessment that combines informa-



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Mark Davison, with the Office of Educational Accountability at the University of Minnesota, testifies at the House Education Policy Committee Jan. 11 during a discussion regarding Title I and accountability.

tion gathered from different testing methods.

Marianne Johnson of the Children, Families and Learning Department defended the use of the test.

"We're looking to evaluate a school program, not students' progress through the years," she said.

Jessie Mantano, assistant commissioner at the department, said the federal education department, which requires the test, isn't dictating to the state.

"They say we must use standards, but not which," Mantano said. "We have set the score at a reasonable level. The MCAs are designed to measure standards that correspond to certain skills."

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) said he doesn't blame the department for an evaluation he says is inadequate and misleading.

"(The MCAs are) pretty close to useless as a measure for most districts because of turnover rates in different classes," he said. "The Federal government has put CFL in a box, and made them come up with tests."

Some school officials who testified before the committee reported they use several methods of testing in addition to the MCAs to evaluate their students.

"Our use of the MCA state accountability system is limited," said David Heistad, director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment at Minneapolis Public Schools. It indicates progress, he said, but he leans more on another test.

Margo Baines, from the Office of Accountability at St. Paul Public Schools, said they look at several indicators of progress, including the MCAs as well as other tests and additional factors such as attendance.

"We know that MCAs only test to a benchmark rate," she said, then pointed out a positive result of the test. "We have noticed through the tests that many students have made progress, especially those students of color and at poverty levels."


Baines confidently praised her school district's testing methods.

"We believe our accountability system is working," she said.

Baines said St. Paul schools look at one student at a time, and some schools ask to test first-grade students. Comparatively, Heistad said that Minneapolis schools use tests to evaluate kindergartners.

"The tests give a background of students for parents who want to know specifics of how their child is doing," Baines said.

Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington) said she's heard it's hard to test students so young, but Heistad said it is necessary to assess students to determine areas of strength and weakness.

"We use a test appropriate to abilities," Heistad said. "This provides valuable information towards progress of standards." 

History repeats itself

Dispute over speaker's committee assignments mirrors similar disagreements from the Houses past

By JONAS M. WALKER

This legislative session was off to a rocky start Jan. 3, as uncommonly apparent bickering intruded upon the normally routine process of appointing members to committees.

However, it's not the first time the caucuses have clashed over committee assignments. A similar situation faced the body nearly 20 years ago.

House rules endow the speaker with the responsibility of "attaining proportionate representation on the committees for the minority members."

However, DFL House members are charging that House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) violated both the letter and spirit of that rule in making committee assignments for the 2001-2002 biennium.

The issue first made itself apparent on opening day Jan. 3 with comments prior to the opening session by House Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) but reappeared Jan. 8 on the House floor.

Shortly after the conclusion of the opening prayer, Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) rose to a point of order to protest the assignment of a bill to the

K-12 Education Finance Committee. She asserted that the bill could not be considered as legitimate because that committee had not been properly introduced in accordance with House Rules.

In particular, Folliard argued that Sviggum violated Rule 6.02, which provides the speaker with the authority to assign members to committees. The rule allows the speaker to balance

members' requested assignments with "the purpose of attaining proportionate representation on the committees for the minority caucus."

History shows that House speakers have tended to honor the committee preferences of minority members while making only a handful of modifications. However, current minority leaders have said Speaker Sviggum made more than 60 such changes.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead), who assisted Sviggum in making committee assignments, argued against Folliard's point of order, noting that his caucus had weighed a number of factors.

Among those factors, Goodno said, were geographic and ideological representation, as well as gender balance. Previous speakers had used the same factors in their committee assignments, Goodno said.



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

House members 2001-2002 assignments to various committees, such as the House Education Policy Committee pictured here, caused controversy on the House floor Jan. 8.

Back in 1995, Republican members of the House proposed a rule change that would have required the speaker to honor the minority's committee preferences, said House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) during the exchange. However, the then-DFL majority voted down the change, he said.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) still stands by her opposition to that plan. "You don't want

Rule 6.02 reads, in part:

If the minority leader submits to the Speaker-designate, at least 15 days before the start of the session, a list of proposed committee assignments for the minority caucus that complies with the numbers and guidelines provided, the Speaker must make the proposed assignments with the purpose of attaining proportionate representation on the committees for the minority caucus.

A committee of the House must not have exclusive membership from one profession, occupation or vocation.

to tie the hands of the speaker. (Before the 1995 proposed rule change), there never had been any abuse" of the speaker's discretionary authority, she said.

As to the Republican claim that gender and geographic considerations should come into play, Kahn said that "proportionality should only be interpreted in terms of (caucus membership)." Asked to comment on the assignments themselves, Kahn said simply, "It makes no sense."

This year's wrangling bears significant similarity to past sessions. In 1983, for example, DFL House Speaker Harry Sieben considered more than just a member's party affiliation when making appointments.

According to a 1985 University of Minnesota report, Sieben said "that the understanding between the parties was that minority requests would be taken into consideration along with geographical and philosophical balance among other things." He only changed a few minority assignments, the report said.

Two years later, Republicans took control of the House and elected David Jennings as speaker. He changed 23 of the 193 minority requests, something which, according to the U of M report, "caused much grumbling in the DFL camp because of the number of changes in minority recommendations." He later allowed a minority leader to protest, albeit unsuccessfully.

Like Sviggum this year, Jennings argued that committee assignments balanced members' views and backgrounds. However, the 1985 study showed that DFLers were generally moved to less-requested committees. Fiscally conservative DFLers were moved to committees on which Republicans "needed more votes," in the words

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Majority Whip

Goal of new House position is better communication within the Republican caucus

By DAVID MAEDA

The lawmaking process is full of colorful terms. To the uninitiated, somewhat cryptic words and phrases like “engrossed,” “lay on the table,” and “germane” sound strange as they are thrown about the chamber throughout the session. Now for the first time in recent memory, the term “whip” will be used in the House.

In December, Republican members approved the appointment of Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) as the majority whip.

The newly created position will assist Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) in floor debate, motions, and parliamentary procedures. Seifert will also help coordinate floor activity including amendments, speeches, the order of speakers, and defending caucus policies. The whip also is responsible for determining if enough votes are present on priority bills.

“It was a reaching out by leadership to the caucus for better communication,” Seifert said.

He said with the slimming majority, the leadership of the party thought the new position would help provide better organization within the caucus.

Seifert will be assisted by six assistant majority whips, Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka), Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville), and Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring).

In government terms “whip” was first used in the English Parliament. The term comes from the sport of fox hunting where the “whipper-in” is the person responsible for keeping the hounds together and working as a team. Thus, legislatively, the position traditionally has been the member or members responsible for keeping others in the same party together in voting on specific key issues as well as other coordinating duties.

House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) said that he agreed to the idea of creating the new position, an idea that initially came from Pawlenty. He said the six assistant whips will be responsible for meeting with 10 caucus members individually for at least 15 minutes each week.

“It will create a better informed majority and a majority that feels more ownership to the final product,” Sviggum said.

He said not only will the new structure lead to better commu-

nication between leadership and members but also from members to leadership. He said that in the past some members have felt they were not involved enough in the decision making process within the caucus and that the new positions will spread out responsibility and allow for more input.

The DFL caucus has not announced plans for a comparable position.

Traditionally in the House, the caucuses have appointed a majority leader, a minority leader, and assistant majority and minority leaders. One exception to this was in 1979 when the House was split evenly with 67 Republican and 67 DFL members.

That year a compromise between the two parties was reached, and Rep. Rod Searle (R-Waseca) was named Speaker of the House. Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int’l Falls) was named as DFL House Leader, Rep. Harry Sieben Jr. (DFL-Hastings) was named House Floor Leader, and Rep. Gerald Knickerbocker (R-Minnetonka) was named Independent Republican Caucus Leader.

This year Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville), Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie), Rep. William Kuisle (R-Rochester), and Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska) are the assistant majority leaders. Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) has four assistant minority leaders—Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar), Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls), and Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie).


The position of whip has been used more frequently in the Senate. This session the Senate DFL has six whips — Sen. Linda Higgins (DFL-Mpls), Sen. David H. Johnson (DFL-Bloomington), Sen. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins), Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing), Sen. David L. Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm), and Sen. Deanna L. Wiener (DFL-Eagan). 



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Majority Whip Marty Seifert talks with Rep. Ken Wolf and Rep. Elaine Harder during the Jan. 8 House floor session.

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

Time to shine

Once-shy Jacobson steps out, hoping to shape policy and reform the tax system

By DAVID MAEDA

Rep. Carl Jacobson (R-Vadnais Heights) began his career as an accountant working for a corporation — a factory in Iowa that made filing cabinets.



Rep. Carl Jacobson

Quiet and introverted by nature, Jacobson said that corporate accounting appealed to him because it focused on working with numbers and didn't require a lot of direct contact with others.

But he eventually switched over to public accounting precisely because it required talking with people and that was what he ended up finding most enjoyable about his work.

As a member of the Minnesota Society of Certified Public Accountants, Jacobson came to the Capitol on a day last year for MnCPA Lobby Day. He met with his representative, former Rep. Sherry Broecker, who mentioned to him that she was considering not running for another term.

He had previously worked with Broecker and former state Sen. Linda Runbeck (R-Circle Pines) when he served as the party treasurer to his House district. Both encouraged him to run for Broecker's open seat.

"It's something I always wanted to do but always thought that I would do later on," Jacobson said. "I've always believed we need good people with common sense, which is sometimes lacking."

Born in Hibbing and schooled at Minnesota State University, Mankato, Jacobson has spent most of his life in Minnesota. He worked for awhile in Iowa as his wife, Joyce, completed her post-graduate education in chemistry.

Once he decided to run, the most difficult part was getting out and knocking on doors — something that again challenged his shy nature.

"It was something I was not looking forward to but ended up enjoying the most," he said.

Jacobson said his accounting background will lend itself well as he serves as a member of the House Taxes Committee, and House Sales Tax Division.

"I'm more likely to sit back and help shape how things are going rather than come in with my own long agenda."

—Rep. Carl Jacobson

As a CPA, he worked with a broad spectrum of clients — from large and small corporations, to single person businesses. He said that wide range of experience gives him a broader perspective on various tax issues.

In addition to reducing the tax rates in the state, Jacobson thinks the system itself needs to be simplified.

He supports reform with two specific goals. The first is decreasing the number of people required to file. And the ultimate goal would be to reduce the form for those who do file to a postcard size.

Jacobson had the privilege of being the author of this session's first bill (HF1), a bill that would reduce the income tax rates for a third consecutive year.

Along with his interest in taxes, Jacobson will also serve on the House Health & Human Services Policy Committee. Although it is an area he doesn't have a lot of experience in, he thinks the committee will deal with some

extremely important issues.

"From talking to the state agency people they tell me that the people on welfare are really the ones that need to be there," he said.

He said that while that is good, it also raises issues of how best to take care of those who most need the help.

Jacobson said his personality and work background will help shape the type of legislator he is likely to be.

"I'm more likely to sit back and help shape how things are going rather than come in with my own long agenda," he said.

He learned a lot while campaigning — from talking to people and his own self-reflection. And he had plenty of help along the way as his wife helped door knock and another

family member, the couple's dog Rocky, was a star in the parades they attended.

"We learned Rocky is highly intuitive," Jacobson said. "He would go right up to the children. He was a big hit."

DISTRICT 53B

1998 population (estimate): 37,307

Largest city: Vadnais Heights

County: Ramsey

Location: Northern suburbs of St. Paul

Top concern: "Our (tax) system is better than some but I think we could do better. Not only reducing rates but simplifying the system."

— Rep. Carl Jacobson

A new generation

Sertich relies on his youth and perspective to bring new prosperity and opportunity to the Iron Range

By JONAS M. WALKER

Barely moved into his new office, freshman Rep. Anthony “Tony” Sertich (DFL-Chisholm) mused early this month on being one of the youngest representatives ever elected to the Minnesota Legislature.



Rep. Tony Sertich

“It’s pretty neat,” said the 25-year-old. “It’s getting a new generation, some new blood into public policy discussion.”

Sertich takes over the District 5B seat vacated by David Tomassoni, who moved on to the Senate.

Though he is new to the Legislature, Sertich is no stranger to the DFL caucus at the Capitol, having worked on the staff of former state Sen. Jerry Janezich. Sertich’s first exposure to the world of politics came while interning with Janezich, whom Sertich now credits as a mentor and benefactor.

“He was thoughtful,” Sertich says of Janezich. “He took the time to listen, no matter the issue.”

While learning the art of politics, Sertich never broke contact with another passion, the politics of art. A longtime thespian, Sertich credits Laurel and Hardy among his original theatrical inspirations.

Today, film actor Kevin Spacey can count Sertich among his most loyal fans. As for the stage, Sertich favors the likes of Shakespeare, mentioning “The Merchant of Venice” as his favorite piece.

“It has everything,” he said. “Love, politics, religion, money.”

Hailing from the same town as Tomassoni and Janezich, Sertich spoke knowingly of the politics of that DFL stronghold.

“If you don’t bring jobs, people are going to leave,” he said. Sertich explained the difficult position many of his Generation-X Iron Range companions find themselves in. “Many

of us came down to the Twin Cities for college and would like to return to the region, but can’t.”

Sertich said he plans to follow the tradition of other Iron Rangers at the Capitol and try to find ways to provide some of the state’s wealth to his marginalized constituents.

“The state’s had an economic boom in the last few years, but we really haven’t felt it up there,” he said.

“If you don’t bring jobs, people are going to leave. Many of us came down to the Twin Cities for college and would like to return to the region, but can’t.”

—Rep. Tony Sertich

However, Sertich anticipates that accomplishing this goal will be no easy task. One obstacle, he said, is convincing the majority of state residents that parts of Greater Minnesota are suffering.

“It’s kind of hard to convince the rest of the state when they see low unemployment” and other positive economic conditions, he said.

The Iron Range has suffered some economic decline in recent years. Sertich said he hopes to address the trends that have become characteristic to the region: a declining school enrollment, the relative scarcity of high-paying new jobs, and the inability of native college graduates to return.

To that end, Sertich is pleased with his appointment to the House Commerce, Jobs, & Economic Development Policy Committee.

Sertich hopes to both steer public resources toward his district and use his position to lobby the private sector on the strengths of the area, which he listed as “tourism, taconite, timber,” before adding “technology” to that list. In that particular sector, Sertich’s youth may be a distinct advantage. Given his generation’s comfort with computing, he said, he looks forward to making a strong case for

high-tech investment in northeastern Minnesota.

He would also like to develop a plan that would gather a list of skilled workers who would pledge to return to the Iron Range if employers will provide desirable jobs.

“It worked in Georgia,” Sertich said. Such a plan has never been applied on a regional level, he said, but he’s interested in exploring whether the idea could work in Minnesota.

As to the matter of trade, Sertich sketches himself as a “fair-trade” moderate. Having seen firsthand some negative localized effects of global trade, he describes himself as “passionately” committed to the unique problems pressing his district.

Ultimately, Sertich sees himself teaching in

some capacity. Both his parents work in education, and he considers the edification of the masses to be among the most noble of endeavors in a democratic society.

Until then, Sertich will draw on his previous experience in the Legislature to give him a bit of a head start as a first-time representative. “I know where my desk is,” he said. “I don’t have to run around asking how to do this, or who to talk to about finding that out.”

DISTRICT 5B

1998 population (estimate): 31,445

Largest city: Hibbing

County: St. Louis

Location: Northeastern Minnesota
Iron Range

Top concern: “I am hoping to find a voice for our generation; to put a new face on public service. If you don’t bring jobs, people are going to leave.”

—Rep. Tony Sertich

Close enough to count

Slawik returns to Legislature, still favoring issues of education and health care after two-year absence

BY MARY KAY WATSON

In an election year dominated by a contentious presidential recount, Rep. Nora Slawik (DFL-Maplewood) understands firsthand the stresses that a recount imposes upon the candidates.



Rep. Nora Slawik

A veteran of close elections, Slawik saw two of her three runs for the Legislature capped by recounts — both against Republican attorney Jim Seifert of Woodbury.

After winning her first bid for election in District 57A in 1996, Slawik lost to Seifert by 298 votes in 1998. Last November, when more than 22,000 ballots were cast, she won by 79 votes after a recount.

It was like living through election night all over again during the three days of the recount and the weeks that preceded it, she said.

"It confirmed that we have a really good process in Minnesota," Slawik said. "I am thrilled and humbled at the same time."

As a freshman legislator and member of the majority party during the 1997-98 session, Slawik served as vice-chair of the Health & Human Services Committee. At that time, her interest in education and early childhood issues led her to sponsor a bill that would have created an endowment fund for early childhood education.

That bill died in conference committee, though it brought the importance of early childhood issues to the forefront, she said.

After a two-year hiatus from the Legislature, and with the hard work of campaigning behind her, Slawik says of losing and coming back that she has a "new appreciation for all of it."

The issues important to her remain the same as before: education, health care, and tax reform. She is serving on the House Health & Human Services Policy and Family & Early Childhood Education Finance committees.

The key issue for Slawik is education, specifically early childhood issues. Solving the problems of overcrowded classrooms, too few teachers, and outmoded buildings are a top priority for her tenure, she says.

In addition, Slawik said she believes that increasing funding to reduce class sizes will lead to children learning better. "Education is the beginning of everything," she said. "If you educate children well, you will have the educated work force Minnesota needs."

"I see myself as a true public servant. I'd like to serve my constituents well."

—Rep. Nora Slawik

Slawik, 38, said she feels qualified to voice the needs of young families in the Legislature. She and her husband, Brien, have a fourth-grade son, Sean, and a daughter, Victoria, in preschool. Victoria was born during Slawik's first legislative tenure in 1997.

Born and raised in Tucson, Ariz., Slawik was selected for a training program for the United Way of America after graduating from Arizona State University. She worked in Texas and Colorado, then moved to Minnesota to work as a campaign manager for the United Way of the Saint Paul Area.

Eventually she formed her own consulting business, which provides services to non-profit organizations in fund raising and resource development.

Slawik has also been active in her community in roles as varied as president of the Woodbury-Cottage Grove League of Women Voters, founding board member of the Southeast Area YMCA, and volunteer coordinator for the Ramsey County book drive.

She also has family roots in Minnesota. Her grandfather published a newspaper in Benson, Minn., and served on the Democratic National Committee. Her husband Brien's family, also from Minnesota, developed the Har Mar Mall in Roseville.

In addition to education, top concerns of Slawik's constituents are prescription drug costs and long-term care issues — issues she also hopes to address.

"I see myself as a true public servant," she said. "I'd like to serve my constituents well." However, she pointed out that legislators "have hundreds of things on our plate and only a few we can bring back."

Like many other areas throughout the state, a property tax cut is another high priority for constituents of District 57A, the fastest growing district in the state. Along with this rapid growth have come climbing property values and subsequent tax increases that present a problem for both seniors and young families.

Slawik said she hopes the Legislature will strike a balance in dealing with the surplus

with a combination of tax cuts and rebates.

Redistricting will undoubtedly have a profound effect on the political makeup of Slawik's district. Already the most populated district in the state, District 57A has grown especially rapidly in swing areas, such as Woodbury, which tends to vote Republican.

"We have to lose 11,000 people in redistricting," she said.

Slawik said she refuses to dwell on the potential vulnerability of her seat when redistricting is complete. "Right now I'm here to serve my constituents," she said.

DISTRICT 57A

1998 population (estimate): 49,822

Largest city: Woodbury

Counties: Ramsey, Washington

Location: east and south of St. Paul

Top concern: "When it comes to education, you can pay now and invest in kids, or you can pay later in higher crime rates and associated costs."

—Rep. Nora Slawik

Committee Information

2001 Minnesota House of Representatives

Agriculture Policy

517 State Office Building 296-9918

Meets: Wed., 12:30 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 18

Chair: Finseth-R

Vice Chair: Westrom-R

Lead Democrat: Wenzel-DFL

Cassell-R	Otremba-DFL
Dorman-R	Penas-R
Harder-R	Peterson-DFL
Johnson, R.-DFL	Rifenberg-R
Juhnke-DFL	Schumacher-DFL
Kubly-DFL	Skoe-DFL
Ness-R	Swenson-R
Osskopp-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Brad Biers 296-4172

Committee Legislative Assistant

Rebecca Lowden 296-4230

Agriculture & Rural Development Finance

509 State Office Building 296-4344

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 12:30 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 10

Chair: Ness-R

Vice Chair: Swenson-R

Lead Democrat: Peterson-DFL

Dorman-R	Kubly-DFL
Finseth-R	Wenzel-DFL
Harder-R	Westrom-R
Johnson, R.-DFL	Bishop-R**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Craig Clark 296-1540

Committee Legislative Assistant

David Easterday 296-9463

Capital Investment

451 State Office Building 296-6316

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 12:30 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 22

Chair: Knoblach-R

Vice Chair: Fuller-R

Lead Democrat: Kalis-DFL

Bishop-R	Evans-DFL
Clark, J.-R	Greiling-DFL
Daggett-R	Holsten-R
Dempsey-R	Jaros-DFL

Kahn-DFL
Leppik-R
Lipman-R
Luther-DFL
Mariani-DFL
Molnau-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Matthew J. Hughes 296-2585

Committee Legislative Assistant

Barbara Thomas 296-7191

Civil Law

503 State Office Building 296-9188

Meets: Mon., Wed., 10:15 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 12

Chair: Smith-R

Vice Chair: Holberg-R

Lead Democrat: Luther-DFL

Boudreau-R	Murphy-DFL
Clark, J.-R	Skoglund-DFL
Lindner-R	Stanek-R
Lipman-R	Swapinski-DFL
Mahoney-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Dennis Virden 296-6860

Committee Legislative Assistant

Scott Wiggins 296-5356

Commerce, Jobs, & Economic Development Policy

549 State Office Building 296-9278

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 12:30 p.m. in Room 200*; Wed., 12:30 p.m. in Room B*

Members: 27

Chair: Davids-R

Vice Chair: Stang-R

Lead Democrat: Rukavina-DFL

Bakk-DFL	Lindner-R
Bradley-R	Mahoney-DFL
Clark, K.-DFL	Marquart-DFL
Entenza-DFL	McElroy-R
Erhardt-R	Mullery-DFL
Gerlach-R	Opatz-DFL
Gunther-R	Paymar-DFL
Haas-R	Ruth-R
Hackbarth-R	Sertich-DFL
Johnson, J.-R	Sykora-R
Larson-DFL	Walz-R
Leighton-DFL	Westerberg-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Brian McDaniel 296-4283

Committee Legislative Assistant

Cristina Wohlford 297-8139

Economic Development & Tourism Division

417 State Office Building 296-7806

Meets: to be announced *

Members: 10

Chair: Lindner-R

Vice Chair: Walz-R

Lead Democrat: Mullery-DFL

Davids-R	
Gunther-R	Mahoney-DFL
Hackbarth-R	Ruth-R
Larson-DFL	Sertich-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Erik Aamoth 296-3108

Committee Legislative Assistant

Kelly J. Tungland 296-5355

Crime Prevention

533 State Office Building 296-4229

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 10:15 a.m. in Room B*

Members: 18

Chair: Tuma-R

Vice Chair: Penas-R

Lead Democrat: Skoglund-DFL

Bishop-R	Paymar-DFL
Fuller-R	Smith-R
Gunther-R	Stanek-R
Hilstrom-DFL	Swapinski-DFL
Johnson, S.-DFL	Sykora-R
McGuire-DFL	Walz-R
Murphy-DFL	Wenzel-DFL
Olson-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Charles Noerenberg 296-5533

Committee Legislative Assistant

Denise Berger 296-8857

Education Policy

401 State Office Building 296-5363

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 8:15 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 32

Chair: Mares-R

Vice Chair: Olson-R

Lead Democrat: Dorn-DFL

Anderson, B.-R	Leppik-R
Biernat-DFL	Mariani-DFL
Buesgens-R	Marquart-DFL
Carlson-DFL	McGuire-DFL
Cassell-R	Ness-R
Davnie-DFL	Opatz-DFL
Dehler-R	Pelowski, Jr.-DFL
Eastlund-R	Penas-R
Entenza-DFL	Seagren-R
Erickson-R	Schumacher-DFL
Goodwin-DFL	Seifert-R
Gray-DFL	Skoe-DFL
Greiling-DFL	Sykora-R
Johnson, J.-R	Wolf-R
Kielkucki-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Rebecca J. Pryse 296-9469

Committee Legislative Assistant

Rory Koch 296-5394

Environment & Natural Resources Finance

381 State Office Building 296-3018

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 10:15 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 14

Chair: Holsten-R

Vice Chair: Hackbarth-R

Lead Democrat: Osthoff-DFL

Bakk-DFL	Swenson-R
Finseth-R	Tingelstad-R
Howes-R	Wagenius-DFL
Jennings-DFL	Wasiluk-DFL
Kelliher-DFL	Workman-R
Ozment-R	Bishop-R**

Staff

Committee Administrator

David Chura 297-5723

Committee Legislative Assistant

Kathleen S. Anderson 296-8871

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

479 State Office Building 296-4306

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 10:15 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 22

Chair: Ozment-R

Vice Chair: Tingelstad-R

Lead Democrat: Wagenius-DFL

Bakk-DFL	Kelliher-DFL
Cassell-R	Nornes-R
Finseth-R	Osthoff-DFL
Hass-R	Peterson-DFL
Hackbarth-R	Skoe-DFL
Hausman-DFL	Swenson-R
Holsten-R	Vandever-R
Howes-R	Wasiluk-DFL
Jennings-DFL	Workman-R
Johnson, R.-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Marilyn Brick 296-8893

Committee Legislative Assistant

Mary Lee Telega 296-5994

Ethics

439 State Office Building 296-4293

Meets: Call of the Chair

Members: 6

Chair: Daggett-R

Vice Chair: Milbert-DFL

Dauids-R	†Kubly-DFL
Murphy-DFL	†Rhodes-R
†-Alternate	

Family & Early Childhood Education Finance

403 State Office Building 296-4315

Meets: Mon., Wed., 12:30 p.m. in Room 5*

Members: 10

Chair: Sykora-R

Vice Chair: Nornes-R

Lead Democrat: McGuire-DFL

Eastlund-R	Mulder-R
Gray-DFL	Slawik-DFL
Haas-R	Swapinski-DFL
Leppik-R	Bishop-R**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Jared Jordal 296-5318

Committee Legislative Assistant

Michele Timp-Pilon 296-7167

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

409 State Office Building 296-9889

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8:15 a.m. in Room B*

Members: 20

Chair: Rhodes-R

Vice Chair: Osskopp-R

Lead Democrat: Jaros-DFL

Anderson, B.-R	Kielkucki-R
Biernat-DFL	Krinkie-R
Dehler-R	Kubly-DFL
Dibble-DFL	Lipman-R
Eastlund-R	Mares-R
Erickson-R	Seifert-DFL
Evans-DFL	Solberg-DFL
Gleason-DFL	Thompson-DFL
Hilty-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Laurie Esau 296-4112

Committee Legislative Assistant

Lisa Frenette 296-9194

Health & Human Services Finance

563 State Office Building 296-5515

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8:15 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 10

Chair: Goodno-R

Vice Chair: Mulder-R

Lead Democrat: Huntley-DFL

Abeler-R	Koskinen-DFL
Boudreau-R	Otremba-DFL
Bradley-R	Wilkin-R
Folliard-DFL	Bishop-R**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Christine Eilertson 296-5065

Committee Legislative Assistant

Holly Iverson Hayden 296-4295

Health & Human Services Policy

559 State Office Building 296-9249

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 8:15 a.m. in Room 10*

Members: 16

Chair: Bradley-R

Vice Chair: Boudreau-R

Lead Democrat: Koskinen-DFL

Abeler-R	Huntley-DFL
Folliard-DFL	Jacobson-R
Goodno-R	Kubly-DFL
Haas-R	Mulder-R

Nornes-R Walker-DFL
Otremba-DFL Wilkin-R
Slawik-DFL

Staff
Committee Administrator
Heidi M. Holste 296-7185
Committee Legislative Assistant
Cheryl A. Burke 296-4375

Higher Education Finance
485 State Office Building 296-7026

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 10:15 a.m. in Room 300S*

Members: 10
Chair: Leppik-R
Vice Chair: Dehler-R
Lead Democrat: Carlson-DFL

Cassell-R Seifert-R
Marquart-DFL Stang-R
Opatz-DFL Tuma-R
Pelowski, Jr.-DFL Bishop-R**

Staff
Committee Administrator
Bret Walsh 296-4091
Committee Legislative Assistant
Sarah Berkowitz 296-7168

Jobs & Economic Development Finance
437 State Office Building 296-4212

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8:15 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 10
Chair: McElroy-R
Vice Chair: Gunther-R
Lead Democrat: Clark, K.-DFL

Davids-R Paymar-DFL
Gerlach-R Sertich-DFL
Lindner-R Walz-R
Mahoney-DFL Bishop-R**

Staff
Committee Administrator
Andy Gildea 296-5069
Committee Legislative Assistant
Ann Matuella 296-5999

Judiciary Finance
543 State Office Building 296-5502

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 8:15 a.m. in Room B*

Members: 10
Chair: Stanek-R
Vice Chair: Lipman-R
Lead Democrat: Murphy-DFL

Bishop-R Hilstrom-DFL
Fuller-R Johnson, S.-DFL

Skoglund-DFL Tuma-R
Smith-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Jeff Davidman To be assigned
Committee Legislative Assistant
Dana Gotz 296-4119

K-12 Education Finance
477 State Office Building 296-7803

Meets: Mon., Wed., Fri., 10:15 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 19
Chair: Seagren-R
Vice Chair: Kielkucki-R
Lead Democrat: Greiling-DFL

Abeler-R Mares-R
Biernat-DFL Ness-R
Buesgens-R Olson-R
Davnie-DFL Penas-R
Dorn-DFL Schumacher-DFL
Entenza-DFL Skoe-DFL
Erickson-R Wolf-R
Goodwin-DFL Bishop-R**
Johnson, J.-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Gregory L. Marcus 296-9468
Committee Legislative Assistant
Kitty Musty 296-3316

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
575 State Office Building 296-8635

Meets: Mon., Wed., 12:30 p.m. in Room 200*

Members: 18
Chair: Dempsey-R
Vice Chair: Howes-R
Lead Democrat: Marko-DFL

Abrams-R Koskinen-DFL
Bernardy-DFL Krinkie-R
Buesgens-R Lenczewski-DFL
Davnie-DFL Osskopp-R
Dibble-DFL Ozment-R
Folliard-DFL Seagren-R
Hilstrom-DFL Vandever-R
Holberg-R

Staff
Committee Administrator
Blair Tremere 296-5376
Committee Legislative Assistant
Clayton J. Helmer 296-5998

Redistricting
445 State Office Building 296-7449

Meets: Call of the Chair

Members: 12
Chair: Paulsen-R
Vice Chair: Rifenberg-R
Lead Democrat: Pelowski, Jr.-DFL

Abrams-R Luther-DFL
Anderson, I.-DFL Mariani-DFL
Boudreau-R Seifert-R
Gray-DFL Tingelstad-R
Knoblach-R

Staff
Redistricting Analyst
Gregg Peppin 296-5508
Committee Legislative Assistant
Erik Holmstrom 297-8404

Regulated Industries
571 State Office Building 296-5185

Meets: Mon., 12:30 p.m. in Room 10*

Members: 18
Chair: Wolf-R
Vice Chair: Gerlach-R
Lead Democrat: Jennings-DFL

Davids-R Lieder-DFL
Gleason-DFL Paulsen-R
Gunther-R Pelowski, Jr.-DFL
Hilty-DFL Rifenberg-R
Holsten-R Stang-R
Johnson, S.-DFL Westrom-R
Kahn-DFL Workman-R
Kalis-DFL

Staff
Committee Administrator
Brian S. Fahey 296-9302
Committee Legislative Assistant
Cassandra J. Holmstrom 296-5489

Rules & Legislative Administration
459 State Office Building 296-4128

Meets: Call of the Chair

Members: 21
Chair: Pawlenty-R
Vice Chair: Seifert-R
Lead Democrat: Pugh-DFL

Abrams-R Molnau-R
Dorn-DFL Olson-R
Gerlach-R Ozment-R
Huntley-DFL Paulsen-R
Knoblach-R Peterson-DFL
Mares-R Solberg-DFL
McGuire-DFL Sviggum-R
Milbert-DFL Tuma-R

Wagenius-DFL Winter-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Georgie Hilker 296-4276

Committee Legislative Assistant

Lesley Hinz 296-9183

State Government Finance

365 State Office Building 296-2907

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 10:15 a.m. in Room 300N*; Fri., 8:15 in Room B*

Members: 12

Chair: Krinkie-R

Vice Chair: Anderson, B.-R

Lead Democrat: Hilty-DFL

Dibble-DFL	Kielkucki-R
Eastlund-R	Mares-R
Erickson-R	Rhodes-R
Evans-DFL	Thompson-DFL
Jaros-DFL	Bishop-R**

Staff

Committee Administrator

Craig Stone 296-5367

Committee Legislative Assistant

Kathy Heimerl 296-3367

Taxes

585 State Office Building 296-9934

Meets: Mon. - Fri. 10:15 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 25

Chair: Abrams-R

Vice Chair: Daggett-R

Lead Democrat: Anderson, I.-DFL

Bernardy-DFL	Leighton-DFL
Dawkins-DFL	Lenczewski-DFL
Dempsey-R	McElroy-R
Dorman-R	Milbert-DFL
Erhardt-R	Mullery-DFL
Gleason-DFL	Paulsen-R
Harder-R	Rifenberg-R
Jacobson-R	Rukavina-DFL
Knoblach-R	Walker-DFL
Krinkie-R	Wilkin-R
Kuisle-R	Winter-DFL

Staff

Committee Administrator

Jason Rohloff 296-8880

Committee Legislative Assistant

Kathleen M. Kieffer 296-5991

Property Tax Division

591 State Office Building 296-4363

Meets: 10:15 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 14

Chair: Erhardt-R

Vice Chair: Kuisle-R

Lead Democrat: Milbert-DFL

Abrams-R	McElroy-R
Daggett-R	Mullery-DFL
Dempsey-R	Rifenberg-R
Gleason-DFL	Rukavina-DFL
Knoblach-R	Winter-DFL
Lenczewski-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Margaret Amundson 296-7427

Committee Legislative Assistant

Adrienne Buske 296-2955

Sales Tax Division

583 State Office Building 296-5373

Meets: 10:15 a.m. in Room 200*

Members: 12

Chair: Harder-R

Vice Chair: Dorman-R

Lead Democrat: Dawkins-DFL

Abrams-R	Leighton-DFL
Anderson, I.-DFL	Paulsen-R
Bernardy-DFL	Walker-DFL
Daggett-R	Wilkin-R
Jacobson-R	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Open

Committee Legislative Assistant

Shelley Peterson 296-3641

Transportation Finance

443 State Office Building 296-8872

Meets: Mon., Wed., 8:15 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 14

Chair: Molnau-R

Vice Chair: Vandever-R

Lead Democrat: Lieder-DFL

Clark, J.-R	Marko-DFL
Hausman-DFL	Ruth-R
Holberg-R	Westerberg-R
Juhnke-DFL	Workman-R
Kalis-DFL	Bishop-R**
Kuisle-R	
Larson-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Erik Rudeen 296-5528

Committee Legislative Assistant

JoAnn Overgaaup 296-5336

Transportation Policy

537 State Office Building 296-5066

Meets: Tues., Thurs., 8:15 a.m. in Room 5*

Members: 18

Chair: Workman-R

Vice Chair: Clark, J.-R

Lead Democrat: Hausman-DFL

Holberg-R	Marko-DFL
Howes-R	Molnau-R
Juhnke-DFL	Ruth-R
Kahn-DFL	Vandever-R
Kalis-DFL	Westerberg-R
Kuisle-R	Westrom-R
Larson-DFL	Winter-DFL
Lieder-DFL	

Staff

Committee Administrator

Mary K. Cummins 296-3244

Committee Legislative Assistant

Rebecca S. Reiners 297-5603

Ways & Means

453 State Office Building 296-0573

Meets: Call of the Chair

Members: 29

Chair: Bishop-R

Vice Chair: Haas-R

Lead Democrat: Solberg-DFL

Abrams-R	Molnau-R
Anderson, I.-DFL	Mulder-R
Carlson-DFL	Osthoff-DFL
Clark, K.-DFL	Otremba-DFL
Dawkins-DFL	Rukavina-DFL
Dehler-R	Seagren-R
Erhardt-R	Stanek-R
Jaros-DFL	Stang-R
Kahn-DFL	Sviggum-R
Kalis-DFL	Swenson-R
Kelliher-DFL	Sykora-R
Krinkie-R	Wenzel-DFL
McElroy-R	Wilkin-R

Staff

Committee Administrator

Chas Anderson 296-8875

Committee Legislative Assistant

Shirley Koderick 296-4999

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(651) 296-9896 TTY, or
(800) 657-3550 toll free voice and TTY.

MONDAY, January 15

House offices closed.

TUESDAY, January 16

8:15 a.m.

Joint House HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY/ Senate HEALTH & FAMILY SECURITY

10 State Office Building

Chrs. Rep. Fran Bradley, Sen. Dallas Sams

Agenda: Presentation on Legislative Long Term Care Task Force.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: A resolution memorializing the benefits of a modernized waterway transportation delivery system; ports; and HF37 traffic regulations; abolishing statutes defining trackless trolley car, regulating driving through rough country, and prohibiting carrier employment by persons addicted to liquor.

10:15 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. John Tuma

Agenda: Overview of sentencing guidelines. Sentencing Guidelines Commission 2001 Report to the Legislature. Sentencing trends and statistics. Overview of DWI laws. DWI trends and statistics.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: Karen Studders, MPCA Commissioner, global/state environmental issues.

Tom Koehler, co-chair of the Minnesota Environmental Coalition of Labor and Industry (MECLI).

Bill Cunningham, Unions for Jobs and Environment (UJAE), climate policy issues.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Department of Administration update on Capitol area projects.

Budget presentation, State Treasurer.

Budget presentation, Attorney General.

TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HFXXXX (Daggett) Department of Revenue technical bill (continued from Jan. 11 tax committee meeting).

Utility taxation study.

Forestry taxation study.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Overview of the dairy industry from processors' economic and financial perspectives.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: Overview of building processes in Minnesota, CAPRA and ADA by Kath Ouska, Dept. of Administration.

COMMERCE, JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: Department of Economic Security agency overview.

3 p.m.

The House meets in session.

4 p.m. or immediately following session

REDISTRICTING

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Erik Paulsen

Agenda: Historical overview of the redistricting process.

Professor Charles Umbanhower, Department of Political Science, St. Olaf College.

Professor Joe Kunkel, Department of Political Science, Minnesota State University-Mankato.

WEDNESDAY, January 17

8 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Bus trip

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: Tour and overview of the Minneapolis Veterans Home.

8:15 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Discussion of Interim Federal Funding and other LAC requests.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Presentation from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency.

Testimony will include advocates for more affordable housing and advocates for more homeless shelters.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Demonstration of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technology.

10:15 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) overview of selection process and LCMR recommendations.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Higher Education Services Office overview, Dr. Robert Poch, director. State Grant Program overview, Dr. Robert Poch, director.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Department of Children, Families and Learning review of federal programs:

Title I;

Professional development;

Charter schools; and

Secondary vocational programs.

TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

**Economic Development & Tourism
Division/COMMERCE**

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: Introduction of new members and staff.
Overview presentation by the Department of Trade and Economic Development.
Overview presentation by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency.

**FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION FINANCE**

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Adult Basic Education (ABE) overview, Barry Shaffer and Greg Sogaard, Department of Children, Families and Learning.
ABE Policy Task Force recommendations.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT &
METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS**

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jerry Dempsey

Agenda: Overview presentations (municipalities):

League of Minnesota Cities; Association of Metropolitan Municipalities; Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities; Minnesota Association of Small Cities; Municipal Legislative Commission; and other.

Committee rules.

Organizational items.

REGULATED INDUSTRIES

107 State Capitol

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: Presentation by the Department of Commerce on energy issues.

THURSDAY, January 18

8:15 a.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: Overview of School Trust Fund Lands.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF4 (Abrams) MinnesotaCare premium and provider taxes repealed, pass-through consumer savings required, tobacco settlement proceeds allocated, and contingent penalties provided.

HF14 (Bradley) Tobacco settlement revenues credited to health care access fund, MinnesotaCare provider taxes eliminated on contingent basis, and pass-through of savings required.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: Design-build.

10:15 a.m.

**Joint CRIME PREVENTION/
JUDICIARY FINANCE**

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chrs. Rep. John Tuma, Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: Overview of Criminal Justice Information Policy Group and integrating Minnesota's Criminal Justice Information System (CrimNet).

**ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL
RESOURCES POLICY**

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: Continuation of HF94 (Haas) Fish and game law gross overlimit violations criminal penalties established, and restitution values determined.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: Budget presentation, State Auditor.

Budget presentation, Secretary of State.

12:30 p.m.

**AGRICULTURE & RURAL
DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Dairy producers' perspective of environmental feedlot rules.
Testimony from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: Update on the State Office Building repairs from Kath Ouska, Department of Administration.

Overview of HEAPR - University of Minnesota.

**COMMERCE, JOBS &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: Presentation by Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB).

HRXXXX (Bakk) Relating to the extension of unemployment benefits to LTV mine workers.

3 p.m.

The House meets in session.

FRIDAY, January 19

8:15 a.m.

**GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS &
VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY**

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HFXXXX (Krinkie) Clarifying that executive branch constitutional officers are subject to the code of ethics; prohibiting executive branch constitutional officers from engaging in outside work.

Tentative

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: If necessary, this meeting is a continuation of the discussion on:

HF4 (Abrams) MinnesotaCare premium and provider taxes repealed, pass-through consumer savings required, tobacco settlement proceeds allocated, and contingent penalties provided.

HF14 (Bradley) Tobacco settlement revenues credited to health care access fund, MinnesotaCare provider taxes eliminated on contingent basis, and pass-through of savings required.

**JOBS & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Presentation from the Department of Trade and Economic Development.

10:15 a.m.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Private colleges overview - David Laird, president, Minnesota Private College Council.
Metro Alliance overview.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Department of Children, Families and Learning review of federal programs:
Completion of Wed., Jan. 17, agenda;
Special education;
Food and nutrition;
Class size reduction; and
Discretionary funds.

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TRANSPORTATION

Tinklenberg talks transit

At the Jan. 8 meeting of the House Transportation Finance Committee, the Transportation Department's top gun gave members a peek into the future — or at least what they can expect from his department in the next two years.

Referring to Gov. Jesse Ventura's comprehensive transportation plan, "Moving Minnesota," Elwyn Tinklenberg, commissioner of the state Department of Transportation, emphasized that "we want to be a multi-modal transportation department."

He explained that transportation system components, such as highways or airports, are best understood as collections of interdependent units, which function best when designed with other elements in mind. For example, highways are useful only when they are not overburdened by excessive truck traffic, and ports function only when trains are readily available to move goods overland.

Tinklenberg touched on the plan's alphabetic priorities: "A, advantages for transit; B, bottleneck removal; and C, connecting inter-regional corridors." Tinklenberg said that both Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities areas would likely benefit under Ventura's proposals.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) inquired about the department's ability to deal with the rising cost of real estate in the

metropolitan area, which can make purchasing land for transportation projects very expensive.

Tinklenberg responded that the department lamented the cost increase, but was prepared to meet the challenges.

Hausman further expressed appreciation for the governor's leadership on transit, remarking that Ventura is the first state leader in many years to offer a comprehensive transportation plan. However, she also expressed her confusion at "the absence of transit in (Ventura's recent) State of the State address."

Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) asked if the commissioner believed there was a relationship between housing development, "Smart-Growth" initiatives, and transportation policy. Tinklenberg said there is.

Rep. William Kuisle (R-Rochester) questioned the commissioner on the length of time the department takes to secure and execute construction and other contracts. Noting that his department requires up to eight months, Tinklenberg said his staff is working aggressively to reduce that time.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska), committee chair, asked about the department's use of funds the committee had previously designated to repair highways to underwrite the operating cost of a suburban commuter bus.

Tinklenberg explained that the department had secured additional federal funding by commencing with the bus project, and if they had not, Minnesota would have lost the funding.



After introducing herself at the Jan. 11 meeting of the House Capital Investment Committee, Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville), tongue firmly in cheek, said, "To anyone who read that I was 'miffed' to be on this committee, that was a slip of the tongue. In fact, I'm delighted to be here and especially to be working with Rep. Knobloch."

To which Rep. Jim Knobloch (R-St. Cloud), committee chair, quipped, "Rep. Greiling, members — whether you planned to be here or not, you're all welcome."

In its presentation to a joint meeting of the House Health and Human Services Finance and Policy committees Jan. 8, representatives of the state Department of Health discussed recent achievements in health-related ventures and presented the following Top 10 list of public health accomplishments of the 20th Century:

- Vaccinations
- Motor vehicle safety
- Safer workplaces
- Control of infectious diseases
- Decline in deaths from coronary heart disease and stroke
- Safer and healthier foods
- Healthier mothers and babies
- Family planning
- Fluoridation of drinking water
- Recognition of tobacco use as a health hazard

In light of the potential stadium talk between the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Vikings, one educational group is definitely out of the picture.

"No pro sports team has asked us to build them a sports stadium on their behalf," said Morris Anderson, chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. His comments came Jan. 10 at the House Higher Education Finance Committee meeting, two days after University of Minnesota President Mark Yudof said his institution would not seek stadium funds.

Continuing the lightheartedness of the moment, committee chair Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley) noted there were no television cameras in the room, unlike when Yudof spoke. Anderson replied, "They never showed up."

Safety quiz



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Members of the House Transportation Finance Committee test their knowledge of driver safety during a tour of the Midway Driver License Exam Station in St. Paul Jan. 10.

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Date

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Monday, Jan. 8

HF44—Rifenberg (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 857, Lewiston, fund transfer authorized.

HF45—Erickson (R)

Taxes

Kanabec County aggregate materials production tax imposed.

HF46—Lipman (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Comprehensive local planning local control re-established, metropolitan land use planning and metropolitan council review of local comprehensive plans repealed, and conforming changes provided.

HF47—Rukavina (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Iron mining; Closed iron mines and facilities required to be maintained for two years.

HF48—Abrams (R)

Taxes

Sales tax rebate provided and money appropriated.

HF49—Seifert (R)

Transportation Policy

Special veterans of Grenada military action license plates authorized.

HF50—Pelowski (DFL)

Higher Education Finance

Winona State University science building construction and renovation bonds issued and money appropriated.

HF51—Goodno (R)

Crime Prevention

DWI; maximum blood-alcohol level lowered for impairment offenses involving driving motor vehicles, recreational vehicles or watercraft, hunting, handling explosives, or operating military vehicles.

HF52—Rifenberg (R)

Taxes

Agricultural loans exempted from mortgage registry tax.

HF53—Seifert (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Fair campaign practices act; use of name, image, or voice of certain candidates prohibited from public service messages or state agency advertising.

HF54—Kielkucki (R)

Health & Human Services Finance

Abortion standard conformity with United States constitution required, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF55—Jaros (DFL)

Family & Early Childhood Education Finance

Family definition provided.

HF56—Lipman (R)

Civil Law

Covenant marriages option provided.

HF57—Molnau (R)

Transportation Policy

Drivers' licenses; certain crimes against children included as disqualifying offenses for purposes of school bus driver endorsements.

HF58—McGuire (DFL)

Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development

Standards prescribed for identification of beer kegs, retailers required to maintain records of keg sales, and penalties provided.

HF59—Luther (DFL)

Transportation Policy

World War II license plates with symbols showing highest decoration awarded authorized.

HF60—Workman (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Teachers retirement association service credit purchase authorized for a specified individual.

HF61—Jaros (DFL)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Simulated elections for minors provided.

HF62—Kubly (DFL)

Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development

Yellow Medicine and Chippewa counties disaster relief provided for July 25, 2000 tornado, and money appropriated.

HF63—Ness (R)

K-12 Education Finance

School district career and technical aid restored, and money appropriated.

HF64—McElroy (R)

Crime Prevention

Itinerant carnival prohibition repealed.

HF65—Folliard (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Toxic air contaminants reduction required and reports required.

HF66—Folliard (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance

Licensed K-12 teachers additional staff development and additional salary option authorized.

Thursday, Jan. 11

HF67—Abrams (R)

Taxes

S corporation federal tax conformity provided.

HF68—Buesgens (R)

Taxes

Military pay income tax subtraction provided.

HF69—Howes (R)

Transportation Policy

Portion of motor vehicle sales tax dedicated to highway user tax distribution fund, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF70—Seifert (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Presidential electors designated and duties specified.

HF71—Pawlenty (R)

Education Policy

School Districts' financial and academic performance evaluated, and money appropriated.

HF72—Mares (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Washington County tax-forfeited land sale authorized.

HF73—Abrams (R)

Taxes

Long-term capital gain income tax exclusion allowed.

HF74—Erhardt (R)

Taxes

Individual income tax rate reduction provided.

HF75—Hackbarth (R)

Transportation Finance

Minneapolis to Anoka County highway No. 22 express transit bus service appropriation provided.

HF76—Davids (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Diesel fuel oil minimum biodiesel content required.

HF77—Peterson (DFL)

Taxes

Motor fuel retailer grants and tax incentives provided for installing E85 pumps and equipment, state required to purchase and operate E85 vehicles, and money appropriated.

HF78—Rifenberg (R)

Transportation Policy

Winona County highways natural preservation route designation partially removed.

HF79—Stanek (R)

Taxes

Nursery stock production farm machinery sales tax exemption provided.

HF80—Hackbarth (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Anoka County; Coon Lake water level control installation required.

HF81—Solberg (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Itasca County additional part-time peace officers authorized.

HF82—Seagren (R)

Education Policy

Staff development reserved revenue dedicated to induction and mentorship activities for new teachers.

HF83—Anderson, I. (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Deer River fire station addition design appropriation provided.

HF84—Daggett (R)

Taxes

Income, property, sales and use, cigarette and tobacco, liquor, MinnesotaCare and other taxes technical corrections bill.

HF85—Jennings (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Wyoming and Chisago City orderly annexed property reimbursement duration limitation exemption provided.

HF86—Jennings (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Taylor's Falls fire and rescue operations grant provided in support of Interstate park, and money appropriated.

HF87—Koskinen (DFL)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Minneapolis teacher retirement fund association service credit purchase authorized for specified individual.

HF88—Juhnke (DFL)**Judiciary Finance**

Drug task force education measures federal Byrne grant matching funds appropriations provided.

HF89—Greiling (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 623, Roseville, fund transfer authorized.

HF90—Mulder (R)**Taxes**

Nonprofit dance club admissions and sales tax exemption provided.

HF91—Mulder (R)**Taxes**

Military pension income tax subtraction provided.

HF92—Daggett (R)**Taxes**

Long-term care insurance income tax credit maximum increased.

HF93—Entenza (DFL)**Education Policy**

Guidance counselor to student ratio established.

HF94—Haas (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Fish and game law gross overlimit violations criminal penalties established, and restitution values determined.

HF95—Opatz (DFL)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

St. Cloud city employee retroactive bounce-back annuity payment provided.

HF96—Entenza (DFL)**Education Policy**

Criminal background check required of nonlicensed individuals paid to provide classroom instruction.

HF97—Greiling (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Revisors instructed to replace phrase concerning mental illness.

HF98—Greiling (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Como Park natural science education coordinator provided, and money appropriated.

HF99—Westerberg (R)**State Government Finance**

National Sports Center conference center construction authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF100—Seifert (R)**Education Policy**

Higher education grant stipends calculation modified relating to Pell grants.

HF101—Dempsey (R)**Transportation Finance**

Port development assistance appropriation provided.

HF102—Seifert (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 418, Russell, fund transfer authorized.

HF103—Jennings (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 578, Pine City, fund transfer authorized.

HF104—Stang (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 750, Rocori, fund transfer authorized.

HF105—Jennings (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Independent School District No. 578, Pine City, disabled access levy extended.

HF106—Ness (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Minnesota agricultural education leadership council permanent or temporary replacement members authorized for specified ex-officio seats.

HF107—McElroy (R)**Taxes**

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

HF108—Cassell (R)**Taxes**

Sales to political subdivisions tax exemption provided.

HF109—Kuisle (R)**Taxes**

Correctional facilities construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF110—Wagenius (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Water quality standards risk evaluation and report required.

HF111—Krinkie (R)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Ethics code applied to executive branch constitutional officers, officers prohibited from engaging in outside work, and malfeasance definition expanded for purposes of recall.

HF112—Murphy (DFL)**Taxes**

Hermantown local sales tax uses expanded to include construction projects and bond issuance authorized.

HF113—Murphy (DFL)**Taxes**

Cloquet authorized to impose local sales tax and bond issuance authorized.

HF114—McElroy (R)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Internet access catalyst grants in rural Minnesota provided, and money appropriated.

HF115—Luther (DFL)**Taxes**

Nonprofit animal shelters sale of pets sales tax exemption provided.

HF116—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Respiratory care practitioner advisory council sunset delayed, and athletic trainer registration cancelled for nonrenewal after two years.

HF117—Anderson, I. (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Superior National Forest connecting road construction authorized, money appropriated, and report required.

HF118—Kielkucki (R)**Regulated Industries**

Resolution memorializing television networks to reduce violent and sexually explicit material and produce material that promotes wholesome family values.

HF119—Harder (R)**Taxes**

S corporation federal tax conformity provided.

HF120—Bakk (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Fishing; imported leeches from Canada authorized as fishing bait.

HF121—Erhardt (R)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Presidential electors designated and duties specified.

HF122—Skoglund (DFL)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

Purchase of service credit authorized for parental or family leaves of absence or breaks in service.

HF123—Juhnke (DFL)**Governmental Operations &****Veterans Affairs Policy**

National Guard eligible members tuition and textbook reimbursement level increased, and money appropriated.

HF124—Folliard (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Home care providers required to provide notice of service termination, and state health care program reimbursement rates increased for home care providers.

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of a Republican member at the time.

No such assertions have been made regarding Speaker Sviggum's motives this session.

Until 1973, House rules favored the majority caucus; no provision was made for the minority leader's requests. With conservative Republicans holding tight control over the body at that time, minority influence was minimal.

When DFLers won a majority in 1973 after campaigning on a platform of reform, they "adopted the changes which the conservatives previously had refused," according to the 1985 U of M report.

In part because of their reformist leanings, DFLers were unable to continue the rules against which they had campaigned. In short, they had little choice other than to honor Republican committee requests.

By the time Republicans had regained a majority in 1985, House rules included a bevy of language meant to protect minority requests; that language remains today.

In an interview after the session Jan. 8, Goodno explained that the speaker had acted in good faith and well within the bounds of the rules. "There is a certain portionality balance that the rules require us to meet," he said. "Not specific rules, but generally, it states that (committee membership) should be proportional. I think we followed those rules."


According to Goodno, a group of Republican legislators and staff suggested assignments to Sviggum, which he then modified and published. "I don't know how the DFLers (make assignments when they are in the majority)," he said.

Goodno said the speaker was concerned that each member had a comparable number of assignments. And though they anticipated the DFL members would object to some assignments, Goodno said, they needed to complete the rosters in a timely manner.

Assistant Minority Leader Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar) was denied membership to a committee he had selected. "If we look at [the rule]," he said, "as long as certain dates and time limits are followed, really the speaker must appoint based on the minority leader's recommendations."

He said he was especially troubled by the use of "ideological" characteristics and reiterated that the specific provisions of Rule 6.02 were not followed.

Juhnke also said the conflict over committee assignments has brought the caucus together and sets them on a path to work together throughout the session.

Now, the tumult seems to have subsided, and both caucuses are gearing up for legislating. "At this point," said Goodno, "the committees have been assigned, the speaker has made those assignments under the rules of the House, and it's time to move forward and start doing the people's will." 

Reflections

Many "firsts" and coincidences show up when the 82nd Legislative Session and 2001 governorship are compared to the 57th Legislative Session 50 years ago.

When the Legislature convened on Jan. 2, 1951, 40 new House members took their seats in the 131-member representative body. Over in the 67-member Senate chamber, 21 became new lawmakers.

On Jan. 3, 2001, the 82nd Legislative Session convened, with 21 newly elected members joining the 134-member House.

At the first day of the 2001 Legislative Session, southern Minnesota's Rep. Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) was elected as House Speaker for a second time. So was southern Minnesota's John A. Hartle (Conservative-Owatonna) in 1951.

Gov. Luther W. Youngdahl was sworn in for his third, two-year term on Jan. 2, 1951. He made his state address one day later.

Jesse Ventura gave this year's State of the State Address as the 38th governor on Jan. 4, also one day after the start of session.

Critics said both governors' requests went too far on their respective issues: Youngdahl in law enforcement programs, namely those that related to anti-gambling, and Ventura on license tab fees. Both got what they wanted.

As they served, both governors' programs may not have always received high favor, but both held a 70 percent or greater approval rating in polls conducted in 1951 in the *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune* and in 2001 by the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*.

Youngdahl first became head of the state based on the strength of many Minnesotans who transcended party lines when they voted. So did Ventura.

Both governors were born in south Minneapolis — Ventura, in 1951.

Like Ventura, Youngdahl was over 6'2" tall and athletic.

Ventura ended his wrestling career for

health reasons. Youngdahl ended his governorship for a similar matter. He was a victim of very high blood pressure. Thus, the 27th governor of the state was told by his Mayo Clinic physician to "Quit the governorship — forthwith!"

U.S. Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey heard about it from Ray Ewald, a mutual friend. Humphrey asked then-President Harry Truman to nominate the governor for a U.S. District Court judgeship in the District of Columbia, a job that would be less stressful.

A long-distance call via public pay phone from Humphrey to Youngdahl sealed the plan. The latter resigned.

On Sept. 28, 1951 Lt. Gov. C. Elmer Anderson became the 28th governor, having been appointed to complete the term, some 50 years and two months ago, about the same time as the birth of Minnesota's 38th governor, Ventura. He ultimately beat two opponents — one of whom was Hubert H. Humphrey III—to become the head of state.

Anderson was already known as the only lieutenant governor to serve six governors in 11 non-consecutive years — longer than anyone else.

Already popular, it also helped Anderson that when he became governor the state was experiencing technological growth and a major state fund surplus. So did Ventura.

Anderson was later elected to the governor's office in 1953, and served to 1955. After leaving St. Paul, Anderson served two terms as mayor of Nisswa, and later as mayor of Brainerd. Before he became governor, Ventura was the mayor of Brooklyn Park.

Likely, the similarities may further increase as the Legislature becomes more involved with the issues of the day.

—LECLAIR GRIER LAMBERT

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MINNESOTA INDEX

Gauging water quality

Number of major river basins into which Minnesota land drains	10
Number of miles of streams in Minnesota	92,000
Percentage of studied* stream miles fit for swimming, 1998	68
Percentage fit for aquatic life	65
Number of public access sites on lakes, rivers and streams, 1999	3,180
Public access sites, 1990	3,000
Ratio of people to boats in Minnesota, 2000	6:1
National rank for recreational watercraft per capita	1
Number of water bodies in Minnesota with surface water use regulations, 2000.....	300
Number of lakes with fish harvest regulations, 2000.....	100
Number of rivers	30
Minnesota streams designated as trout waters	600
Percentage of Minnesotans who rely on groundwater for drinking water	75
Percentage of Minnesota community water systems fed by groundwater	98
Percentage of monitor stations showing a decrease in phosphorus pollutant levels ...	78
Percent that showed an increase.....	1
Percentage of water bodies negatively affected by increase in nitrogen levels	75
Percent showing a decrease in nitrogen	1
Monitoring stations showing a decrease in ammonia levels, as percent	83
Percent showing an increase	4
Square miles drained into the Lake Superior basin	6,150
In the Minnesota, Missouri and Des Moines River basins	
(southwestern Minnesota)	18,259
The Red River basin (northwestern Minnesota).....	17,743
Upper Mississippi basin (central Minnesota)	20,089
Combined wind and water erosion of cropland, above tolerance levels,	
as percent, Lake Superior Basin, 1992	0
Minnesota, Missouri and Des Moines River basins	51.3
Red River basin	86.5
Upper Mississippi River basin	50.1

* The report assessed about 5 percent of streams as a jump-off point for setting goals.

Source: *Minnesota Watermarks: Gauging the flow of progress 2000-2010*, Minnesota Environmental Quality Board, September 2000.

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