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In this issue:

FUNDING HIGHER EDUCATION

CUTTING AIR POLLUTION, MILITARY TAX BREAKS, AND MORE

HF400-HF550

Session Weekly

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On the cover: Members of the House Jobs and Economic Development Committee get a firsthand look at one of three floor-to-ceiling storage areas where boxes of county and state records are stored before they are microfilmed, and then destroyed. The committee was on a Jan. 26 tour of the Minnesota Historical Society facilities.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

Cutting it close

University of Minnesota, MnSCU paint a bleak picture following release of Ventura higher education budget plan

By MIKE COOK

University of Minnesota President Mark Yudof said students could face double-digit tuition increases, jobs could be lost, and all Minnesotans could suffer, if Gov. Jesse Ventura's budget proposal for higher education stands.

Those are just some of the consequences Yudof warned of in a Jan. 26 presentation to the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

"The scenarios are quite bleak," he said. "Every year you hear agencies say the sky is falling, but the sky is going to fall."

Morris Anderson, chancellor of the Minne-

requested \$255.6 million for the next two years to cover inflation and make essential improvements in academic programs, technology, and workforce development.

"We're going backward," Jo Ann Roche, vice president of the Minnesota Community College Faculty Association, said Jan. 26. "With rising costs of health care, inflation, and other cost increases needed just to keep our system working, MnSCU will actually be losing money with this budget."

Higher education officials in both systems worry they will either have to increase tuition costs or cut services, or both, in order to make

ends meet. Specifically, they are concerned that access to higher education will be reduced because costs will prohibit certain students from pursuing a college degree.

The University of Minnesota requested \$221 million for the next biennium. Ventura's 2002-03 budget calls for \$56.6 million to the institution, \$40 million of which would support inflation adjustments for faculty and staff

those of greater need.

Most of the university's request would cover salaries. Of the \$124.1 million inflationary request, \$62.8 million was for a 3 percent bump in salary and non-health care fringe benefits.

"The second thing we looked at is what it would cost to give employees exactly the same health insurance coverage for the next two years they have had the last two years," Yudof said. That number came to \$58.1 million. Costs are increasing by 20 percent per year, he said, noting the package is negotiated by the state.

MnSCU officials say they need \$153.3 million just to cover similar costs.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring), noting that more businesses are making employees pay more for their health plan, asked if that was an option for university employees. Yudof said the university is examining that but most people prefer to stay with the current state plan.

Finally, the university wants to raise the wages of some employees, who are struggling to make ends meet financially, from \$10 per hour to \$12 per hour, for a total increase of \$3.2 million for the biennium.

Beyond salaries, Yudof said, the university hopes to continue giving the best undergraduate education possible.

"Undergraduate education has been the foundation of the University of Minnesota for 150 years, and if we don't do that right there is nothing else worth doing, frankly," Yudof said.

To that end, the university seeks \$15 million to add 40 teachers for specific freshman seminars, to improve student advisement, to increase undergraduate research opportunities, and to expand study abroad opportunities.

The governor's proposal could also prompt cuts at the University Medical School.

"The medical school is losing \$8 million per year, and has been losing money for a reasonably long period of time," Yudof said, noting that the reserves can no longer sustain the program. "You either have to fix the problem or we will significantly cut back on medical education."

The school has dropped from 13th in 1980 to 27th in 1999 in the National Institutes of Health rankings. "This reflects the underinvestment and retrenchments in Minnesota compared with state institutions that improved investments," Dr. Frank Cerra, senior vice president of the Academic Health Center told the House Higher Education Finance

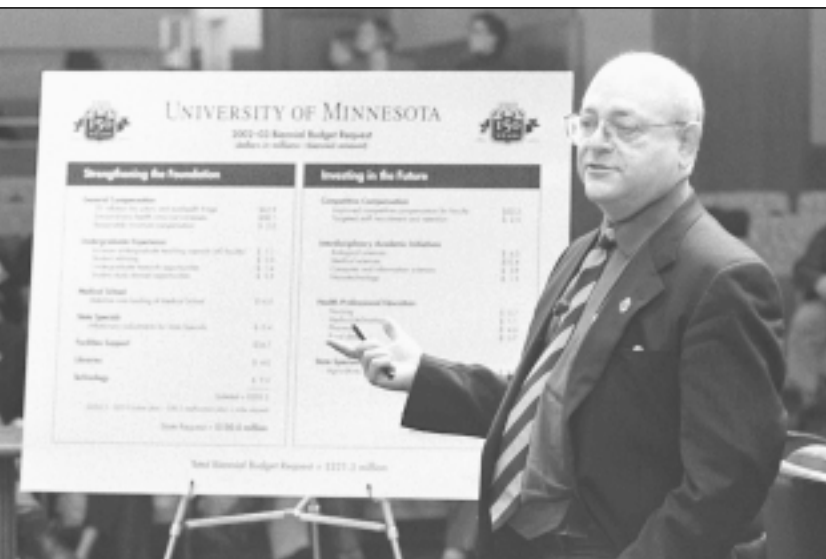


PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

University of Minnesota President Mark Yudof speaks about consequences of the governor's higher education budget request Jan. 26 before the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

sota State Colleges and Universities, echoed those sentiments at a Jan. 30 news conference. MnSCU representatives are scheduled to address the committee Feb. 9.

"The governor's proposed \$47 million increase falls drastically short of meeting our needs, and we cannot avoid serious damage if it is adopted," Anderson said. MnSCU, with Fall 2000 enrollment of more than 150,000 students at 35 institutions and 53 campuses,

compensation.

Yudof spent much of his presentation detailing why the university needs the money it requested.

Both the MnSCU and University of Minnesota budgets were based on a 3 percent tuition increase each of the next two years and \$30 million in internal reallocations. At the university, most of that would be shifting money for faculty from areas of less need to

Committee Jan. 31.

Yudof said \$8 million is needed annually to stabilize the situation. The state currently picks up 9 percent of the medical school operating costs.

Though there are some professors at the medical school who make more than \$100,000 annually, the state only pays for 10 percent of those salaries, Yudof said. The remainder comes from research and outside activities, such as a clinical setting.

"If this medical school downsizes, eight years from now you will rue the day when for \$20 million you could have fixed it," Yudof said. "Because then you will not fix it for (\$20 million)."

The university is also seeking \$34.7 million for facilities support, significantly due to rising energy costs, ongoing maintenance and debt service; \$4 million for libraries with book costs increasing 10 to 15 percent per year; and \$9 million for technology upgrades.

The other \$71.5 million of the university budget request would be targeted for "Investing in the Future" initiatives such as competitive compensation, interdisciplinary academic initiatives, and improving program options, particularly in the health sciences.

While not wanting to present a "doomsday scenario," Yudof said without more money, the university will likely have to reduce allocations for colleges (possibly as much as 7.5 percent each), shift funds to departments with more urgent needs, and raise tuition, possibly as much as 15 percent each year.

"This may get us through the inflationary costs," Yudof said. "It's a matter of choice. How good do you want this place to be?" For example, he said, by keeping costs down, top faculty will leave for other institutions.

"I didn't envision that at a time of a surplus, we'd be cutting back all our programs 7.5 percent," Yudof said.

Stang said if the university were to get all it seeks, the "doomsday scenario" may only be delayed. "What happens in the future when these plans need inflation-plus?" he asked. "Taxpayers may not be very receptive to tax increases for these type investments."

"We need to be efficient, but also know it's extremely difficult to predict the future," added Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria).

Anderson and Yudof each stressed the link between higher education and economic development of the state as a whole.

"By just funding inflation we are doing nothing to help the labor shortage in Minnesota," Yudof said. For example, he said medical facilities in the state are suffering or shutting down due to lack of nurses, pharmacists, and other medical technicians. 🐼



Safety first

Legislators refine rules of the road whether on wheels or on foot

A century ago, the automobile was a new phenomenon and drivers found themselves fighting for road space with both horse-drawn carriages and pedestrians.

And the pedestrians often lost the minor skirmishes, unable to protect themselves from the faster, heavier, and more powerful machines.

It was not unusual to see newspaper accounts of tragic car-pedestrian accidents that claimed the lives of foot-bound travelers. Take the following account from the *New York Times* of Henry H. Bliss, who became the first pedestrian killed by a car on Sept. 13, 1899 — the day of his 68th birthday:

"H.H. Bliss, a real estate dealer, with offices at 41 Wall St. and living at 235 West 75th St., was run over last night at Central Park West and 74th St. He was injured fatally. Bliss, accompanied by a woman named Lee, was alighting from a south-bound, Eighth Ave. trolley car when he was knocked down and run over by an automobile in charge of Arthur Smith of 151 West 62nd St. He had left the car, and had turned to assist Miss Lee, when the automobile struck him. Bliss was knocked to the pavement, and two wheels of the cab passed over his head and body. His skull and chest were crushed.

"Dr. David Orr Edson, son of ex-mayor Edson, of 38 West 71st St., was the occupant of the electric cab. As soon as the vehicle was brought to a standstill, he sent in a call to Roosevelt Hospital for an ambulance, and until its arrival did all he could to aid the injured man. When he was taken to the hospital Dr. Marny, the house surgeon, said that Bliss was so seriously injured that he could not live."

Though Bliss secured an unfortunate role in history pedestrian safety was hardly a new concern. As far back as ancient Rome, Caesar decreed that heavy wagons were forbidden within the central city after dusk.

As the automobile became more prominent in American society so too did accidents involving cars and pedestrians. By 1937 a record 15,000 pedestrians were killed.

The first major pedestrian safety education efforts began around the beginning of World War I. In 1928 the first electronic traffic light was installed on Fifth Avenue in New York.

One year prior, the Minnesota Legislature passed the state's first major pedestrian safety law, the Uniform Highway Traffic Act, a law that required drivers to yield to pedestrians crossing streets at any clearly marked crosswalk. Likewise, the 1927 law required pedestrians to yield to vehicles within a business district at any point other than a pedestrian crossing.

By the early 1930s, school safety patrols were formed around the country with one of the first established in St. Paul. At about the same time, the Minnesota Highway Department began publishing written guidelines for student patrols. In 1933 the Legislature passed a law that authorized schools to establish school patrols for the purpose of directing and assisting children when crossing streets or highways near schools "so that the crossing may be made without accident and with as little inconvenience as possible."

Though the new laws focused attention on pedestrian safety issues, the number of fatalities remained high. In 1939, 175 Minnesota pedestrians, representing 31 percent of all traffic deaths in the state, were killed. Further emphasis was placed on community planning to address safety issues.

Currently, about 6,000 pedestrians a year are killed nationwide while another 90,000 are injured. That equates to about one injury or death every three to four minutes.

In 1995 the Legislature strengthened the state's crosswalk laws requiring, among other things, drivers to not only yield to pedestrians in crosswalks but to slow to a stop when necessary. The law also made it clear that drivers must yield to pedestrians not only in marked crosswalks, but also unmarked intersections. Failure to do so is deemed a misdemeanor.

In 2000 the Legislature further strengthened and clarified the law by specifying that drivers must stop their vehicles, yield to pedestrians, and proceed only when the pedestrian has completely crossed the lane in front of the stopped vehicle.

Lawmakers hope that by strengthening crosswalk laws the number of pedestrian fatalities will decline.

(D. MAEDA)

★ AGRICULTURE

Food standards protected

Legislators are considering a bill that would provide legal protection for foods prepared according to Islamic religious law.

HF149, sponsored by House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) would prohibit the sale or serving of food falsely labeled "Halaal," or prepared according to Islamic religious law, called Sharia. The provisions are modeled on existing standards for Kosher foods prepared according to Jewish religious law.

The House Agriculture Policy Committee approved the bill and referred it to the House Crime Prevention Committee because it would make misrepresentation of Halaal standards a misdemeanor.

During a Jan. 31 Agriculture Policy committee meeting, Damon Drake, outreach director for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said the state-sponsored guarantee of Islamic standards would help state farmers hold on to a growing number of Muslim food shoppers. "We think that this will improve profits for farmers," he said.

Matthew Ramadan is an Islamic religious authority known as an Imam. He opened the first Halaal market in Minnesota in North Minneapolis in 1986. "Halaal is basically a word that means lawful, or legal," he says.

Ramadan says that Muslims are required to humanely treat animals intended for human consumption.

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

Until now, Ramadan says that Minnesota Muslims have had to rely on organic or Kosher foods, which Islamic law permits when truly Halaal food is unavailable. He estimates the Minnesota Muslim population numbers about 100,000 people, and that food prepared according to Halaal standards will remain in high demand.

Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie), co-sponsor of the bill, said that existing federal guidelines could be easily adopted by state food inspectors and government agencies.

Ramadan explained that Halaal requirements are commonly upheld in other cities by inspections by local religious authorities.

Citing the shared interests of the Muslim and Jewish communities, Shepard Harris, of the Jewish Community Relations Council, offered his group's endorsement of the proposal.

★ CRIME

Communication plan funding

Lawmakers are considering a bill to fund a program intended to dramatically improve communication between law enforcement agencies regarding data about convicted criminals. HF260, sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), would appropriate \$41.5 million to further the development of CriMNet, a computer system which would integrate, track, and share criminal justice information among law enforcement, courts, public safety, and other criminal justice agencies.

The House Crime Prevention Committee considered the bill Jan. 30, and voted unanimously to re-refer it to the House Civil Law Committee to deal with data privacy issues.

The bill would also mandate procedures to assist the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) in cataloging criminals. Among those provisions are strict guidelines for imprinting fingerprints and forwarding copies to the bureau, a commonly overlooked yet effective method for organizing data.

Steve Correll, manager of BCA Criminal Justice Information Systems, testified that sheriffs often provide incomplete information to the bureau regarding every arrest made in their county. For example, he said about 40 percent of all arrests in Hennepin County are incorrectly or incompletely reported to the BCA. The proposed legislation would require sheriffs to regularly report arrestee information to the bureau.

Correll said his bureau retains such incomplete reports, but that information is far less helpful than it could be when courts or other agencies request data on a particular offender.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) expressed concern about the effectiveness of CriMNet, given his understanding that many people held in state prisons and jails are not Minnesota residents. "The value is greatly attenuated

(diminished) if we don't coordinate (information sharing) with other states," he said.

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Charlie Weaver said the funding request, which was drafted by a mandated policy group, would allow CriMNet to coordinate with a similar federal system, also in development.

Gov. Jesse Ventura proposed spending \$27 million for the CriMNet program in his 2002-03 biennial budget. Weaver explained that the \$41.5 million proposal was a "perfect world" request.

However, he argued that the need for adequate background checks "is one of the most important problems for society." According to Weaver, CriMNet can provide the information necessary to conduct thorough background checks for education, health care, and other workers.

★ EDUCATION

Student goals questioned

Asking members of the House Education Policy Committee to shift the focus from standardized test results to individual school progress, Joe Nathan, director of the Center for School Change at the University of Minnesota, challenged legislators to learn the objectives of schools in their districts.

"Clear, explicit, measurable goals," Nathan says, are a part of the answer to ensuring progress for students and schools as a whole.

"We need to have a broader picture — not just standardized tests," he said.

The goals, he said, should also be widely understood so teachers, parents, students, and community members are aware of the school's progress.

At the Feb. 1 hearing, Nathan discussed material from a six-month study that was published in a report titled, *What Should We Do? A Practical Guide to Assessment and Accountability in Schools*.

With an apple, orange, golf ball, baseball, and basketball in front of him, Nathan began his presentation explaining that the objects before him shared certain characteristics, such as circumference and weight. "But there is something that can be said about just not having the numbers," he added.

Legislators commended Nathan's ideas, but

questioned the purpose of education, and educational opportunities in Greater Minnesota.

Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie) wanted to know if students should be preparing to enter the workforce or gaining “a renaissance approach and appreciation for the world around them.

“Where do we keep the balance, and what do we want our children to achieve?” he asked.

“Finding that balance is enormously difficult,” Nathan replied. He said it is appropriate for the Legislature to decide what students should know when they graduate, and to provide educational opportunities, such as choosing different schools or programs.

However, Kielkucki, who represents a district approximately 50 miles west of the Twin Cities, said there are fewer opportunities outside the metro area. “We don’t have that choice in rural Minnesota.”

Nathan said he’s found many schools in smaller districts have different programs in one building.

He also stated the role that the representatives fill. “The Legislature needs to be careful to provide some things but not tie the hands of schools.”

Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) pointed out that much of what the study calls for is already in statute, and wondered how Nathan intended to advocate the study’s findings differently.

“We’re disappointed that the focus has been on districts instead of local schools,” Nathan responded. “We haven’t focused on explicit goals.”

Equitable funding proposed

The House K-12 Education Committee heard a bill (HF3), sponsored by Rep. Maxine Penas (R-Badger), that would make education funding more equitable across the state.

“There needs to be some kind of provision for districts who cannot pass a levy,” Penas said at the Jan. 31 meeting.

The governor’s recommendation for next biennium calls for a \$60 per pupil unit increase for fiscal year 2003, with no change in 2002.

That recommendation is based on two equity regions — the Twin Cities metropolitan area and Greater Minnesota. Penas’ bill would eliminate the two regions, therefore distributing more funds to districts of a lower percentile. Districts are ranked by percentile according to allocations determined by a state formula.

The governor’s proposal totals \$21 million. HF3 would cost around \$35 million annually, increasing the provisions of current law by at least \$25 per pupil unit while providing up to

an additional \$75 per pupil unit more according to a bill’s prescribed percentile rank.

Penas’ bill, unlike the governor’s recommendation, does not include a distinction between districts that conduct a referendum and those who do not.

The committee did not act on the bill, but it will be among several bills considered for inclusion in the committee’s omnibus budget bill.

★ ENERGY

Heating help approved

A bill that would allow low-income families to receive heating assistance funds two weeks early was passed by the House Jan. 29.

The bill (HF421), sponsored by Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville), would release \$12.2 million dollars in federal money that would otherwise not be granted until Feb. 13. The next allocation would be given out at the end of February.

“This is an urgency and I hope we can make the money available to families who need it,” McElroy said.

Heating bills across the state are much higher than expected this winter. December 2000 was much colder than normal, and the price per unit of natural gas is almost triple the rate it was one year ago.

McElroy said the Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LI-HEAP) has received many more applications than in the

past. He said the average grant is \$400 to 500 per family.

“This bill will serve a significant number of families,” McElroy said.

The Senate also passed the bill on a vote of 58-0 Feb. 1. It now travels to the governor’s desk for approval.

McElroy reported that Gov. Jesse Ventura said he will stay in town to sign the bill, and, if signed, money would be available right away.

★ ENVIRONMENT

Legal battle nears resolution

A four-year dispute over the water level of Coon Lake in Anoka County has pitted lake residents against the county and the Department of Natural Resources. That battle may soon be over.

In hopes of resolving the dispute, Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar) has sponsored a bill (HF90) that would require the DNR to modify an outlet control for Coon Lake on an experimental basis, thus raising the water level by approximately six inches.

The committee approved the bill as amended. It will now go to the House floor.

The lake level dropped about one foot in 1996 after Anoka County, with permission from the DNR, removed sediment and vegetation upstream from the lake outlet structure.

A group of lakeshore owners subsequently sued the county and DNR for damages.

SIMON SAYS



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Simon Opatz joins his dad, Rep. Joe Opatz, and legislators at the big committee table Feb. 1 for the House Education Policy Committee meeting. Simon’s birth, nearly six years ago, prompted Opatz to sponsor legislation requiring that mothers be allowed to stay in the hospital at least 48 hours after birth. The bill became law in 1996.

Mediation in 1998 resulted in the plaintiffs suspending the lawsuit with the understanding that a resolution would be forthcoming.

In 1999, the Legislature directed the DNR to study the feasibility of raising the control elevation of Coon Lake. The study that followed examined options for raising the lake to a level acceptable to the most residents with the least environmental impact and lowest cost.

Kent Lokkesmoe, director of DNR waters, told the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee Jan. 30 that the department's recommendation is to construct a modification to the outlet control that would restrict the capacity of outflow. The cost, estimated to be less than \$10,000, would be paid out of the department's budget.

Zoo budget request

Lawmakers arriving for the Jan. 31 House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee meeting were greeted by a velvety chinchilla, two Australian lizards, and a dwarf white rabbit — each on the arm of a blue-clad volunteer.

All were emissaries from the Minnesota Zoological Garden, joining its official representatives for the annual budget presentation.

"The Minnesota Zoo's reputation extends broadly and deeply in the international zoological community as a leader in education and conservation work," said Lee Ehmke, the zoo's executive director.

Still referred to as the "new" zoo, the Minnesota Zoo is 23 years old and needs work, according to officials. The board also said the zoo needs a new vision, and they hired Ehmke last year to develop a "roadmap to the future."

An environmental lawyer and landscape architect, Ehmke designed the highly acclaimed Congo exhibit at the Bronx Zoo in New York.

Education is one of the zoo's principal activities. This year a proposal for a project called "Connect with the Wildlife at the Minnesota Zoo" would place new interpretive graphics displays in animal exhibit areas. The cost of the project, \$230,000, would come from the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources.

The zoo was created as a public-private partnership and remains so today. The state provides approximately 40 percent of the costs associated with the zoo. The rest comes from admissions, fees, and gifts from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

Gov. Jesse Ventura recommended the zoo's base budget of about \$15 million for the biennium, plus their LCMR request, and \$140,000 from the Natural Resources Fund, which comes from the lottery-in-lieu monies dedicated to the Department of Natural Resources.

Jim Reinholdz, the zoo's vice president for finance, pointed out the zoo's infrastructure is deteriorating and in need of refurbishing. In support of this, Ventura recommended a capital appropriation of \$4 million to continue the roadways and pathways project.

"Unfortunately," said Reinholdz, "the governor's budget is not enough to cover inflation." Additional increases of about 20 percent each in employee health care and energy costs have zoo finance officials worried.

"As an educational institution, you have a great opportunity to teach about energy conservation," suggested Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls).

Despite a budget shortfall, Ehmke and zoo

board members have high hopes for the future.

"I believe the Minnesota Zoo has the potential to become one of the world's great zoos," Ehmke said. "It could be one of the crown jewels of Minnesota."

★ GOVERNMENT

State help wanted

The state's largest employer could face a serious labor shortage in the near future, the head of the Department of Employee Relations told the House Government Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee Jan. 31.

Commissioner Julien Carter said the State of Minnesota employs more than 53,000 people. He said state government may be on the cusp of a "significant exodus of current workers."

Currently 70 percent of state employees are more than 40 years old. Carter said if past retirement trends continue, 18 percent of the workforce, including more than one-half of the professional and management staff, could retire in five years.

Carter said the state needs to develop a strategic plan to replace those workers and decide where resources should be spent. He said while some would argue that reducing the size of government would be a benefit, without a strategy in place it "may lead to more headaches than relief."

Over the years the state has had to adapt in the marketplace to compete with the private sector for workers. Carter said that historically the notion of public service attracted people to government work. Now the state has had to increase its compensation and benefit packages to get quality workers.

"We have an obligation to the taxpayers," he said. "We want to be competitive but we don't want to be extravagant."

Rising health care costs coupled with the aging workforce is another issue the state will need to address, Carter said. Currently the state insures more than 153,000 people including employees, their spouses and dependents.

He said limited competition due to few health care providers has meant rising insurance costs.

This past year the state began a long-term care insurance program for its employees. Carter said the amount of people signing up exceeded the department's expectations and that in the long run that insurance will provide significant savings for the state.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Susan Heffron, a volunteer at the Minnesota Zoo, holds a bearded dragon as committee chair Rep. Mark Holsten prepares to convene the Jan. 31 meeting of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee. The committee was hearing a budget presentation from the zoo.

★ HUMAN SERVICES

Adult foster care rules eased

When Donna Lundgren learned that her mother, who has multiple sclerosis, was too young to receive care from the only adult foster care facility in her county, she called her legislator.

"I could not believe how rigid the rule was," said Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls).

After looking into the matter, Wenzel sponsored a bill that would ease the way for people to be admitted to an adult foster care facility rather than a nursing home. He presented the bill (HF181) to the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Feb. 1. It was approved as amended and sent to the House floor.

Wenzel's bill would change the capacity requirements for adult foster care by lowering the age base from 60 to 55 for facilities that provide service to five persons or fewer.

The bill would also allow the commissioner of human services to grant variances for persons under 55 to be admitted to foster care homes with five or fewer beds when recommended by the county in which the facility is located, as long as other requirements are met.

"Sometimes statutory limits are at odds with what is in the best interests of patients," said Jerry Kerber, director of licensing for the Department of Human Services.

"I see a lot of situations like this," said Marie Poling, who owns Amazing Grace, the care center in Morrison County where Lundgren's mother will live if the bill passes.

Lundgren said her mother, Marge Mueller, who is 58, needs a lot of care but she's too young for a nursing home.

"She needs to be in her own community, near her friends, in a less institutional setting," Lundgren said.

The amendment allows the part of the law that affects Mueller to be effective the day after the governor signs it.

Less nursing home paperwork

Ask most nursing home staff what they think about paperwork and they'll tell you three things: it's a headache, some of it is necessary and some of it is not. But it's all required — by federal, state, or county entities.

In 1999 the Legislature asked the Department of Human Services to recommend a plan to revise Minnesota's case-mix system and reduce redundant and unnecessary paperwork for nursing facility payments.

The resulting report was presented to members of the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Jan. 30.

A case-mix system ensures that nursing homes admit residents who may require a lot of care. State payments to the facility depend on the amount of care needed by its residents. The system does not determine how much is spent, but how it is allocated.

The primary goal of the Nursing Facility Case-Mix Transition Plan, which took 18 months to complete, was to move from a dual to a single resident assessment system, which meant aligning the state's system with federal requirements.

The result is a report recommending "a state-of-the-art system," Bob Held, division director of continuing care for the elderly in the Department of Human Services, told the committee. "It is fair, equitable, and budget neutral."

Minnesota's current system is 16 years old, unwieldy, and obsolete in terms of technology. The new approach would be based on the federal system and will significantly reduce paperwork, Held said.

It will take time to update the system. Estimates on the date of implementation range from July 1, 2002 to Dec. 31, 2002, he said.

It will also cost money — about \$1 million the first year, said Ann Lutterman, director of

case-mix review for the Department of Health. Some of that money will come from the federal government.

The biggest costs will be for new technology, including hardware and software, and for education, she said.

On Jan. 25, Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls) introduced a bill (HF332) that would establish new nursing facility resident assessment and reimbursement systems based on the Department of Human Services study.

The bill has been referred to the Health and Human Services Policy Committee and awaits a hearing.

★ INDUSTRY

Extending closed mine maintenance

A bill (HF47) that would extend the time a closed mining facility is maintained was approved by the House Commerce, Jobs and Economic Development Committee Jan. 30.

Current law states any closed mining facility must be kept in operating condition for one year. The amendment would lengthen the time to two years.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), who sponsored the bill, said it would give another year for mining plants such as LTV Steel Mining Company time to pursue a new owner. The Hoyt Lakes plant ceased operations in early January, laying off 1,400 steel workers. Rukavina said there is potential for more.

Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) said that LTV Corporation is in Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

"I'm very fearful that in the next few months Chapter 11 could become Chapter 7," Bakk said. "It's essential that we try to keep those assets together."

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

Limiting imported steel

Representatives of the Commerce, Jobs and Economic Development Committee approved a bill (HF219) Jan. 30 that would send an official message, in the form of a resolution, to President George W. Bush requesting that his administration investigate illegal dumping of steel products in the United States.

"We can compete with any country in the world if we have a fair chance," said Stan Daniels, staff representative for United Steelworkers of America.

"Illegal dumping" refers to the practice of other countries exporting their excess steel into the United States and selling it at a lower market price than U.S. manufacturers. Officials say this practice has resulted in more than

AFFORDABLE HOUSING



Mary Harms carries her sign and 17-month-old granddaughter, Janessa, whose parents are working hard to be able to afford their own home, at an affordable housing rally held in the Rotunda Jan. 31.

7,000 job losses for steel workers across the nation in the last six months, including 1,500 in Minnesota.

The same resolution was proposed three years ago and passed in the Senate, but didn't make it through the House, said Rep. Tony Sertich (DFL-Chisholm), who is sponsoring the bill.

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) stated that 70 percent of steel companies could be filing Chapter 11 bankruptcy by end of year, and he attributes some of that to illegal dumping.

"It's not because we can't compete, it's because of dumping," he said.

"This country has a very strong demand for steel and we need foreign imports," but the percentage of foreign sale is too great, said Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook). "Washington D.C. needs to investigate."

Daniels said it has been proven that some countries have done illegal dumping in the United States and the federal government is currently taking action on several cases.

Taconite brings in \$1.5 billion annually for Minnesota, Daniels said. "We will not let this industry die."

The bill now travels to the House floor. Once it passes both the House and Senate, and receives the governor's approval, a proclamation will be sent to the president.

★ RECREATION

No sales tax for dancing

Some Minnesota dancers might have a little more bounce in their step due to a proposed tax break heard by the House Taxes Committee Sales and Income Tax Division Jan. 29.

HF90 would exempt non profit dance clubs from the state sales tax. The exemption would apply to admission, food and drink, and other sales held at dances sponsored by square dance, folk dance, polka, and ballroom dance clubs.

The committee took no action on the measure, but Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson), the division chair, said it would be considered for possible inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), the bill's sponsor, said the tax relief would help those nonprofit clubs that pay a small amount of sales tax and have to pay accounting help to fill out the forms.

Mulder said the measure would also help those that were unaware that they were supposed to be collecting sales tax at their dances and are now worried about owing the state years of taxes.

Robert Maiden, from the Minnesota

Federation of Square Dancers, said most square dance clubs in the state are small in size, averaging five squares, or 40 dancers. He said the costs to rent space have continued to increase, as has the cost of hiring callers, and cuers — those that call round dances, similar to ballroom dancing.

The Department of Revenue estimates the annual sales of organizations exempted under the bill is around \$6,500. The department estimates lost revenue associated with the bill would be around \$47,000 in 2002, and \$51,000 in following years.

Mulder said many clubs currently are exempt from federal taxes as they have qualified as educational organizations. He said some of those clubs are bigger than the clubs that would become exempt from state sales taxes under his measure.

★ SAFETY

Don't let the dog bite

Technology and "man's best friend" may become one as legislators are considering a bill that could significantly change laws affecting dangerous dogs.

Among the most significant changes in HF130, sponsored by Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul), is a provision that would require owners of dogs deemed dangerous by local animal control officers to pay for the mandatory insertion of a computer microchip into their canines' backs.

A dog would be deemed dangerous based on its behavior, not its breed. That determination, according to the bill, would be made by a local animal control official.

The microchips would be inserted by a veterinarian or animal control officials, and would assist in the tracking and identification of the dogs. The bill would make it a misdemeanor to remove the chip.

Another provision would create misdemeanor and civil liability penalties for owners of dogs who injure service dogs, such as seeing-eye or police dogs.

Because of concerns over the number and character of changes, the House Civil Law Committee voted against moving the bill out of committee during its Jan. 31 meeting. The committee plans to revisit the issue during its next meeting.

"Basically, this is just a plain English rewrite of existing law," Dawkins said. "Sort of a 'get-tough-on-dangerous-dogs' bill."

Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault) expressed concern about a provision that would prevent dog owners from appealing a decision higher than the district court level. "I have

concerns about due process," she said.

St. Paul attorney Pamela Finamore testified against the bill, saying it would unnecessarily increase the number of dogs determined to be dangerous and would unreasonably limit dog owners' ability to appeal the determination.

That sentiment was echoed by an American Kennel Club (AKC) through a letter distributed to committee members. According to the club, which represents 70 local dog clubs in Minnesota, the bill "places greater authority and discretion in the hands of animal control officers. In doing so, (it) could make the process by which a dog is determined dangerous much more subjective."

★ TAXES

Governor's tax plan

Calling it a substantial and ambitious tax plan, House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) presented Gov. Jesse Ventura's tax proposal to the House Taxes Committee Jan. 30.

The committee is scheduled to hold several more hearings on the bill, which has not been formally introduced in the House.

Sviggum said he is sponsoring the measure as a courtesy to the governor even though there are provisions in the bill he does not



Department of Revenue Commissioner Matt Smith, left, and House Speaker Steve Sviggum, who is sponsoring Gov. Jesse Ventura's tax plan, listen as members of the House Taxes Committee ask questions about the proposal during a Jan. 30 hearing.

support. He praised the overall bill for “reducing taxes for all Minnesotans.”

“This is reform like we have not seen for a long, long time,” Sviggum said.

He said the bill addresses real life situations and provides substantial relief from the tax burden on all state taxpayers.

Department of Revenue Commissioner Matt Smith said the bill combines both permanent tax relief and fundamental tax reform.

He said one major goal of the proposal is to reduce property taxes, dropping that tax from the second highest tax collected in the state to the third highest, behind income and sales taxes.

Smith said the bill also is an attempt to modernize the sales tax to make it fairer and more representative of today’s economy.

In total the bill would cut property taxes by \$801 million and income taxes by \$496 million. The bill would cut the sales tax rate from 6.5 percent to 6 percent but broaden the base by taxing more services. Those changes would mean an increase in collection of around \$446 million a year.

Smith said the total tax savings per year would be nearly \$1.05 billion.

Sviggum said raising taxes by broadening the sales tax during a time of budget surpluses was an idea he was not sold on.

“I have difficulty with sending a mixed message to taxpayers,” he said.

Ventura’s proposal does not include a 2001 sales tax rebate but Smith said that portion of the governor’s plan would be forthcoming in another bill. He said that proposal would be similar to those already introduced in the House that would total about \$925 million in automatic rebates to 2.4 million taxpayers.

★ TRANSPORTATION

Improving the bus system

The Twin Cities transit system would double its current size in the next two decades under a plan put forward by the Metropolitan Council.

Met Council Chair Ted Mondale said the agency hopes that by the year 2020 capacity of the bus system would increase twofold. Currently around 125,000 people ride the metro buses every day.

The Metropolitan Council gave an overview of the agency’s services to the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee Jan. 31.

Mondale said in order to meet the goal the system would have to increase by about 3.5 percent a year. He said the benefits of this expansion would include \$2 billion in savings

from not having to build roads and expand utilities.

The agency also estimates other benefits including that around 110,500 acres of land would be spared development, 550 million miles of travel eliminated, 245,000 fewer auto trips would be taken daily, 27 million gallons of fuel would be saved, and 6,600 tons of carbon monoxide would be eliminated.

Mondale said the bus system will remain the backbone of the area’s mass transit system. He said the country’s biggest transit mistake occurred in Los Angeles where the development of light rail led to a “gutting” of that city’s bus system.

The agency would be seeking increased state funding both in the budget base and in property taxes, Mondale said. Also the agency is proposing a fare increase from \$1 up to \$1.25.

Rep. Jim Davnie (DFL-Mpls) expressed concern with the proposed fare increase because it would lead to fewer people riding buses.

John Byrd, the interim general manager of Metro Transit, said that although in the short term the fare increase would inevitably decrease ridership, in the long term an increase in bus service and further improvements to the system would ultimately mean even more riders.

Obsolete rules revised

The task of repealing obsolete rules, something Gov. Jesse Ventura has long promoted as a key element of legislative responsibility, has begun.

HF254, sponsored by Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall), would repeal six rules identified by the Department of Transportation as obsolete or repetitive. The House Transportation Policy Committee approved the bill Feb. 1 and sent it to the House floor.

Hope Jensen, rules coordinator for the department, explained in a letter that federal law prohibits states from enacting rules which would allow states to administer tariffs on intrastate carriers. Therefore, according to Jensen, state rules that guide the collection of such tariffs should be repealed.

Other rules that HF254 would repeal also refer to the tariff enforcement.

Jane Nelson, management analyst for the Department of Public Safety, told the committee that repealing laws at the legislative level is far more efficient than doing so via intradepartmental procedures.

Departments are required to allow public hearings and meet other obligations before amending rules on their own initiative, a lengthy and costly process. “We pay \$80 to \$90

per page to publish (rule changes) in the public register,” she said.

The bill has already encountered some opposition. Members decided some provisions in the original list of rules to be repealed should remain in effect. In fact, HF254 passed the committee with only one-third of the original 17 rules to be repealed.

Seifert welcomed the amendments, hoping to make the bill as palatable as possible. “I want to make sure that the House floor doesn’t become a bidding war for getting rid of rules.”

More troopers sought

Gov. Jesse Ventura’s proposed budget calls for 65 new state troopers to be funded with \$4.3 million from the Trunk Highway Fund during the next two years.

Members of the House Transportation Finance Committee heard that message at its Jan. 29 meeting.

According to the governor’s budget, denial of the additional funds will “prevent the State Patrol from providing even basic coverage in many areas of the state. This will seriously compromise the safety and security of our trunk highway system.”

The state Department of Public Safety hopes to have a total of 566 State Patrol officers working throughout Minnesota by 2004. The Legislature had previously provided funds aimed at sufficiently training, equipping, and paying that many officers.

However, Department of Public Safety Commissioner Charlie Weaver said that his department was unable to hire sufficient officers due to increased health insurance, fuel, and vehicle maintenance costs. Health insurance costs for the State Patrol have increased by “nearly 80 percent” between 1997 and 2001, according to the department.

Some of the requested funds would be earmarked for a training program which would introduce new recruits to the department’s procedures and prepare them for duty on Minnesota’s highways. The funds would be drawn from the Trunk Highway Fund, a resource established by the state constitution for the construction and operation of state highways.

Weaver will continue his testimony at a later hearing.

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Capture the flag

Modern-day interest in Civil War battle involving Minnesota's First regiment brings captured confederate flag to the forefront

By JONAS M. WALKER

The honor-bound dictates of battle place terrific importance upon a military regiment's flag. In ages past colorful banners served as both a communication tool, alerting friends and foes of a particular unit's movement, and as a spiritual rallying point before, during, and after battle for weary soldiers.

So it was on July 3, 1863, the bloodiest day in American history.

That day was the third day of battle between Union and Confederate forces near Gettysburg, Pa., the "Confederate High Tide," the northern most point of conflict during the Civil War.

During a particularly vigorous point in the battle known as Pickett's Charge, some 15,000 Confederate soldiers assailed the Union line at a point held in part by a complement of highly-decorated Minnesota soldiers. The result was predictably tragic — the 28th Virginia Regiment suffered 90 percent casualties, and their Minnesota counterparts fared little better.

According to research conducted by the Minnesota Historical Society, Private Marshall Sherman of Company C, First Minnesota infantry, spotted a Confederate lieutenant bearing his regiment's flag during the storied assault.

Sherman would later report that he approached the Confederate officer and demanded the flag, threatening the Southerner with his bayonet. Although later reports cast doubt upon the accuracy of Sherman's account, no one disputes that he captured both the enemy officer and the all-important flag.

So popular was Sherman's action that he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor — the first St. Paulite to do so. A dutiful as well as brave soldier, Sherman handed over the prize flag to the United States Department of War, in keeping with military regulations. The flag was catalogued along with other captured equipment and labeled "No. 58."

The historical society reports that the War Department returned the flag to Sherman, although it is not known precisely when. It was displayed at his funeral in 1896. Afterwards, it

was moved to the Minnesota State Capitol, where it was exhibited as glorious war booty.

In 1905, the flag came under the official custody of the historical society. Today it is cared for by skilled textile conservators and collections curators and held in climate-controlled cabinets within the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul.

For most Civil War artifacts, the story would end there. However, riding a wave of popularized interest in the Civil War, a group of Confederate re-enactors from the

Roanoke, Va. area asked to be given the flag in 1998.

The Minnesota Historical Society refused the request, citing their legal responsibility to care for fragile artifacts. In its judgment, there was no competent curatorial authority that could be entrusted with the delicate flag. The re-enactors did not have the necessary preservation resources, nor did a Virginia museum nominated by the re-enactors to receive the artifact.

Unwilling to give up, the Virginians convinced their own state legislature to pass a resolution calling for the flag's return to "the people of Virginia."

Not wishing to fight the Battle of Gettysburg all over again, the historical society asked the Minnesota Attorney General's Office to formulate a response to the re-enactors' increasingly vigorous attempts to acquire the flag.

According to a statement issued by the attorney general at the time, Hubert H. "Skip" Humphrey III, the re-enactors based their request on a 1905 Congressional joint resolution that required the Department of Defense, formerly the War Department, to return all

Continued on page 27



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Minnesota Historical Society Director Nina Archabal, *left*, gives members of the House Jobs and Economic Development Committee a brief history of a Confederate flag captured by the First Minnesota regiment during the battle of Gettysburg before having Ian Stewart, deputy director of the Interpretive Programs Division, give a more detailed account of the circumstances surrounding the society's custody of the flag. Members and staff gathered around the flag are, *from right*, Rep. Michael Paymar, Rep. Bob Gunther, Rep. Chris Gerlach, Rep. Dale Walz, Rep. Tony Sertich, Rep. Dan McElroy, Stewart, David Kelliher from the historical society, Linda Holmes from House Research, and Rep. Tim Mahoney.

Budget equity

Ventura focuses on accountability and student achievement while legislators strive to satisfy districts' requests

BY THERESA STAHL

State representatives argued with government officials about the governor's intentions for general education after their first look at recommendations for the 2002-2003 biennium.

During the Jan. 26 and Jan. 29 meetings of the House K-12 Education Finance Committee, members said they weren't convinced the budget reflects an effort to provide equitable funding to schools across the state.

"The governor, I believe, means well," said Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka). He said the problem is extremely challenging, but hopes Gov. Jesse Ventura will accept the committee's advice.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) said that upon seeing no increase for small schools he doubted Ventura's intentions for more equitable funding.

"I don't know how the governor can expect an equity piece for education and still be consistent with his philosophies," he said.

Tom Melcher, manager of the program finance division for the Department of Children, Families and Learning, said the governor's recommendation calls for a \$60 per pupil unit increase for fiscal year 2003, with no change in 2002.

"There will be no increase for two years unless districts pass a referendum," Melcher said. He said the state expects to see a \$50 million increase in school district referendums across the state during the biennium.

"This seems counteractive to the goal we set to close the gap," said Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake). "I don't see (an effort for equitable funding) occurring in this bill."

Wayne Hayes, from the governor's office, said projections support the governor's goal of simplifying government. He added that Ventura would make his final decision based on accountability and student achievement. "The governor has not closed the door to additional funding," he said.

Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie) pointed out that the "equity problem" is still there.

Hayes responded there might be different perspectives between the executive and legislative branches and emphasized Ventura is

looking at the issue statewide, examining greater flexibility, high achievement, current needs, and where he wants to go in the future. "Students and needs are not uniform across the state," Hayes said.

Legislators were frustrated with how the bill would affect individual school districts. Kielkucki said members of his district have called him, expressing their disappointment with the budget.

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) said all districts want less reliance on referenda, not more.

"This bill is every district's worst nightmare," she said.

Ness brought up another downfall of not making an effort to establish more equitable funding.

"No equity equals teacher shortages — there are no resources to compete. Money isn't everything," he added, "but the idea of punishing everyone is not a fair approach to help all students (receive) a fair education."

Hayes mentioned a \$15 million incentive in the budget for school districts to attempt compensating teachers in a different way than the traditional "steps and lanes" system.

Teachers are currently paid by "steps" — the number of years a person has been teaching — and "lanes" — the degree or degrees a person has earned. The new incentive program, which is not yet clearly defined, would compensate teachers according to their students' achievement in the classroom.

"This goes away from steps and lanes,"

Hayes said. The new plan to pay teachers based on "student achievement is a step in the right direction."

The governor's recommendations decrease education funding by 1 percent in 2002, but increase it by almost 2 percent in 2003. Both funding totals fall below the rate of inflation, which worried representatives, especially regarding special education.

Greiling said she doesn't want to see a "backlash" to funding for special education children.

Christine Jax, commissioner of the Department of Children, Families and Learning, said Ventura has been speaking to people across the state about special education and is concerned about the state's national profile in that area. She said special education funding is "a dilemma for the governor."

Jax said special education receives state and federal funding and suggested teachers, legislators, and school administrators complain to Congress about the funding situation in a uniform way.

"This bill is every district's worst nightmare."

—Rep. Mindy Greiling

Congress has committed to fund 40 percent of special education costs. However, cur-

rent funding levels only represent about 9 or 10 percent of the necessary aid.


The difficulty in special education, along with most funding issues, Jax said, is that the governor got elected as a fiscal conservative.

Rep. Leslie Schumacher (DFL-Princeton) said going back and saying what Ventura did last year doesn't address current needs.

Hayes responded that the governor's recommendations attempt to make the system better. "The budget sets the stage for continued goal of student achievement."

"I look at the rung for my district, and I don't know if they're going to make it," Abeler said. He added that the budget shows nice ideas, but he's concerned.

"Is (Ventura) serious about increased funding?" asked Committee Chair Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington).

Hayes replied "Yes" and added that the governor will "base his final decision on what appears on his desk," referring to his power to approve or veto any bill forwarded to the governor's desk by the Legislature. 

Breathe deeply

Legislators, PCA hope better fuels and consumer education lead to cleaner air

BY MARY KAY WATSON

Minnesota may be ahead of the rest of the country in air quality, but a report from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency says it's no time to be complacent.

Major strides in cleaning up the air have made it look cleaner, PCA Commissioner Karen Studders told the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee Jan. 25, but "air toxics that are now of concern are not visible."

"Command and control" approaches to reducing air pollution worked in the past when major polluters were stationary and easily identifiable, she said. However, today a better model would involve a cooperative approach to address mobile sources of pollution.

"It is time for a paradigm shift in the area of environmental protection," Studders said.

In the Twin Cities metropolitan area, health care and other costs from mobile, or transportation-related, air pollution have been estimated at \$1 billion annually according to a recent University of Minnesota study.

The PCA report identifies particulate matter and toxic air pollutants, or air "toxics," as the culprits. Particulates are very small airborne particles from combustion sources. Toxics include a variety of chemicals, such as those found in vehicle exhaust.

"There is a growing concern about the potential health impact of particulate matter," said David Thornton, major facilities manager of the Policy and Planning Division of the Pollution Control Agency.

Smaller than one-tenth of the diameter of a human hair, particulates penetrate deeply into the lungs when inhaled. Hospital admissions and deaths have increased along with the measured increase of particulates in the air.

Most air toxics emissions come from mobile sources, such as cars, trucks, and airplanes. Small stationary sources, which contribute about 34 percent of air toxics, include wood stoves, gas stations, and dry cleaners. Large stationary sources, like refineries, that are the



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Tim Gerlach, director of outdoor air for the American Lung Association of Minnesota, discusses air toxics during the Jan. 29 House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee meeting.

traditional targets of pollution control agencies, contribute 9 percent. Natural sources such as volcanoes, forest fires, and microbes are usually minor contributors.

Of the 11 air toxics targeted by the PCA, two generate special concern — benzene and diesel exhaust, both of which are known to cause cancer at certain concentrations. It is unknown whether those concentrations occur at ordinary outdoor levels.

Air particulates and toxics and the related problem of global warming are results of a fossil fuel-based economy. Fuel efficiency is at a 20-year low due to an increase in the number of light trucks and SUVs, according to Leo Raudys, PCA community and area-wide manager for the metro district.

To change those numbers the agency has set two major goals by the year 2010: to reduce particulate emissions and ozone-causing

pollutants by 20 percent and to reduce concentrations of air toxics to below federally established health benchmarks.

Raudys said the agency plans to meet these goals by encouraging the following:

- Reducing fuel and energy consumption;
- Substituting cleaner fuels; and
- Increasing air pollution-reduction technologies.

A 10-point plan submitted by the PCA includes study, collaboration, education, and action. People need to be educated to make better environmental choices, Raudys said.

"It is time to market social change," agreed Tim Gerlach, director of outdoor air for the American Lung Association of Minnesota.

Gerlach cited a consumer survey by the association's Clean Air Fuels Education (CAFÉ) Alliance showing that most people are willing to use less polluting fuels and vehicles but few are able to identify pollutants or their impact.


The goal of the group, which includes manufacturers such as Koch Petroleum Group, the Minnesota Corn Growers Association, and the Ford Motor Company, is to educate consumers to use "better" traditional or alternative fuels that exceed federal and state clean air requirements.

On Jan. 30, Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), chair of the committee, took a step toward consumer education when he introduced HF455 that is aimed at giving Minnesota residents a clearer picture of the clean fuels that are available and why it's important to use them.

The bill has been referred to the environment policy committee and awaits a hearing.

Clean fuels as defined in the bill include the following:

- Biodiesel blends of 20 percent or greater by volume
- Compressed natural gas
- Ethanol blends of 70 percent or greater by volume
- Hydrogen
- Liquefied natural gas
- Liquefied petroleum

The bill would appropriate \$500,000 a year for two years from the general fund to the commissioner of commerce for "a public education and awareness program on the use of Minnesota clean fuels." The bill requires the funds to be matched by non-state sources. 

Duty noted

Four new bills aim to provide tax relief to Minnesota's military personnel

By DAVID MAEDA

Minnesota is one of nine states that does not recognize military pay in its tax codes. As a result the number of military personnel that list Minnesota as their residence is decreasing, according to testimony in the House Taxes Committee Sales and Income Tax Division Jan. 29.

Service members spoke in support of four bills that would give tax incentives to the state's military personnel. The committee took no action on any of the proposals but each will be considered for inclusion in the omnibus tax bill.

Angela Schweitzer, a specialist in the Minnesota Army National Guard, said as a single mother holding two jobs to make ends meet, the extra money would make a difference.

"In my situation every dollar counts. Something like a tax break would add those dollars that I need and keep me off of other state funded programs," she said.

Schweitzer said a deduction might also help reduce the number of service members leaving after the first six years of duty is complete.

"This might be just the thing we need to keep the number of (people) in our Minnesota Army National Guard up to where it needs to be. This might be the incentive to get them to re-enlist," she said.

Rep. Dale Walz (R-Brainerd) said in the past Minnesota's tax treatment of its service men and women has been different. A \$2,000 tax deduction was first initiated for Minnesota military personnel in 1943 during World War II. During the Korean conflict the amount was increased to \$3,000, and was further increased to \$5,000 during the Vietnam War.

In 1987 the omnibus tax bill eliminated many deductions including the military subtraction in order to conform with federal tax reform.

Walz said that many of the state's military personnel have chosen to change their residence to states with lower tax rates.

According to the Department of Military Affairs there were an estimated 10,000 military personnel who listed Minnesota as their state of residence in 1996. Since then that number has



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Tom Nesbitt, left, from the Retired Officers Association, speaks in favor of a bill to subtract military pension from the individual income tax during a Jan. 29 meeting of the Sales and Income Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee. Also testifying in favor of the bill was Keith Westrup, a 22-year veteran of the Marine Corps.

declined by an estimated 12 percent.

HF294, sponsored by Walz, would allow a military pay subtraction of up to \$8,000 from Minnesota taxable income and income tax liability. The Department of Revenue estimates the cost would be around \$9.9 million a year.

"I think it's very important we recognize our military personnel and reinstate this tax deduction to them, just as a dedication to them and as an incentive to serve in the military," Walz said.

Rep. Steve Wenzel (DFL-Little Falls) a co-sponsor of the bill, said the 1987 reforms were an attempt to simplify the tax system. But ultimately eliminating the deductions proved to be a "foolish" and "counterproductive decision."

"When you compare what other states do for guard members, Minnesota is found wanting," Wenzel said.

Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), a co-sponsor of HF294, presented HF68 saying that it would allow a subtraction for active duty military pay for members stationed outside of

Minnesota. The proposal would cost about \$4.4 million per year.

Buesgens said his four brothers all served in the military and all ended up changing their residences in part because of Minnesota's tax policies.

"HF68 says to the young men and women who join our active duty service that we honor and value your commitment to this state and country," Buesgens said. "And we as a Legislature will demonstrate that by correcting a fundamental injustice of taxing these servicemen and women even when they are not stationed in the state of Minnesota."

HF230, sponsored by Rep. Connie Bernardy (DFL-Fridley), would allow active duty personnel including those serving the United Nations and in the Peace Corps to subtract the first \$5,000 of military pay in determining income tax liability.

Bernardy said she supports the other measures, but her bill is a lower cost option. The Department of Revenue estimates HF230 would cost around \$2 million per year.


"Minnesota does lose out on more than just the tax that (residents) pay on this income. They also lose out by losing the numbers of people that

normally stay in Minnesota if they didn't have to pay income tax," Bernardy said. "Whether it be congressional representatives at the national level or losing highway or welfare type funds from the federal government"

Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) said his bill, HF91, would allow taxpayers to subtract military benefit pensions from taxable income. Those benefits are currently not exempt federally and would cost the state around \$13.2 million in 2002 and \$13.9 million in 2003.

Steven Meyer, a retired serviceman who spent 22 years in the U.S. Navy, including 17 years in Minnesota as a recruiter, said tax issues are important to military personnel.

"I've had a lot of contact with military retirees and people on active duty and I can assure you that the taxation in Minnesota is of utmost concern," Meyer said.

He said the money retirees would bring to the state would more than make up any holes the tax deductions would cause. 

Donning a new hat

Goodwin draws on experience as researcher, lobbyist, and policy expert in new role as legislator

By Jonas M. Walker

Rep. Barbara Goodwin (DFL-Columbia Heights) describes her ascent to office as an extension of her previous work developing state policy.



Rep. Barbara Goodwin

As a first-time member of the House of Representatives, she joins the caucus whose legislative services office she used to direct. She has also led DFL research efforts on matters of state policy, and later represented the Minnesota Association

of Professional Employees as a lobbyist in the Capitol.

Her expertise led to a position as a planner for children's mental health policies in Hennepin County, a position she plans to keep, at least part-time, while lawmaking.

Goodwin now represents District 52A, an area covering several suburbs north of Minneapolis. She takes the seat most recently occupied by Sen. Satveer Chaudhary (DFL-Fridley), who successfully ran for state Senate.

Although she has lived most of her life in the area she now represents, Goodwin says the decision to run for the House was itself an educational experience.

"I wasn't totally aware of all the issues in my district when I decided to run," she said. "You don't really know an area until you knock on doors for five months. But I knew that whatever issues they were, I would be able to jump on those pretty quickly."

Goodwin lists health care, transportation, and education as matters of keen concern to her constituents.

She says she was aware that health care concerns troubled the minds of many Minnesotans, but was surprised to discover the extent of hardships facing people living in her own community. She cites her encounters with the disturbing trend of elderly couples on a fixed income having insufficient funds to purchase medication.

"They had to choose who was going to get their prescription and who was not," she said.

The issue is especially relevant in Goodwin's district, as 60 percent of her constituents are over 55, and many have only marginal health insurance coverage, she said.

Goodwin further explained the mixed blessing of economic development, which her district has seen with the addition of one company's corporate headquarters. Medtronic Corporation recently placed its global headquarters in Fridley, bringing with it 5,000 well-paying and secure jobs.

While Goodwin says she is thankful for the placement, and welcomes the company, her

Goodwin says her committee assignments, including the House Education Policy and K-12 Education Finance Committees, will allow her some leverage in shaping policy important to her district.

Perhaps the striking example of such a difference can be found in the attitudes of Goodwin's constituents toward one issue that consistently divides urban areas and wealthier suburbs. "I asked people about property taxes and they said, 'No, they're pretty good,'" explains Goodwin.

She also said she looks forward to working with her colleagues in the Republican caucus, and remembers enjoying success with those members as a former lobbyist for state professional employees.

"I had Republican votes on a lot of the legislation that was promoted by the members I worked for, so I don't expect that (being in the minority) will be an overwhelming problem," she said.

"I wasn't totally aware of all the issues in my district when I decided to run. You don't really know an area until you knock on doors for five months. But I knew that whatever issues they were, I would be able to jump on those pretty quickly."

—Rep. Barbara Goodwin

constituents are concerned about the increased traffic on an already congested portion of metropolitan freeway that runs through her district — Interstate 694.

"Anytime we can get an employer that provides health benefits and decent wages, we're really lucky," she said.

She is hoping the proposed NorthStar Corridor commuter rail system can help alleviate what she fears will be an undue traffic burden in her area.

Goodwin says her district "has a lot of school districts running in the red." She says that is due partly to changes increasingly facing inner suburban districts like her own.

"My area is becoming more like an inner city than a suburb," she said. Goodwin explains that an increasing portion of students in those districts require special counseling or instruction in English, services that only recently became necessary.

Though she hopes to serve her constituents as a House member for many years, Goodwin says she is already impressed by the stamina demonstrated by her more senior colleagues. "There are plenty of people here older than me, but I can't count on having that kind of energy at that age," she said. Legislating is "a lot of work, a lot of time, a lot of energy."

DISTRICT 52A

1998 population (estimate): 32,437

Largest city: Fridley

County: Anoka

Location: Northern Twin Cities suburbs

Top Concern: "My most important priorities will be health care, transportation, and education."

— Rep. Barbara Goodwin

Coming home

After years away from his home in Minnesota, Johnson takes seat in St. Paul

By JONAS M. WALKER

Rep. Jeff Johnson (R-Plymouth) is a man whose travels, ancestry, and faith have shaped his understanding.



Rep. Jeff Johnson

The new representative cites two particular places as key to bringing him where he is today — the first, like many Minnesotans, is the land of his ethnic ancestry, Norway.

Johnson said that ancestry informs his views of government. He sums

those up as “self-sufficiency, hard work, and the limited scope and reach of government.”

After growing up in Detroit Lakes, Johnson enrolled in Concordia College in Moorhead, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in economics. He then attained a law degree from Georgetown University in Washington D.C., his second life-defining location; significant because it enhanced his appreciation of home.

“I missed the Midwest,” Johnson explained. “Three years was enough.” So, the newly anointed lawyer returned as far west as Chicago, where he began working at business litigation in a large firm.

After a number of years, he returned to Minnesota, settling in the Twin Cities and beginning work for Cargill, a major corporation with interests ranging from agriculture to manufacturing. Johnson said he enjoys the job in part because he can get out and “meet the people who actually make money for the company, not just those of us who sit behind desks and push paper. It gives me a better perspective on life.”

Johnson says his experience with employment litigation has prepared him for functioning in the House. Citing the importance of discernment and judgment, Johnson says that, in his Cargill position, he “gets to hear a lot of interesting things that may or may not be happening.”

He plans on remaining with Cargill during the session, and returning full-time after the House adjourns in the spring.

Johnson assumes the seat most recently occupied by former Rep. Henry Todd Van Dellen (R-Plymouth), a fellow Republican who decided not to seek re-election. Johnson now represents a district composed of western Minneapolis suburbs and smaller cities in Hennepin County. Although he says his district “leans Republican,” he faced strong opposition from Dorothy Muffett, whom he characterized as a moderate Democrat.

Johnson says he ran on the issues of education and “fiscal conservatism.” He explains that

“Taxpayers should get back every penny of the budget surplus. Individuals and families can make much better decisions about spending money and educating their kids than a bunch of bureaucrats in St. Paul can.”

—Rep. Jeff Johnson

he was first motivated to run when his son was born three years ago.

“After our little boy was born, I realized how hard it is to raise a child,” he said. “It’s tough to raise a child in Minnesota, in the United States. And I realized that is directly related to legislation.”

Elaborating, Johnson said tax burdens contribute to the already difficult job of parenting. Taxes “make it harder for parents to do what they feel is right with their children,” he said.

Specifically, Johnson would like to “eliminate entirely” the Profile of Learning, which, along with the basic skills tests, comprise the state’s graduation standards measuring the performance of public school students. Johnson favors replacing that system with what he characterizes as an “input system,” in which the state demands relatively few skills and leaves the actual work of curriculum development to local school boards, teachers, and especially parents.

Although he says he came in bearing the frustration of parents regarding K-12 funding and governance, Johnson admits he has a lot to learn.

“I thought I knew a lot. I didn’t,” he said. “It’s a fairly steep learning curve” just to understand the way Minnesota funds primary education. “It has become so complex, it’s ridiculous,” he says. He hopes to make the system more accessible to average citizens.

His other top priority is to bring the principles of fiscal conservatism to bear on all areas of legislation. “Taxpayers should get back every penny of the budget surplus,” he said. “Individuals and families can make much better decisions about spending money and educating their kids than a bunch of bureaucrats in St. Paul can.”

He expressed his frustration with what he sees as “a mentality from both sides of the aisle that the people’s money belongs first to the government, and only second to families and individuals.”

Johnson counts Ronald Reagan among his ideological heroes. More locally, he credits State Sen. Gen Olson (R-Minnetrista) as a mentor, saying her legislative behavior and ideas make her a role model in the Legislature.

Recalling his joy in litigation, Johnson also expressed his appreciation for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. “He doesn’t back down,” said Johnson.

But supporting it all is a key element of Johnson’s true personality: his faith. Johnson says his Lutheran faith is extremely important in his life. “It factors into every decision, every day,” he said.

DISTRICT 34B

1998 population (estimate): 38,036

Largest city: Plymouth

County: Hennepin

Location: Western Twin Cities suburbs

Top concern: “My most important priority is the elimination of the Profile of Learning.”

—Rep. Jeff Johnson

Straight shooter

Walz brings law enforcement background, and interests in gun owners' and property owners' rights to the Legislature

BY THERESA STAHL

Like other elected officials in the state, Rep. Dale Walz (R-Brainerd) advocates a smaller, less intrusive government.



Rep. Dale Walz

“One of the roles of government is to enable people to take care of themselves, but not to take care of the people,” he said.

Walz campaigned for a spot in the Legislature by suggesting that he would not “over-govern” as a member of the House. His 2000 campaign for district 12A came after a loss in 1998, where he earned 46.3 percent of the vote.

“I decided that was good enough to try again,” he said.

Promoting tax rebates, equitable school funding, and property owners and gun owners rights, Walz is now a part of a political body he's always been drawn to.

“As long as I can remember I've been interested in politics,” he said.

Walz defeated incumbent Rep. Kris Hasskamp (DFL-Crosby) in November 2000. Hasskamp had served in the House since 1988.

A police officer for 16 years, and now serving as captain in the Baxter Police Department, Walz said the biggest plus he can contribute to the Legislature, and particularly his spot on the House Crime Prevention Committee, is his experience as a law enforcement official. He has been a member of Minnesota Sex Crimes Investigators Association and has specialized in child molestation issues.

Although Walz's good friend and fellow officer, Russ Wicklund, doesn't live in the same district and therefore couldn't vote for him, Wicklund says Walz will be an excellent representative.

“He's very good with people,” and at asking questions, listening, and problem solving, Wicklund said.

Wicklund, who started working with Walz in March 1990, was surprised to learn Walz

would be running for state office, but didn't doubt his ability to do the job well.

“I could see him doing anything he set his mind to,” he said.

Walz has been involved with many state organizations during his time with the police department.

“He works with a lot of county investigators, state officers, and pollution control,” Wicklund said. “He works with every kind of agency in the area when the job calls for it.”

Walz says his background of working with city councils and other government entities

owners' rights. He fully supports people's right to bear arms, and at the same time understands the importance of teaching children gun safety and respect for weapons.

“A lot of it is parental responsibility,” Walz said. He has three children, ages 6, 10, and 16.

“My son is 6, and he likes to look at my guns,” said Walz, who keeps his guns locked in a vault where his children can't get to them. “But I taught my son — my daughters, too — respect for guns and that they're not toys.”

Walz said his two younger children don't really understand why their dad now works in St. Paul, but his 16-year-old daughter is interested in her father's new job. His children live in Owatonna with their mother, and his new role at the Capitol allows him to see them more.

In his spare time, Walz also enjoys deer hunting, walleye fishing, and working on his 1951 Ford.

“Hopefully we can get the budget surplus returned to the taxpayers, see more prominent income tax cuts, and some restructuring and reforming of property taxes.”

—Rep. Dale Walz

will contribute to his work at the Capitol.

“It's on a much grander scale down here,” he said, “but it helps a little bit.”

Eager for results in tax cuts, Walz said he plans to support action on tax reform.

“Hopefully we can get the budget surplus returned to the taxpayers, see more prominent income tax cuts, and some restructuring and reforming of property taxes,” he said.

Besides belonging to the Crime Prevention Committee, Walz serves on two other committees. They are the House Commerce, Jobs and Economic Development Policy Committee and the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee. He is also the vice chair of the Economic Development and Tourism Division of the Commerce Policy committee.

“We're seeing a lot more development in Crow Wing County,” Walz said of the district he represents.

Working to strengthen Greater Minnesota, Walz says equitable funding for schools in rural areas is one of the biggest issues he promoted during his campaign.

Also of significance to his district and a concern of Walz's is property owners' and gun

Walz, who is a member of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL), said pro-life legislation is important to him. “I can't change that — it's here,” he said, pointing to his heart. “It's the way I am.”

Right now Walz is on leave from the police department, but he fully intends on keeping his law enforcement career and will be going back to work in June. Wicklund says the department already senses his absence.

“We miss him, but we know he'll be back,” he said. “He has a very important job down there and takes it very seriously.”

DISTRICT 12A

1998 population (estimate): 36,471

Largest city: Brainerd

County: Crow Wing

Location: north central Minnesota

Top concern: “Equity funding for schools, returning the surplus, and more permanent tax cuts.”

— Rep. Dale Walz

Call, visit, watch, log on . . .

Legislative information is plentiful, accessible, and free

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

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

A new, improved Web site

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

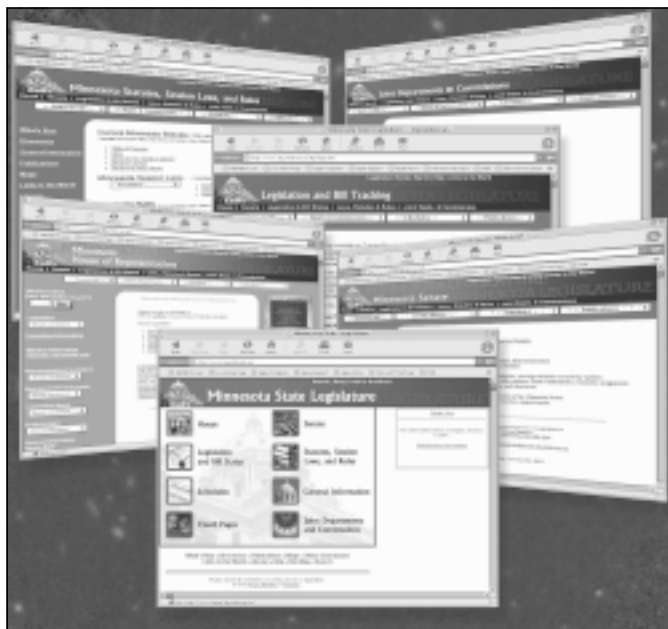
During that time, users commented on the positives and negatives of the site. In response to those remarks, an interim committee of legislative staff looked at ways to enhance the online information — making it even more useful. As a result, the Web site was redesigned and the new format was launched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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

You've got mail

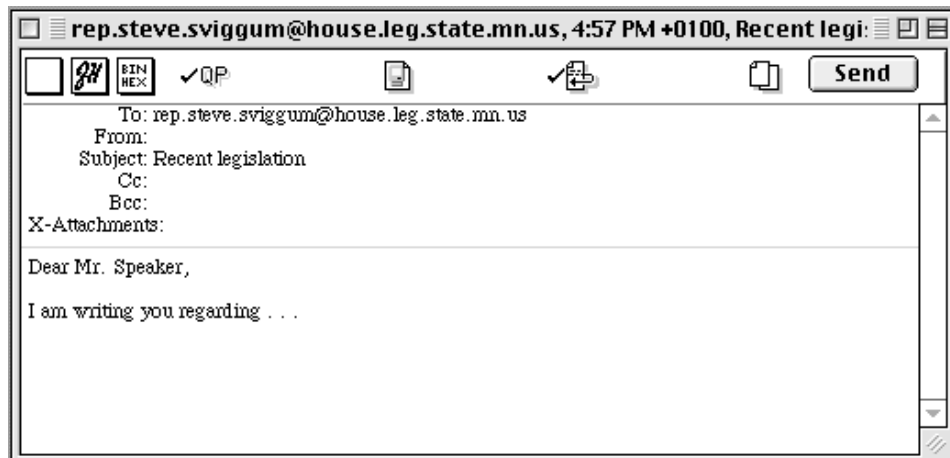
Constituents with e-mail service can now receive daily and weekly committee schedules from both the House and Senate without having to request them each day.

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

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

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

To receive a Senate schedule, e-mail a message to listserv@senate.leg.state.mn.us. Leave the subject line blank and in the body of the message type: `subscribe sen-schedules`.



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

Come on down

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

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

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

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

Pick up the phone

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

You don't need to leave home to obtain copies of House bills, either. Simply call the House Chief Clerk's Office at (651) 296-2314 and they'll mail you a copy of any bill. If you



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

don't know who sponsored a bill or what a particular bill's House File number is, call House Index at (651) 296-6646. They can also tell you the status of a bill as it is traveling through the process.

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

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

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

Tune in

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

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



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

Frequently used Web links

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Frequently called numbers

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

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

Chief Clerk's Office:
651-296-2314

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

Monday, January 29

HF400—Pawlenty (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Property tax free zones established, individual and business tax incentives provided, tax benefits repaid under specific circumstances, tax free zone aid provided, and money appropriated.

HF401—Abeler (R)

Crime Prevention

Massage therapists and Oriental bodywork therapists registration system established, rulemaking authorized, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF402—Pawlenty (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Disaster relief and flood mitigation measures provided counties designated a major disaster area and money appropriated.

HF403—Vandever (R)

Transportation Policy

Automobile license tax credits provided and tax credit amounts transferred from the general fund to the highway user tax distribution fund.

HF404—Wagenius (DFL)

Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development

Nonprofit corporation neighborhood organization voting rights and meeting notice requirements specified.

HF405—Koskinen (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Patient health information data confidentiality provided, and release of health records to the state prohibited without patient consent.

HF406—Jennings (DFL)

Agriculture Policy

Minnesota State Fair Foundation established by the state agricultural society.

HF407—Howes (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Wastewater infrastructure supplemental assistance provided and money appropriated.

HF408—Knobloch (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

State legislators elected without party designation.

HF409—Seifert (R)

Taxes

Yellow Medicine County law enforcement and family service center construction materials tax exemption provided.

HF410—Ottremba (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Abortion informed consent required, and civil remedies provided.

HF411—Clark, K. (DFL)

Civil Law

Retalitory eviction defense regulated.

HF412—Mulder (R)

Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development

Housing finance agency prohibited from excluding small-volume lenders from loan programs.

HF413—Mulder (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Independent School District No. 402, Hendricks, included in previous facilities needs grant.

HF414—Mulder (R)

Crime Prevention

Department of Corrections assigned responsibility for investigating allegations of maltreatment in juvenile correctional facilities.

HF415—Knobloch (R)

Civil Law

Job reference information disclosure protection provided.

HF416—Rifenberg (R)

Transportation Policy

Hokah authorized to vacate roads if necessary due to extensive damage.

HF417—Jennings (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Pine County nursing facility bed moratorium exception provided.

HF418—Jennings (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Chisago County emergency medical services special taxing district authorized and reverse referendum permitted.

HF419—Seifert (R)

Education Policy

Rural charter schools of excellence grants provided and money appropriated.

HF420—Schumacher (DFL)

Environment &

Natural Resources Policy

Benton County Graves Farm property purchase grant provided and money appropriated.

HF421—McElroy (R)

Jobs & Economic Development Finance

Energy assistance program federal fund expenditure authorized.

HF422—Seagren (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Loan repayment program established to improve recruitment of excellent teachers in science, math, industrial technology, special education and in rural areas, and money appropriated.

HF423—Greiling (DFL)

Transportation Policy

Combat-wounded veterans exempted from special motor vehicle license plate design decals.

HF424—Greiling (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Mental retardation and related conditions waiver recipients authorized access to respite care in intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation and related conditions (ICF/MR).

HF425—Cassell (R)

Environment &

Natural Resources Finance

Pope/Douglas County materials recovery facility construction grant provided and money appropriated.

HF426—Knobloch (R)

Sherburne County nursing home medical assistance rate increase provided and money appropriated.

HF427—Westerberg (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Minnesota amateur sports facility bleacher safety exemption provided.

HF428—Gunther (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Minnesota talented youth math project expanded and money appropriated.

HF429—Bakk (DFL)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

State agencies authorized to allow commercial wireless equipment on state-owned property.

HF430—Opatz (DFL)

Higher Education Finance

Minnesota student retention center established and money appropriated.

HF431—Vandever (R)

Taxes

Sales tax general rate reduced.

HF432—Stang (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Transportation revenue provided school districts and included in general education revenue.

HF433—Entenza (DFL)

Civil Law

ERA; equality of rights under the law for men and women provided and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF434—Wagenius (DFL)

Education Policy

Staff development grants provided to ensure children are able to read by second grade and money appropriated.

HF435—Hilty (DFL)

Transportation Policy

Moose Lake area fires of 1918 history museum highway sign authorized.

HF436—Bishop (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Alternative municipal annexation procedures specified.

HF437—Bishop (R)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Town government continued existence referendum provided.

HF438—Walker (DFL)

Education Policy

At-risk student educational structure developed, county and state agency notification permitted, student obstacles identified, staff development and training grants provided, advisory council created, and money appropriated.

HF439—Marko (DFL)

Transportation Policy

Special motor vehicle license plates authorized for retired veterans.

HF440—Knobloch (R)

Civil Law

Probate; background investigations provided on guardians and conservators, access to data on maltreatment of vulnerable adults authorized, and court procedures and requirements authorized.

HF441—McElroy (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Job Skills Partnership Board membership modified and term limits imposed.

HF442—Opatz (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
Public post-secondary annual compensation treatment provided in state budget and appropriations.

HF443—Westerberg (R)
Taxes
Blaine City Hall and police department facility construction materials tax exemption provided.

HF444—McElroy (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Metropolitan Council membership increased to include nonvoting affiliate members from adjacent Minnesota and Wisconsin counties.

HF445—Dawkins (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Stolen property definition clarified relating to landlords and tenants.

HF446—Solberg (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Unilateral modification of benefits received by retired employees defined as unfair labor practice.

HF447—Lenczewski (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Commuter rail facilities physical design component of advanced corridor plan notice and local approval required.

HF448—Hilty (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 2580, East Central, facilities grant authorized and money appropriated.

HF449—Hilty (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 2580, East Central, capital loan authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF450—Skoglund (DFL)
Civil Law
Medical malpractice statute of limitations statutory reference clarified.

HF451—Nornes (R)
Transportation Finance
State patrol recruit training academy funding provided and money appropriated.

HF452—Gunter (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
Potato disease research grants provided to University of Minnesota, and money appropriated.

HF453—Skoe (DFL)
Civil Law
Discharge of judgments against bankruptcy debtors regulated.

HF454—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Cosmetology salons operating at assisted living establishments exempted from manager requirement.

HF455—Ozment (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Clean fuel (biodiesel) use marketing and education program established, and money appropriated.

Thursday, February 1

HF456—Westerberg (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Resolution memorializing Congress to authorize and appropriate funding for 40 percent of the cost of special education.

HF457—Jacobson (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
One year prohibition on lobbying imposed on former legislators, constitutional officers, agency heads, and certain legislative employees.

HF458—Penas (R)
Taxes
Lands enrolled in conservation reserve programs qualified as special agricultural homestead.

HF459—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Forestry division of Department of Natural Resources relocation to International Falls feasibility study provided, and money appropriated.

HF460—Davids (R)
Education Policy
Independent School District No. 238, Mabel-Canton, permanent school year start prior to Labor Day authorized.

HF461—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
High school athlete physical examination records required on file at schools.

HF462—Howes (R)
Taxes
Residential buildings on temporary sites intended to be moved property tax exemption provided.

HF463—Greiling (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Mental health patient records family access provided, emergency mental health treatment information requirements provided, and family member participation in aftercare plan preparation authorized.

HF464—Wilkin (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Specified litigation and settlements by state officials prohibited, and funds recovered through litigation and settlements deposited in the general fund.

HF465—Marko (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Public employees of the police and fire fund of the public employee's retirement association granted service credit for United States armed forces service.

HF466—McElroy (R)
Crime Prevention
Endurance contest prohibition repealed.

HF467—Hilty (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Moose Lake area history museum addition grant provided and money appropriated.

HF468—Erickson (R)
Taxes
Princeton fire station facility construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF469—Abeler (R)
Taxes
County agricultural societies authorized to retain sales tax on county fair event admissions, and use proceeds for improvements.

HF470—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nursing home operation cessation or curtailing notice period extended and modified.

HF471—Abeler (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Historic structures rehabilitation building code required and rulemaking authority granted.

HF472—Penas (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 2358, Tri-County schools, fund transfer authorized.

HF473—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Koochiching County cold weather testing center grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF474—Rukavina (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Eveleth retired police officers and firefighters post-retirement adjustment provided.

HF475—Wenzel (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Little Elk heritage preserve designated as a historic preserve, and money appropriated.

HF476—Davids (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Insurance self-audit information provided safe harbor protection.

HF477—Mares (R)
Education Policy
School district alternative facilities program eligibility expanded.

HF478—Sykora (R)
Education Policy
ADD; parents and providers required to evaluate programs prior to prescribing drugs to children with attention deficit disorder, educational neglect definition clarified, number of children affected determined, and money appropriated.

HF479—Lipman (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Election day voter registration identity and residence requirements modified, election administration practice study requested, election equipment purchase revolving loan fund created, and money appropriated.

HF480—Kielkucki (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Voluntary accreditation program funding authorized to provide optimal educational support services, and money appropriated.

HF481—Greiling (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Combat wounded veterans day designated as August 7.

- HF482—Kielucki (R)**
K-12 Education Finance
 Independent School District No. 424, Lester Prairie, regional planning management study grant provided and money appropriated.
- HF483—Solberg (DFL)**
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
 Floodwood business and industrial park grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.
- HF484—Anderson, I. (DFL)**
Transportation Finance
 International Falls international bridge design and construction provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.
- HF485—Kielucki (R)**
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Beaver dam removal conditions modified.
- HF486—Seifert (R)**
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 Elections; newspaper ad disclaimers minimum type size required.
- HF487—Vanderveer (R)**
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Townships; nonprofit organizations contract limit for health, social, and recreational services increased.
- HF488—Davids (R)**
Health & Human Services Policy
 Ambulance services medical assistance payments paid at Medicare reimbursement rate.
- HF489—Haas (R)**
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
 Contractor surety bonds not required on competitive bid public improvements.
- HF490—Kuisle (R)**
Civil Law
 County economic development assistance application data designated nonpublic until approved.
- HF491—Jacobson (R)**
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Ramsey County tax-forfeited land sale authorized.
- HF492—Wolf (R)**
Regulated Industries
 Energy reliability and affordability act of 2001 adopted.
- HF493—Lenczewski (DFL)**
Health & Human Services Policy
 Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) included in definitions of child with disability, advisory committee established, and state responsibility for care outside the home defined.
- HF494—Winter (DFL)**
Education Policy
 Teacher loan forgiveness program established, rulemaking provided, and money appropriated.
- HF495—Finseth (R)**
Agriculture Policy
 Feedlot regulation authority transferred from the Pollution Control Agency to the department of agriculture.
- HF496—Ozment (R)**
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 Students eligible to vote granted time off from school to vote.
- HF497—Juhnke (DFL)**
K-12 Education Finance
 Bus purchase aid and one-time fuel adjustment created, transportation sparsity formula modified, and money appropriated.
- HF498—Holberg (R)**
Taxes
 Farmington police department and central maintenance facility construction materials sales tax exemption provided.
- HF499—Rhodes (R)**
Taxes
 Musical instruments used in school provided education income tax credit.
- HF500—Kielucki (R)**
K-12 Education Finance
 Augsburg College teacher preparation program grant provided to educate teachers of students with emotional and behavioral disorders, and money appropriated.
- HF501—Ozment (R)**
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Conservation officer enforcement activity comparison prevented from use in performance evaluation.
- HF502—Paulsen (R)**
Taxes
 Vending machine sales of specified items sales tax exemption provided.
- HF503—Pawlenty (R)**
Taxes
 Research credit increased and extended to income tax, investment credit allowed, application fees imposed, sales tax exemption provided specified purchases, and money appropriated.
- HF504—Mulder (R)**
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
 At-home infant child care program assistance provisions modified.
- HF505—Stanek (R)**
Crime Prevention
 Racial profiling study; statewide model policy and local agency policies required, peace officer training objectives developed, and money appropriated.
- HF506—Bakk (DFL)**
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
 Unemployment insurance eligibility restrictions removed for specified school contractors.
- HF507—Wagenius (DFL)**
Transportation Policy
 Future motor fuel tax increases dedicated to highway user tax distribution fund and new Minnesota public transit fund, and constitutional amendment proposed.
- HF508—Skoe (DFL)**
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
 Mahnom County center of human environment facility grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.
- HF509—Seifert (R)**
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
 Automobile insurance claim misleading statements prohibited and comparative fault interpretation clarified.
- HF510—Wolf (R)**
Regulated Industries
 Telecommunication laws modified and recodified, excise tax imposed on telecommunications, cable, and video services, and money appropriated.
- HF511—Sviggum (R)**
Taxes
 Omnibus tax bill providing property tax reform; income and corporate franchise tax reform; sales, use and motor vehicle tax reform; providing miscellaneous tax reforms; granting powers; appropriating money.
- HF512—Hilstrom (DFL)**
K-12 Education Finance
 School district emergency energy heating and transportation costs funding provided, and money appropriated.
- HF513—Winter (DFL)**
Agriculture Policy
 Cooperatively owned livestock processing plant loan and grant program established and money appropriated.
- HF514—Carlson (DFL)**
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 Continued insurance coverage provided for spouses of specified education retirees.
- HF515—Wagenius (DFL)**
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
 Unfair and deceptive insurance acts and practices regulated and discrimination against victims of domestic abuse prohibited.
- HF516—Carlson (DFL)**
K-12 Education Finance
 Judgement levy authority expanded to intermediate school districts.
- HF517—Osthoff (DFL)**
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
 St. Paul grant provided to restore East Como lake trail and lakeshore, and money appropriated.
- HF518—Rhodes (R)**
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 St. Louis Park firefighters' civil service commission abolition authorized.
- HF519—Kalis (DFL)**
K-12 Education Finance
 Independent School District No. 2860, Blue Earth Area Public School, facility grant provided, and money appropriated.
- HF520—Sertich (DFL)**
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
 Northeast entrepreneur fund microenterprise development grant provided and money appropriated.
- HF521—Folliard (DFL)**
Transportation Policy
 Highway noise barrier account created, matching grants authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.
- HF522—Huntley (DFL)**
Health & Human Services Finance
 Adolescent compulsive gambling prevention and education project grant provided, and money appropriated.
- HF523—Gunter (R)**
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
 Economic development redevelopment grants authorized and money appropriated.
- HF524—Bernardy (DFL)**
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
 Fridley clean water partnership grant provided for Springbook subwatershed implementation project, and money appropriated.

HF525—McElroy (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Public employees prohibited from state board and council compensation except under specified conditions and daily payment standards required.

HF526—Kubly (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Compulsive gambling treatment and education; Granite Falls project turn-about reconstruction grant provided, and money appropriated.

HF527—Ness (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Hutchinson public school employee teachers retirement association service credit purchase authorized.

HF528—Murphy (DFL)
Judiciary Finance
Carlton County criminal prosecution and investigations extraordinary expenses reimbursed, and money appropriated.

HF529—Workman (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Hennepin County land conveyance to city of Eden Prairie, and money appropriated.

HF530—Entenza (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Energy assistance aid authorized to school districts on a one-time basis, and money appropriated.

HF531—Johnson, R. (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Hospital construction and new nursing facility bed moratorium exceptions provided.

HF532—Harder (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Minnesota River basin conservation reserve enhancement program easements acquired and conservation practices implemented, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF533—Carlson (DFL)
Transportation Finance
Publicly owned utility relocation costs to be paid by the state.

HF534—Olson (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 882, Monticello, fund transfer authorized.

HF535—Olson (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 727, Big Lake, maximum effort capital loan authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF536—Peterson (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Lac Qui Parle State Park development funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF537—Koskinen (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Teachers retirement association service credit purchase authorized for a specified sabbatical leave from Independent School District No. 11, Anoka-Hennepin.

HF538—Folliard (DFL)
Taxes
Sales to political subdivisions tax exemption provided.

HF539—Anderson, I. (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
State aids; elementary and secondary school system enhanced by providing all school district operating funds through state aids.

HF540—Folliard (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Unfunded education costs included in referendum revenue cap, and original referendum revenue cap percentage restored.

HF541—Carlson (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Special education; 100 percent state funding provided for special education revenue, and money appropriated.

HF542—Goodwin (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Special education; 100 percent state funding provided for special education revenue, and money appropriated.

HF543—Swapinski (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Special education; 100 percent state funding provided for special education revenue, and money appropriated.

HF544—Bernardy (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Special education; 100 percent funding provided for special education revenue, and money appropriated.

HF545—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Taxes
Biomass electricity facility construction materials sales tax exemption sunset repealed.

HF546—Kubly (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Administrative boards and agencies provided proportional representation between metropolitan and outstate areas.

HF547—Peterson (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Conservation enhancement reserve program funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF548—Mulder (R)
Taxes
Musical instruments used in school provided education income tax credit.

HF549—Solberg (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
General education revenue isolation index modified.

HF550—Eastlund (R)
Higher Education Finance
Edvest; higher education services of-fice rulemaking authority extended.



Beer control

Some must wait to consume adult beverage

Since the Brady Bill became law in 1994, gun owners have had to wait five days after purchasing a handgun before they can actually possess the firearm. One of the purposes of the law was to allow local authorities time to perform background checks on gun purchasers.

Now the state of Ohio has applied a similar waiting period to the purchase of beer. A new regulation there requires people who purchase five or more kegs of beer to register their parties and wait five days to get their beer.

The intent of the rule is to crack down on underage drinking and address concerns that some college parties have gotten out of hand.

The rule, enacted by the Ohio Department of Public Safety last August, requires that buyers fill out a form specifying the time and place where the kegs will be served. The buyer must also sign a notarized affidavit that promises beer won't be served to people under the age of 21 and grants law enforcement authorities the right to inspect the party for violations.

It is the last provision that has gotten the American Civil Liberties Union involved in the matter. The ACLU of Ohio has expressed concern with the potential for unlawful police searches. However, the affidavit of consent does contain a clause allowing the party hosts to revoke permission to the authorities at the time of their arrival.

Department officials said they are aware of loopholes to the rule, which allows one host of a party to buy four kegs of beer and another person hosting the same party to buy four more without either having to register.

The state of Maryland already requires anyone who purchases a keg of beer to register with the state. Other states such as New Hampshire, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania have similar regulations or are considering such legislation.

(D. Maeda)

MONDAY, Feb. 5

8:15 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Overview of Department of Health federal fund budget pages.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Continuation of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency's budget review (if testimony is not completed on Friday, Feb. 2).

Review of the federal funds slated for state expenditures.

Budget review of Minnesota Technology, Inc.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Conclusion of Office of Aeronautics budget presentation, Ray Rought, Director.

Department of Public Safety federal funds overview, Frank Ahrens, Budget Director.

MnDOT federal funds overview, Dick Swanson, Office of Financial Management Director.

Greater Minnesota transit budget presentation, Donna Allan, Director.

Office of Passenger Rail Transit budget presentation, Cecil Selness, Modal Operations Director.

Office of Railroads and Waterways budget presentation, Al Vogel, Director.

10:15 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF130 (Dawkins) Dangerous dog definitions and regulations modified, animal control officers duties expanded, evidence preservation provided, and criminal penalties imposed.

HF450 (Skogland) Medical malpractice statute of limitations statutory reference clarified.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Pollution Control Agency budget overview and presentation.

Pollution Control Agency: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HESO Budget Request.

Witness: Dr. Bob Poch, Director.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF191 (Erickson) Authorizing a fund transfer for Independent School District No. 473, Isle.

HF206 (Opatz) Appropriating money for an after-school educational enhancement pilot program for low-income youth in the St. Cloud area.

HF225 (Anderson, I.) Providing for a swimming pool levy.

HF226 (Anderson, I.) Providing for revenue for transportation for staff development.

HF228 (Anderson, I.) Providing for revenue for remedial instruction for students who do not receive passing scores on the Minnesota basic skills tests.

Property Tax Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF133 (Haas) City aid base and maximum aid increased for specified cities.

HF363 (McGuire) City aid base and maximum aid increased for specified metropolitan municipalities.

HF324 (Kuisle) Agricultural homestead and non-homestead property tax class rates reduced, and educational agricultural credit application increased and extended.

HF5 (Penas) Education agricultural tax credit increased.

HF358 (Wilkin) Property tax class rate on apartments reduced and increased homestead and agricultural credit aid provided.

HF158 (Gleason) Property tax refund; percentage of rent constituting property taxes increased.

Sales and Income Tax Division/TAXES

NOTE ROOM

500N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Elaine Harder

Agenda:

HF148 (Paulsen) Provides a subtraction for social security income from the individual income tax.

HF186 (Hackbarth) Provides a subtraction for social security income from the individual income tax.

HF339 (Dempsey) Creates a subtraction for the depreciation of a taxpayer's automobile.

HF107 (McElroy) Exempts construction materials used for qualified low-income housing projects.

HF183 (Abrams) Makes the capital equipment exemption an up-front exemption.

HF336 (Erhardt) Makes the capital equipment exemption an up-front exemption.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD

EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Way to Grow - Lois Engstrom, Department of Children, Families and Learning. Head Start - Barbara O'Sullivan and Karla Mouw, Department of Children, Families and Learning. Transitional Housing and Emergency Services - Connie Greer, Department of Children, Families and Learning.

HF272 (Nornes) Appropriating money for emergency assistance and transitional housing. Michael Dahl, MN Coalition for the Homeless.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jerry Dempsey

Agenda: HF209 (Hackbarth) Shooting ranges preserved, net losses limited, and relocation costs provided.

HF211 (Ozment) Fire departments reimbursed for extinguishing specified motor vehicle fires, municipalities authorized to collect unpaid emergency services bills from nonresidents, and money appropriated.

HF251 (Mulder) Laverne border development zone tax incentives authorized, state tax reductions provided, and money appropriated. HF393 (Mahoney) Ramsey County and St. Paul city employees allowed equal competition for vacant county jobs in combined city-county departments.

Other business.

REGULATED INDUSTRIES

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: HFXXXX (Wolf) Relating to telecommunications; modifying and recodifying telecommunications laws. (Governor's Telecommunications Reform Bill).

(Continuation of presentation by the Department of Commerce on the Governor's Telecommunications Bill from 1/29/01 meeting.)

Presentation from MAPPCOR (Midwest Area Power Pool).

3 p.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

TUESDAY, February 6

8:15 a.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: Overview of policy and governor's budget.

Witness: Christine Jax, Commissioner, Department of Children, Families and Learning. HF169 (Kubly) Independent School District No. 2534, Bird Island-Olivia-Lake Lillian, grant authorized for contract deadline penalty, and money appropriated.

HEALTH & HUMAN

SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF116 (Mulder) Respiratory care practitioner advisory council sunset delayed, and athletic trainer registration cancelled for nonrenewal after two years.

HF213 (Mulder) Physician assistants infectious disease education requirement repealed.

HF125 (Nornes) Dentist licensure requirements modified for applicants trained in a foreign country.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Pilot Project overview.

Domestic Fatality Review Team overview.

Bomb Disposal and Domestic Terrorism Plan overview.

Auto Theft Prevention Board overview.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: To be announced.

10:15 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. John Tuma

Agenda: HF 149 (Pawlenty) Halaal food product labeling criminal penalties

(Rereferral from Agriculture Policy Committee). HF64 (McElroy) Repealing law prohibiting itinerant carnivals.

HFXXXX (Stanek) Federal law enforcement officers authority.

HF175 (Ozment) Fire retardant cigarettes.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: Discussion of energy issues, Linda Taylor, Deputy Commissioner, Energy Division, Minnesota Department of Commerce.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: HF218 (Krinkie) State Government Finance Bill.

Testimony on: Section 22, proposed budget for Gambling Control Board; Section 23, proposed budget for the Racing Commission; and Proposed budget for the Lottery.

TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HFXXXX (Sviggum) Continuation of governor's tax bill.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: Continuation of overview of the governor's budget proposals relating to agriculture by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: Department of Finance Report on Cancellations, Peter Sausen.

COMMERCE, JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: HF331 (Abeler) Relating to preservation of historic structures; creating a historic preservation grant program.

HFXXXX (Abeler) Relating to preservation of historic structures.

HF320 (Davids) Relating to insurance; authorizing licensed property-casualty insurance agents to assist in the procurement of surplus lines insurance without a surplus lines insurance license.

HF156 (Seifert) Relating to occupations; providing an exception for barber shop registration fees.

WEDNESDAY, February 7

8:15 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Overview of Department of Health budget pages.

JOBS & ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy (Vice Chair Rep. Bob Gunther will be chairing this meeting)

Agenda: Continuation of the Department of Commerce budget review from the Jan. 31 committee meeting.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: Office of Motor Carrier Regulation budget presentation, Ward Briggs, Director.

Local roads budget presentation, Julie Skallman, State Aid Engineer.

Local bridge bonding presentation, Khani Sahebjam, Program Delivery Engineer.

State roads budget presentation, Jim Swanson, Assistant Commissioner; Al Schenkelberg, Investment Management Director; Pat Hughes, Program Support Director.

10:15 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Steve Smith

Agenda: HF260 (Stanek) Criminal justice information system improvements provided and money appropriated.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Pollution Control Agency budget presentation: tax reform.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HESO budget request.

Witness: Dr. Bob Poch, Director.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Platforms of various education groups: Minnesota School Boards Association; Education Minnesota;

Association of Metropolitan School Districts;

Minnesota Rural Education Association;

Schools for Equity in Education;

Partnership for Choice in Education;

Minnesota Business Partnership.

TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HFXXXX (Sviggum) Public testimony on governor's tax bill.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: Overview of the new feedlot rules that are being implemented, with interpretation of last year's feedlot bill and review of 60-day permit turnaround process.

Economic Development and Tourism

Division/COMMERCE, JOBS &

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: Affordable housing.

Report from the Mayor's Task Force.

Legislative Auditor's Report on Affordable Housing.

Report of the Rental Property Task Force.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD

EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Report of Early Care and Education Finance Commission: "The Action Plan for Early Care and Education in Minnesota."

Response to report - Dr. Karen Effrem, Pediatrician; Thomas Prichard, MN Family Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jerry Dempsey

Agenda: HF46 (Lipman) Comprehensive local planning local control reestablished, metropolitan land use planning and Metropolitan Council review of local comprehensive plans repealed, and conforming changes provided.

HF269 (Anderson, B.) Wright County aggregate materials production tax authorized.

HF271 (Anderson B.) Wright County authorized to impose production tax on aggregate materials removed from the county.

HF394 (Seifert) Repealing statutes concerning castrating animals running at large in a town. Other business.

THURSDAY, February 8

8:15 a.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF71 (Pawlenty) School districts' financial and academic performance evaluated, and money appropriated. Other items to be determined.

HEALTH & HUMAN

SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: Presentation on the Prescription Drug Program.

HF6 (Howes) Prescription drug program income limit raised, enrollees required to satisfy monthly deductibles, and money appropriated.

HF13 (Abeler) Prescription drug program income limit raised, enrollees required to satisfy monthly deductibles, and money appropriated.

HF222 (Koskinen) Prescription drug program income limit increased, timeline for enrollment of disabled individuals shortened, and higher burial exclusion provided.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: Budget hearing for the Tax Court.

Budget hearing for the Judicial Standards Board.

Budget hearing for the Private Detective Board.

Others possibly to be announced.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: To be announced.

10:15 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. John Tuma

Agenda: HF351 (Stanek) Establishing felony level DWI penalties.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: Overview and program outcome discussion by Board of Water and Soil Resources (BOWSR), Ron Harnack, Executive Director.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda:

HF218 (Krinkie) State Government Finance Bill.

Testimony on: Section 14, proposed budget for Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board; Section 10, proposed budget for Office of Administrative Hearings; and

Proposal for the Board of Government Innovation and Cooperation.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: To be announced.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knobloch

Agenda: Overview of University of Minnesota HEAPR, Mike Bertelson.

Overview of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities maintenance funding, Al Johnson.

COMMERCE, JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: HF390 (Winter) Relating to local government; authorizing the establishment of a specific nonprofit corporation in development region eight to operate and manage the Prairieland Exposition Center.

Other bills may be added.

3 p.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

FRIDAY, February 9

8:15 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

9:30 a.m.

*****NOTE TIME AND ROOM*****

Joint EDUCATION POLICY/ K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chrs. Rep. Harry Mares, Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: Dr. William Sanders, "Value-Added Assessment System," analytical procedure developed at the University of Tennessee to evaluate teaching effectiveness.

10:15 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

*****NOTE ROOM*****

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Pollution Control Agency budget overview and presentation: Tax Reform - continued.

Pollution Control Agency Budget Presentation: Waters, Air, Land.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: MnSCU budget request.

Witnesses: Morris Anderson, Chancellor;

Laura King, Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer.

Continued from page 11

Civil War flags under its care to the states. Humphrey wrote "it should be noted that the resolution applies only to flags in the War Department's custody in 1905."

In 1888, the Secretary of War issued a list of all banners held by the department. Conspicuously missing was flag No. 58 — Sherman's flag. Therefore, Humphrey argued, the flag was not subject to Congress's 1905 resolution.

To further drive home the point that Minnesota has every intention of keeping its treasured prize, Humphrey wrote that, "under Minnesota law, a claim for the recovery of personal property must be begun within six years. The six-year period begins tolling when the possessor first begins to treat the property as its own. Clearly, this six-year period has already expired."

Lawmakers have considered other legal measures to keep the flag safely in Minnesota, but have yet to introduce legislation. 🐼

Staff passing

A long-time House staffer who was Chief Clerk Ed Burdick's boss when he began his career died Jan. 23 in North Ridge Care Center in New Hope, Minn.

Mrs. Agnes Jensen, 103, began working in the Capitol in 1921 for the commissioner of banking and later joined the staff of the Minnesota House of Representatives.

Former Gov. J.A.O. Preus served as a guardian for Jensen, who was interviewed for a feature in the March 6, 1998 issue of *Session Weekly*. In that story, Burdick remembered Jensen fondly, saying she was a hard worker and well-respected.

"Mrs. Jensen's job was very important," he said. "She instilled in her employees the importance of working hard and holding down state expenses."

An inscription in her scrapbook reads, "I loved every minute of that job." In the story, she marveled at how she accomplished all the tasks in such a short time with limited resources.

"When I look back on those days, I wonder how I did it," she said. "But I was young."

She retired in 1955, making a salary of \$22.50 per day — compared to her initial House salary of \$5 per day.

Memorial services for Jensen were Jan. 28. She was interred in Fort Snelling National Cemetery.



Reflections

One of Minnesota's greats, Roy Wilkins, was honored Jan. 24 as the 24th individual to be commemorated on a Black History Month Series stamp. The U.S. Postal Service added him to such honorees as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Sojourner Truth, Jackie Robinson, and Scott Joplin.

Wilkins served as executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for 22 years while working with the civil rights organization for 46 years.

He grew up in the racially mixed Rice Street area of St. Paul. He graduated in June 1919 from Mechanic Arts High School, where the state's Judicial Center now stands on the Capitol grounds.

Other well-known Mechanic Arts graduates include: Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul); U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun; actress Joan Davis;

Billy Williams, executive aide to 14 governors; and retired St. Paul Deputy Police Chief James Griffin. The school closed in 1974, but it housed House members and staff in 1985 while the State Office Building was being renovated. The school was torn down in 1987.

Not even 21 years of age, Wilkins began to define his own future as a national leader. As a student at the University of Minnesota, he became the first secretary of the St. Paul Urban League Board of Directors when it was founded in 1923 and helped to form the St. Paul branch of the NAACP.

Back at Mechanic Arts, young Wilkins began to develop his oratorical skills on the debate team and was president of the Literary Society. Later at the university he won an oratorical contest by giving a spirited speech that opposed the hanging of a black man in Duluth.

Wilkins majored in sociology and minored in journalism in college, while he worked as night editor for the *Minnesota Daily* and edited a black weekly, the *St. Paul Appeal*. After graduation in 1923, he was a

reporter, then managing editor for Missouri's *Kansas City Call* newspaper.

Minnesota's hometown hero further honed his career as he joined the NAACP by becoming editor of its magazine, *The Crisis*. Wilkins headed the publication after the renowned interpreter of black life in America, W.E.B. DuBois, stepped down.

From 1931 to 1977, he worked with other leaders to get national voting rights and civil rights laws passed. Wilkins said his biggest accomplishment was in 1954 when he led, and won, the fight for desegregation in public schools.

Wilkins was a man of quiet dignity and reason, yet he tackled what he called the "ills of society" with strength and fortitude. He received many awards from diverse national groups for his effectiveness, with the highest honor being the Medal of Freedom award, bestowed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1967.

One of Minnesota's favorite sons was not forgotten at home, even after he died in 1981.

In 1984, when the Saint Paul Civic Center Auditorium was renovated, it was named in his honor. A bust dedicated to him can be found at the Saint Paul RiverCentre, near the entrance to the Roy Wilkins Auditorium.

Wilkins was further memorialized in 1992 when the University of Minnesota created the Roy Wilkins Center for Human Relations and Social Justice at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, and endowed a chair in his name.

In 1995, a Roy Wilkins Memorial was placed on the State Capitol grounds along John Ireland Boulevard as another crowning tribute to his legacy.

Wilkins' steady faith is personified in his own words: "There are more people who want to do good than do evil."

—LECLAIR GRIER LAMBERT



Photo courtesy, U.S. Postal Service

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MINNESOTA INDEX

Affordable housing in Minnesota

Income per household (80 percent of median) used to measure affordable	
housing in metropolitan areas, 2000	\$52,480
For non-metropolitan areas	\$35,440
Upper limit affordable home value for such households in	
metropolitan areas	\$140,000
Upper limit affordable home value in non-metropolitan areas	\$95,000
Statewide median home sales price increase, 1990-1999, as percent	61
Median household income, as percent	50
Average rent in the Twin Cities, as percent	34
Median rental household income in the Twin Cities, as percent	9
Median sales price of existing home, Twin Cities metropolitan area, 2000	\$159,200
Rank of Twin Cities among 20 largest U.S. metropolitan areas	10
Median sales price, San Francisco (highest)	\$371,600
Median sales price, Pittsburgh (lowest)	\$95,800
Percentage of households that own their homes in Minnesota, 1999	76
Rental vacancy rates in the Twin Cities area, 2000, as percent	1.5
Normal vacancy rates, according to experts, as percent	5
Number of the nation's 75 largest metropolitan areas with a	
lower vacancy rate than the Twin Cities	3
Average monthly rent for all apartments in the Twin Cities area, 1999	\$678
Average rent for all apartments, 2000	\$751
Percent increase	11
Household costs considered affordable as percent of income	30
Number of counties where median-priced homes were affordable for	
lower income households, 1999	70
Estimated median family income, Twin Cities area (highest), 1999	\$68,600
Median family income, Mahnommen County (lowest), 1999	\$29,500
Minnesota unemployment rate estimate, 1999, as percent	2.8
Labor force participation rate, adults 16 and older, 1999	73
Percentage of labor force making \$13.50 or higher per hour, 1999	50
Percentage making less than \$8 per hour, 1999	19
Assistance distributed by Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, 1999, in millions ...	\$292

Source: *Affordable Housing, Program Evaluation Report*, Office of the Legislative Auditor, January 2001.

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