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In this issue:

COSTS OF FELONY DWI

AFFORDABLE HOUSING, HEALTH RECORD PRIVACY, AND MORE

HF962-HF1143

Session Weekly

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To subscribe, contact:
Minnesota House of Representatives
Public Information Office
175 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155-1298
(651) 296-2146 or
1-800-657-3550
TTY (651) 296-9896

Director
LeClair G. Lambert

Editor/Assistant Director
Michelle Kibiger

Assistant Editor
Mike Cook

Art & Production Coordinator
Paul Battaglia

Writers
David Maeda, Theresa Stahl,
Jonas M. Walker, Mary Kay Watson

Chief Photographer
Tom Olmscheid

Photographers
Andrew Von Bank, Sara Kirk

Office Manager
Nicole Wood

Staff Assistants
Christy Novak, Michelle Sorvari

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On the cover: Carolyn Shafer, 12, from Girl Scout Troop 1341 stops to observe an exhibit in the Rotunda on Women's Day, Feb. 19. The exhibit recounted acts of violence against women in Minnesota.

—Photo by Sara Kirk

Footing the bill

Legislators examine the price tag at both state and local levels associated with a felony drunken driving penalty

By JONAS M. WALKER

Acting on an initiative that has disappeared and reappeared in the Legislature for years, lawmakers are considering making a fourth drunken driving conviction within 10 years a felony.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove) has sponsored a bill (HF351) that provides a maximum penalty of up to seven years in prison and up to a \$14,000 fine, or both.

But the major point of derailment for instituting a felony drunken driving sentence is not the policy; it's trying to anticipate the cost.

During the 2000 legislative session, "four-in-10" provisions passed both the House and Senate, but died in conference committee amid lingering concerns about the cost of prosecuting and incarcerating many new felons. Gov. Jesse Ventura had threatened to veto any measure that did not include sufficient cost information and support.

Dave Johnson (DFL-Bloomington), gave its final report in October.

Stanek said his bill echoes a number of the group's conclusions. For example, the group concluded "there is a real need to impose stayed sentences that provide sufficient incentives for the offender to choose treatment and supervision." Stanek said that, faced with the prospect of three years behind bars, offenders would likely choose intensive treatment.

Although Stanek's bill includes no appropriation, the bill is estimated to cost \$5.4 million in FY 2003, a figure that could increase to more than \$13.6 million by FY 2005.

However, the Department of Finance said the material fiscal impact will depend upon how judges actually sentence drunken driving offenders.

The bill has cleared two House committees so far, including the House Crime Prevention Committee, and most recently, the House

Transportation Policy Committee on Feb. 19. Under the bill, a DWI violation is classified as a felony if a person has three prior convictions, in addition to the current violation, within 10 years of the first conviction.

Existing law for first-time drunken driving offenders provides a maximum penalty of 90 days in jail, a \$700 fine, and a drivers' license suspension for at least 30 days. A driver could face gross misdemeanor charges if their blood-alcohol

concentration exceeds .20 or if a child is in the vehicle. Although both criminal and administrative penalties, such as license revocation, become more stringent for repeat drunken driving offenders, current law

does not allow felony convictions.

Under HF351, courts would not be allowed to stay the imposition of a felony sentence, but would have the option of staying its execution. In other words, judges would have discretion as to whether a convicted drunken driving felon spent his or her entire sentence behind bars.

Specifically, a convicted drunken driving felon could leave prison before completing two years if he or she successfully completes a chemical dependency treatment program while incarcerated. Drunken driving felons could be released as soon as 10 months after being placed in prison if they agree to a work release program.

Dennis Benson, deputy commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Corrections, previously said his department is prepared to meet the additional burden of incarcerating DWI felons. They would likely be housed at Faribault or Moose Lake prisons, where chemical dependency treatment programs already exist.

Most of the additional funds for felony DWI would be required for the housing, treatment, and protection of incarcerated drunken driving offenders in state prisons. According to 1998 Department of Public Safety data, approximately 1,400 drunken driving offenses would be eligible for felony-level conviction under the proposed bill. Of those, 550 offenses would be committed by drivers, who had already been convicted of at least four DWIs.

According to Sentencing Guidelines Commission information provided in the fiscal note for the bill, "If 15 percent of offenders received an executed prison sentence and 10 percent of those on probation were eventually revoked to prison, 326 to 613 prison beds would be needed." The range reflects early release options.

However, the same publication calls those figures "conservative" and notes judges still have the option of staying the execution of a sentence, a judgement resulting in a 180-day jail sentence that would fall to local jurisdictions.

Similar measures providing felony penalties for repeat drunken driving offenders have met with opposition from local jurisdictions that fear being overburdened by what amounts to an unfunded state mandate — Minnesota creating a felony that counties and cities fund.

Agencies have attempted to address that concern, but have been unable to provide concrete numbers. For example, the Supreme Court concluded "additional administrative staff time and courtroom security (are)



PHOTOS BY ANDREW VON BANK

Paul Scoggin, representing the state County Attorney's Association, speaks about the fiscal impact of HF351 during the Feb. 19 House Transportation Finance Committee meeting.

Stanek also sponsored the 2000 felony DWI initiative.

Instead of creating a felony DWI, the conference committee mandated a statewide study. The DWI working group, chaired by Stanek and Sen.

required to process felony cases." It identified those as "local government costs," but declined to make an actual estimate.

Judges may at first execute relatively few sentences, only to render more stringent penalties as offenders collect felony convictions.


Assuming that judges will become increasingly likely to execute the sentences of felonious drunken drivers, the number of needed beds could increase to 1,500. Predicting this figure is more likely to coincide with the actual effects of the new law, the commission noted imprisonment rates for other crimes carrying mandatory minimum penalties are "significantly higher than 15 percent."

The same report also cited the novelty of treatment-initiated early release programs as a factor contributing to the difficulty of predicting the number of beds needed. Currently, Minnesota does not have a broad early release mechanism for offenders who complete treatment while in prison.

In total, the Department of Corrections estimates that it will need to hire almost 170 full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) by fiscal year 2005 to appropriately guard, supervise, and treat felony drunken drivers. Other agencies estimate they would need 20 FTEs, including one person to manage additional felony appeals for the state Attorney General's office, which handles most felony appeals in Greater Minnesota.

Elsewhere, the Department of Public Safety estimates that State Patrol appearances to testify in the prosecution of DWIs will cost \$27,000.

The bill now moves to the House State Government Finance Committee, which will likely take up the matter in early March.

The Senate companion file, SF264, sponsored by Sen. Johnson has been approved by that body's Crime Prevention Committee. The Health and Human Services and Corrections Division of the Senate Finance Committee is now set to hear the matter. 



David Rosini, convicted of criminal vehicular homicide, gives emotional testimony in support of HF351 during the Feb. 8 House Crime Prevention Committee meeting.

IT'S A FACT



Who's in charge?

150-year-old U of M not always run by Legislature-appointed regents

On Feb. 25, the University of Minnesota will celebrate its 150th anniversary. Chartered before Minnesota was even a state, the school is patterned after state universities in surrounding states, but today stands unique among those other schools for its governing structure.

Minnesota was still a territory in 1851, with its current borders on the east, north and south, and the western border extending clear to the Missouri River. Nevertheless, other territorial governments in Michigan, Iowa, and Wisconsin had chartered universities, and Minnesota's territorial leaders would follow suit.

Territorial Gov. Alexander Ramsey petitioned the U.S. Congress for a land grant of 100,000 acres to establish the university. He, and several others who lobbied for the school, fancied an institution not unlike giant schools in the East such as Harvard.

Congress granted 46,080 acres on Feb. 19, 1851, and the territorial legislature acted to charter the school about a week later. Ramsey signed the act Feb. 25.

The Minnesota charter established five areas of study for the school to concentrate on: science, literature, and the arts; law; medicine; agriculture; and the theory and practice of elementary instruction.

The university began a preparatory school Nov. 26, 1851, with 20 pupils, charging between \$4 and \$6 per quarter, depending on the curriculum.

Michigan was the first nearby state to charter a university, doing so as a territory in 1817. The Territory of Wisconsin chartered its university in 1838. And the University of Iowa was founded on the same day as Minnesota, Feb. 25, but four years earlier in 1847. That was 59 days after Iowa became a state.

None of the other states began college classes for several years after passing the initial laws chartering the universities.

Though these upper-Midwestern states all followed suit holding education high among its esteemed principles, they went their own ways as far as university governance was concerned. Each has a board of regents, but those boards are compiled in varying ways.

In the 1851 charter, the University of Minnesota would be governed by a board of 12 regents, elected by joint convention of the Legislature. The state constitution confirmed the charter.

Today, regents are elected the same way. Minnesota is one of only a handful of states where the legislature elects regents.

However, in both Wisconsin and Iowa, the boards are larger, govern all state colleges and universities, and are appointed by the governor. In Michigan, regents are elected by voters in the general election.



Meeting of the Board of Regents in President Northrop's office, University of Minnesota, 1889.

At one time, Minnesota's board was appointed by the governor. According to Theodore Blegen, the reorganization act of 1860 eliminated selection by joint legislative election and provided for a board of eight members — the governor, lieutenant governor, university chancellor

(later president), and five people appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

The reorganization act was prompted, in part, by financial difficulties during the economic downturn of 1857. The school would close during the Civil War years.

In 1864, a new organization act named three men as regents of the university, according to Blegen. They were then-Gov. John Pillsbury, O.C. Merriman, a Minneapolis lawyer, and John Nicols, a St. Paul merchant. Under their guidance, the university's preparatory school turned around its debt, and reopened in 1867. College-level classes began in 1869.

Blegen's accounts of the Board of Regents history don't specifically account for further restructuring. However, another dispute over the board's authority in 1928 uncovered the fact that the governor had appointed the regents serving at that time.

It presented a sticky situation, but a state attorney general, wrote Blegen, argued that the governor was acting within the bounds of the 1851 charter. He had appointed the current members, who could legally hold office until the next Legislature appointed a new board.

(M. KIBIGER)

Clarification

In the Feb. 16 issue of *Session Weekly*, stories in the highlights section may have created some confusion regarding the party affiliation and hometown of Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls). The information provided here is correct. We apologize for any inconvenience.

★ **AGRICULTURE****What time is it?**

Lawmakers are seeking to penalize people who tamper with "clock-hour meters." Such gauges register the amount of time a farm implement, such as a combine, has been in operation.

This information is analogous to the mileage recorded by an automobile's odometer, and can determine the resale value of some equipment. By disconnecting clock-hour meters or altering the time displayed, sellers of farm equipment can inflate the value by making equipment appear newer than it actually is.

Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls) is sponsoring HF375, which would prohibit knowingly tampering with, changing, or disconnecting a meter. The bill provides for a criminal penalty of gross misdemeanor. It also provides a civil remedy of at least \$1,500 for people harmed by such tampering. The penalties are identical to those of people convicted of tampering with automobile odometers.

The House Civil Law Committee approved the bill and referred it to the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Rodney Skalbeck, a farmer from Sacred Heart in west-central Minnesota, told a Feb. 19 meeting of the Civil Law committee of his experience buying a combine that he discovered had an altered clock-hour meter. He said he was defrauded into buying an older combine that was prone to breakdown and could find no legal recourse.

"There should be a law against this," Skalbeck said. "Combines cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. The farmer you save (from fraud) could be raising your food."

The measure was met with opposition from the farm equipment sales industry.

Jerry Schoenfeld, representing the Farm Implement Dealers Association, said the proposed legislation could unfairly hurt farm implement dealers. "Farmers themselves tamper with these meters," he said.

Rep. Eric Lipman (R-Lake Elmo) pointed out the new law would prohibit "persons" from tampering with the meters and would include in the definition of "person" both individuals and businesses.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) also expressed disaffection with Schoenfeld's testimony. "It seems to me that dealers would want

to be protected as everyone else would. They are buying more combines than anyone."

★ **BUSINESS****Prohibiting tattooing of minors**

Elizabeth McCullough, tattoo artist for Acme Tattoo, said a woman recently came into her store with her 13-year-old son to get a tattoo on his neck.

She testified Feb. 20 before the House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Committee that she is concerned about parents having the ability to allow their young children to make permanent decisions about their bodies.

"With parent's permission, anyone can tattoo their 13-year-old, a 5-year-old, an infant,"

McCullough said. "It is not protecting the individual or tattooist."

McCullough supports HF690, sponsored by Rep. Tim Mahoney (DFL-St. Paul), that would prohibit tattooing of minors. The bill is "to help parents in making decisions at the right time," he said.

Rita Bosquez, who works with youth of all ages, said a person's priorities and values change dramatically as they get older. Teens may "seriously regret changes as their lives unfold and develop," she said.

"Teens of today face a unique situation — tattoos are accepted in that age group, and they are easy to get," Bosquez said.

Under HF690, tattooists must require photo identification showing the person is 18 years of age or older. A civil penalty of \$500, plus attorney fees and the cost of removing the tattoo is associated with the bill.

Bosquez noted that tattoos cannot be completely removed.

Committee members began discussing penalties of the bill, then decided those should be negotiated in the House Civil Law Committee, where the bill is headed next.

★ **CHILDREN****Aid to youth**

The House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee heard testimony Feb. 19 supporting a bill that would boost the funding for children's advocacy centers.

HF674, sponsored by Rep. Dale Swapinski (DFL-Duluth), would appropriate money from the state's general fund to the Department of Children, Families and Learning for grants for these centers. The bill does not specify a dollar amount, but Swapinski said they are looking for a total of \$600,000.

The bill was laid over by the committee for possible inclusion in its omnibus bill.

"Every day I have the awesome responsibility of listening to children who have been hurt," said Patty Matejka, executive director of First Witness Child Abuse Resource Center in Duluth.

The Legislature first mandated programs to help abused children in 1987, but the programs vary widely in scope.

Children's advocacy centers, such as First

FREE-RANGE FARMER

PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Mike Noble, who produces organic dairy and free-range hogs and beef near Kenyon, testifies for continued funding for organic and sustainable farming during a Feb. 20 hearing of the House Agriculture and Rural Development Finance Committee.

Witness, take a comprehensive, coordinated approach using a multidisciplinary team of experts in child protection, medicine, mental health, and law enforcement, among others.

Interviews are held in a safe environment, according to Mike Schultz, a sergeant with the Duluth Police Department. "We are seeking the truth in a child-friendly manner."

Carolyn Levitt, director of the Midwest Children's Resource Center at Children's Hospital in St. Paul, said advocacy centers "bring together the commitment and talents of people who work in different agencies for the welfare of the child."

She said the Midwest is "a bit behind" the rest of the country in establishing such centers. So far, funding for the three centers in Minnesota has been a patchwork of appropriations from the U.S. Department of Justice, counties, and state grants.

"We are trying to get the state to help us help our kids," said Matejka. She said the center's staff and their board spend too much time trying to raise money.

"We are struggling to stay open," said Rip Rapp, board member for First Witness. "We are up to our ears writing proposals for grants."

John Laux, former Minneapolis police chief and a board member of Cornerhouse in Minneapolis, said the center interviews more than 500 children a year who are victims of sexual abuse.

"The typical child sexual abuse victim is a 7-year-old girl," he said.

Mark Rubin, assistant St. Louis County attorney, said the centers are needed and valuable because of their team approach.

"These are gifted and dedicated people who treat children with respect and dignity," Rubin said. "When children leave these centers, they are empowered."

★ CRIME

Cutting corrections costs

Officials from the state Department of Corrections plan to reduce the daily cost of housing inmates in the state's prisons by at least \$10 per day by the end of the current fiscal year and a total of \$20 in the future.

They presented their plan for accomplishing this goal to a joint meeting of the House Crime Prevention and Judiciary Finance committees Feb. 20. As a result of the plan, Commissioner Sheryl Ramstad Hvass said the department will not ask for more funding in its budget, even though inmate populations are expected to keep rising during the next several years.

The department hired national consultants,

funded by a technical grant from the National Institute of Corrections, to recommend ways of cutting per diem costs. Of the 38 items the consultants recommended, officials say 35 of them are already being accomplished in whole or part, and the rest are not feasible for Minnesota's prison population.

A committee, consisting of corrections officials and others, was then formed to develop a strategy for reducing per diems.

The plan would reduce per diem costs from an average of \$87.19 per day, to \$77.78 by June 30, 2001, to \$68.72 "in the future." Minnesota has typically been in the top three states nationally, Ramstad Hvass said. The department goal is to be out of the top 10.

"My goal is within three years," she said.

Ramstad Hvass and Deputy Commissioner Dennis Benson outlined several ways the department plans to reduce the numbers.

Cost reductions will come from several places: increasing numbers of inmates per facility, reducing staff via attrition, absorbing growth, and utilizing developing resources.

Ramstad Hvass said the department is leaving vacant positions unfilled and reassigning management and others. She anticipates eliminating or reassigning up to 190 positions in the department that employs about 4,000 people.

Benson said very few would result from layoffs.

Several members were concerned that services would be reduced as a result of the cost reductions. Both Ramstad Hvass and Benson said they don't want to compromise safety or services.

"There have been no wholesale cuts in programs," Benson said. "We have diluted some programs." He continued, saying they plan to better utilize existing resources.

Ramstad Hvass said officials are trying to strengthen the services offered inside the prison with those on the outside so there's some continuity.

"We're starting to think about pre-release plans on day one of incarceration," she said. "Prison is not necessarily the healthiest place for rehabilitation but we're doing a lot to change the culture and focus on the programs that work."

★ EDUCATION

Ritalin use debated

Marilynn Pavlak, a former elementary teacher of nearly 26 years, says parents often asked her if medication such as Ritalin, a prescription drug used to calm children who are abnormally hyperactive, was appropriate for their child. More often than not, she would say no, but said that some teachers see it as a "godsend."

"I have seen a huge misuse of it in the classroom," Pavlak told the House K-12 Education Finance Committee Feb. 20.

She has been questioned by single parents and by families where both parents were working, many of them looking for an "easy fix," she explained.

Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior) has introduced a bill (HF478) requiring parents,

CLASSROOM SESSION



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Members of the Education Policy Committee listen to St. Paul Schools Superintendent Pat Harvey, center, during a Feb. 15 tour of John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School in St. Paul.



Bob DeBoer of New Visions Charter School in Minneapolis testifies in front of the House Education Policy Committee Feb. 20 about a bill that would require parents and providers to evaluate programs prior to prescribing drugs to children with attention deficit disorder.

education providers, and health care professionals to first evaluate alternatives to prescription drugs when a child has been diagnosed with attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

"This is to look at other options before using drugs as first option," Sykora said. "I know for many parents that Ritalin has been their child's savior ... but I also know parents that would pull their child from school before putting them on drugs."

"The traditional approach is to use medication," said Bob DeBoer, founder of New Visions Charter School. For behaviors like ADD and ADHD, he said, "We need to look at the causes before deciding what is best treatment," and suggested examining food and nutrition.

Children using Ritalin, DeBoer said, don't feel the joys of success or frustrations of life. They can experience emotional and behavioral problems, and people on Ritalin for a long time have higher rates of suicide and depression, he said.

A second provision in the bill says, "A parent's refusal to consent to a special education evaluation of the parent's child ... does not constitute educational neglect."

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) argued that under this provision, parents could refuse any assessment for their child.

"Why do you want to draw this so broadly?" he asked. He said it excludes assessment for any type of emotional problem that a child might have if their parent is in denial.

"I don't want parents getting coerced into something they don't want to," Sykora replied. Entenza put forth an amendment to delete the added language in the bill's second section. Sykora agreed to withdraw the bill and attempt to clarify the second section.

Lastly, the bill would appropriate \$50,000 for the state's education department to collect statistics on Minnesota students diagnosed with ADD or ADHD currently taking prescription drugs such as Ritalin. It would also reveal the number of students who have not received an ADD or ADHD diagnosis but are taking such drugs.

The Coalition for Children with Disabilities submitted a letter to the committee, stating the study would not produce accurate numbers, because many students take their prescription drugs at home, not at school. The study would not reveal whether other interventions have been tried and would not give information to show whether schools are "pressuring parents to obtain prescriptions," the letter says.

The committee tabled the bill.

School maintenance funds sought

In an effort to expand qualifications for schools to receive additional funds for deferred maintenance of their buildings, Rep. Barbara Goodwin (DFL-Columbia Heights) sponsored a bill (HF741) that would make about 40 more districts eligible.

Currently, a district qualifies if it has at least 1.85 million square feet of building space and its average building age is at least 15 years. Under this bill, about 20 large school districts fit the requirements.

HF741 would amend current statute to allow districts with more than 500,000 square feet of space with an average building age of at least 30 years to qualify for the program.

During the House K-12 Education Finance Committee Feb. 19 legislators expressed frustration with what is presently in law and acknowledged Goodwin's bill as a step in the right direction.

Goodwin said average-size districts with older school buildings should qualify for funds for maintenance costs.

Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake) said it is a major dilemma for the education community, especially for rural schools that in many ways cannot meet the requirements. "We really have to do something in this area," he said.

To obtain funds for the deferred maintenance costs, districts must either use capital account money, or, more commonly, go to voters for a local levy. If the bill passes, it could cost \$39 million statewide in levies, and \$2.5 million from state aid.

Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel) said there are two things wrong with the bill. First, "it encourages districts to keep old buildings in their register," and, for example, use them for storage. Secondly, it doesn't account for small schools that have less revenue and fewer resources. "It doesn't look at the big picture," Ness said.

Goodwin disagreed, saying the bill supports local accountability. "It is local control," she said.

The committee took no action, but Goodwin said if the bill is approved by the House Taxes Committee, it also has to be approved by the House K-12 Finance Committee. If it became law, it would be effective in 2003.

ELECTIONS



Granny D leads reform

Ninety-one-year-old Doris Haddock went for a walk in Pasadena, Calif., on Jan. 1, 1999, and didn't stop walking until she arrived in Washington D.C. 14 months later.

Haddock, known to many as "Granny D," sought to bring attention to her strong belief that the country is in need of campaign finance reform.

At a Feb. 16 joint hearing of the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee and the Senate Elections Subcommittee, Haddock said reform is needed because it takes "great amounts of money" to win an election in a system that is corrupt.

"We're letting our democracy slip slide, slip slide away," she said.

With two children, eight grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren, Haddock said the best legacy she could leave would be to help turn things around so the nation could get back to being "a true democracy."

Originally she wanted to complete her walk in 12 months but as her journey got more attention, she was asked to speak more about her cause. Along the way she wore out four pairs of shoes, meaning she got about 800 miles per pair.

On her journey she learned that those who say nationwide low voter turnouts are due to people not caring about politics are off base. She said people told her they didn't want to "vote for a bunch of crooks."

"Politicians are not crooks. It's the system that is crooked," she said.

The committee also heard testimony from two Maine lawmakers. In 2000 that state established a voluntary full public financing option for candidates who agree to not take private funds.



Doris "Granny D" Haddock, 91, is applauded for her effort walking across the country in support of campaign reform during the Feb. 16 House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee meeting. Also testifying on clean campaigns at the hearing were Sen. Ed Youngblood (R-Maine), left, and Rep. Bill Norbert (D-Maine)

Sen. Ed Youngblood, a Republican, ran against a 16-year incumbent. He said abiding by the state's "clean election" law forced him to run a focused campaign that included as much face to face contact with the voters as possible.

"The more doors you knock on, the more eyes you look at, the better off you will be," he said.

Rep. Bill Norbert, a Democrat, said volunteering to not take any "soft money" was a "limiting but liberating" experience. He said the public financing program cost Maine taxpayers less than \$1 million for the 2000 elections.

Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park), the House committee chair, said having an open process is important so that people have confidence that the system is fair.

"There is nothing wrong with being a politician. It's a very noble thing to do," Rhodes said. "Hopefully having open and above the board elections will inspire young people to go into the profession."

★ EMPLOYMENT

On-site drug testing

A bill that would permit employers to conduct on-site drug and alcohol testing drew many questions and strong reactions at the Feb. 15 House Commerce, Jobs and Economic Development Committee meeting.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), the sponsor of HF701, explained the bill does not change existing law but would allow drug testing to take place on a job site instead of in a lab, where testing is currently required to take place.

"This is using modern technology to take care of a formerly cumbersome process," he said.

Forty states allow on-site drug and alcohol testing by employers, 11 of them having recently approved the new method.

Product manufacturers for a testing cup that screens for drugs and alcohol testified at the meeting about the product's reliability. The cup, which has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), is one of several products that could be used by employers.

Several representatives from railroad organizations opposed the bill, saying there is very little trust between employees and supervisors in the industry and such a test may be used against them.

Stan Daniels, of the United Steelworkers Association, said the bill would violate basic labor agreements. He said he would not oppose a bill that restricted industries, such as mining, from on-site testing.

Rep. Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook) offered that the language in the bill could be written so permission for on-site testing would not automatically be included in employee contracts.

"I don't want to unilaterally put something into their contracts," Bakk said.

Due to a time constraint, deliberations about the bill are scheduled to continue Feb. 27.

Committee Chair Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) suggested to Gunther that before the bill comes back to the committee he should amend it in consideration of the issues brought up at the meeting for northern Minnesota industries such as railroads and mining.

Political contributions

Employees belonging to particular organizations that advocate or financially support political candidates would be notified of their option to withhold their own funds if they don't support the candidate, under a measure sponsored by Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake).

The House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee heard the bill (HF1027) Feb. 21 and will further discuss it at later hearings.

Olson said the bill requires a membership organization to notify its members of their rights to reduce their dues by the percentage amount the organization uses for political purposes. If the members give written notice, they are entitled to a refund of dues.

George Hawkins, executive director of the Minnesota Chapter of the Association of Builders and Contractors, said the National Labor Relations Act already provides that every employee has the right to join a membership organization, such as a union.

Hawkins said what is not widely recognized is the act also provides that employees have the right not to join a union. He supports HF1027 because it is "a matter of fairness and a matter of information."

"No one can be compelled to participate in a political organization or support a political cause or candidate against his or her will," Hawkins said.

Rep. Mark Gleason (DFL-Richfield) said currently consumers finance political

activities by purchasing products from corporations that later spend money on political causes and candidates. He said he was concerned the bill would limit workers' rights.

"This would be an extreme limitation on the political voice of labor unions and working people," Gleason said.

He offered an amendment that would exclude organizations that exist for the purpose of collective bargaining or for dealing with employees concerning grievances or terms or conditions of employment.

Olson did not support the amendment because it would "gut the bill."

He agreed with Gleason that workers' rights are eroding but said the bill would restore some of those rights by informing people where their dues are being spent.

The amendment failed by an 8-8 vote.

★ ENVIRONMENT

Conservation clock ticking

A program that would improve water quality and reduce pollution in the Minnesota River basin is working against the clock. To achieve its goal, the Minnesota River Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program must receive funding this year from the Legislature.

"This is a project we can't allow to be stagnant for the next year," said Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson), who has sponsored a bill (HF532) that would provide funding for the program.

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is requesting an appropriation of \$51.4 million, a combination of bonding and general fund monies, to leverage \$98 million in federal funding.

"It's urgent for the state to complete its investment to fully leverage federal funds," Ron Harnack, executive director of the board, told the House Capital Investment Committee Feb. 20.

So far, the state has appropriated \$30 million dollars that have been matched by \$65 million in federal funds. The deadline for obtaining the additional federal funds is September 2002.

The goal is to buffer a total of 100,000 acres of marginal cropland in a voluntary, mutually beneficial partnership between the state and landowners. Thirty thousand acres of conservation easements in the Minnesota River basin have already been enrolled.

Cleaning up the Minnesota River is a huge undertaking. According to the board, it is one of the most polluted rivers in the country, largely due to agricultural runoff. Most of the runoff comes from floodplain areas, riparian lands (those adjacent to river banks), and

drained wetlands.

In removing this land from production, significant benefits are anticipated. Among these are:

- reductions in phosphorus, nitrogen and sediment;
- retention of soil;
- reduced disaster assistance;
- habitat improvement;
- carbon sequestration; and
- increased tourism and recreation.

Landowners are paid a percentage of the assessed value of eligible land. In exchange, they set up a conservation plan that will maximize water quality and benefit wildlife.

"It's a program that's hard to beat," Harnack said. "It's forever." He said 99.99 percent of the easements are permanent.

The program is supported by 37 counties and 61 organizations, including The Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, Minnesota Corn Growers, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Its support in the Legislature crosses party lines.

"This is truly a bipartisan effort," said Rep. Henry Kalis (DFL-Wells). "One of the few."

Less cash for trash

Two bills that would reduce the tax rate charged to municipalities for residential and commercial solid waste disposal services were heard in the House Taxes Committee Sales and Income Tax Division Feb. 19.

The measures, HF592 and HF755, are sponsored by Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea).

In 1989 the state imposed a 6.5 percent sales tax on garbage collection. Three years later a solid waste fee of 20 cents per cubic yard on landfilled and processed waste was created.

In 1997 a single solid waste management tax was created to replace the existing tax and fee. Dorman said the new tax was intended to be revenue neutral and raise around \$44.5 million per year, or the same total of the two old revenue sources.

Instead, he said, the amounts collected have exceeded what was forecast. In 1999 the tax raised more than \$49 million and it is projected that in 2001 the tax will generate in excess of \$54 million.

HF592 would reduce the tax rate on residential mixed municipal solid waste disposable services from 9.75 percent to 8.5 percent. Commercial mixed municipal services would see a rate reduction from 17 percent to 15 percent.

HF755 would reduce the rates even further — to 7.2 percent on residential services and 12.8 percent on commercial services.

Lisa Thorvig, a deputy commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, said the agency opposes both bills.

Thorvig said Gov. Jesse Ventura would soon introduce a comprehensive environment tax reform proposal that is contingent on the current solid waste management tax rate.

Since the amount of tax is determined by the amount of waste disposed, Thorvig said the bills would encourage those who are not practicing good environmental habits.

"Those producing increased waste should not be rewarded with a decreased tax," she said.

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

★ GOVERNMENT

Permanent rules move ahead

The full House will soon vote on the Permanent Rules of the House, approved Feb. 21 by the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee.

A revised version of the rules was presented to the committee by Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) who has also been working with the Senate to compile the Joint Rules used by both bodies.

Changes to the rules are primarily technical, Tuma said, with a few exceptions. One significant change would require that each of the finance committees in the House have its own omnibus bill, in an effort to avoid combining multiple topics.

A bill from the 2000 session, dubbed by some as the "garbage bill," raised attention because it combined several topics — including health and human services, environment, criminal justice, agriculture, jobs, government, and economic development — into one bill.

"This is intended to avoid the 'omnibus, omnibus' bill scenario we had last year," said Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), committee chair.

Another change would clarify what Tuma said is already House procedure regarding budget targets set by the House Ways and Means Committee. The change states that the budget resolution will set maximum limits for net expenditures, rather than revenues and expenditures, since the definition of net expenditures includes revenues.

Other changes involve committee jurisdiction over particular bills. For example, many bills affecting government must go before the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee. In an effort to streamline the process, Tuma proposed the committee be allowed to review a bill in the possession of another committee. The governmental operations committee will then offer

its recommendations and if the committee in possession of the bill accepts the recommendations in total, it would not have to be officially heard in the committee.

Another change requires bills ultimately having an impact on capital projects, or bonding, to go through the House Capital Investment Committee. Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), chair of that committee, gave the example of the Hiawatha light rail project where cash was appropriated for planning and preliminary purposes, but bonding was required for the project.

He said the full committee never had an opportunity to approve the overall plan.

Absent from the proposed rules was any change to the rule governing offensive language in speech and debate. During the 2000 session, a controversy arose due to some language on the floor between two members and several members felt the remedy provided by the rule is inadequate.

The House Ethics Committee met to recommend new language, but it was not incorporated into the new rules.

Minority Leader Tom Pugh (DFL-South St. Paul) said there's no remedy to the problem and no guarantee that a similar situation won't occur in the future.

Both Pugh and Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) suggested the method for objecting to language be clarified and archaic wording regarding how the offensive language is recorded be eliminated.

No amendment was offered.

★ HIGHER EDUCATION

Regents recommended

A quintet has been recommended to serve on the University of Minnesota Board of Regents.

Before a Feb. 20 joint meeting of the House education committees and Senate Education Committee, one student and four others were nominated to the institution's governing body.

All must be approved by a joint meeting of the full House and Senate. Previously scheduled for Feb. 26, that meeting has been indefinitely postponed.

Angela Bos, a senior at the university's Morris campus was recommended to be the student representative, and Michael O'Keefe the candidate from the Fifth Congressional District.

O'Keefe, the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and a regent since December 1996, defeated former state finance commissioner Jay Kiedrowski 45-23. Members of the district endorsed Kiedrowski at a meeting one week earlier.

Some questioned O'Keefe's candidacy because he is part of Gov. Jesse Ventura's administration. O'Keefe said some people told him if he wants to remain a regent he must quit his day job.

During his remarks O'Keefe emphasized he has spoken against the governor's funding plan for the university. "My views are probably more widely known than any other regent," he said. "I've done what any good regent should."

The lengthier battles were for the three at-large seats, a four-year seat to finish the term of the late William Peterson, and two six-year terms.

Nine candidates vied for the seats with the four-year choice, which was voted upon first, coming down to Ray Waldron of St. Anthony Village and Frank Berman of Edina. Waldron, the secretary-treasurer for the Minnesota AFL-CIO, led Berman, an attorney, 34-33 after two rounds of voting (with three members voting for other candidates) and 36-34 after three rounds of voting, but 38 tallies were needed to receive the recommendation.

After much discussion on how to break the apparent deadlock, Berman withdrew from competition for the seat, and focused on the six-year terms. Waldron then received 51 votes in round four to win the recommendation. Many legislators abstained during the final round of voting.

Three rounds into the first six-year race, Berman and Regent Patricia Spence of Rice were tied at 35 votes apiece. The same was true after round four, before three legislators changed their minds in the fifth round, giving Spence, the current board chair, the needed 38 votes.

Berman's last chance to gain a recommendation fell in the second round of voting for the final seat as Jacqueline Fraedrich of Coon Rapids, current Regent Warren Larson of Bagley,

and Richard "Pinky" McNamara of Edina advanced to round three.

The final vote gave McNamara, a business owner who donated \$10 million to the university in 1998, the necessary 38 votes, only after Sen. Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul) changed his vote to McNamara as the tallies were being added. Larson received 21 votes and Fraedrich 11.

Afterwards, Cohen said he changed his mind because McNamara would have received the additional vote on the next ballot, and he didn't want to further drag out the meeting, which lasted past 11 p.m.

Smart spending emphasized

With the University of Minnesota and Gov. Jesse Ventura differing on how much money the institution should receive in its budget for the next biennium, university officials stressed their

SNEAK PEEK



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Michael Harris, 6, on a tour of the Capitol with his first grade class from Wildwood Elementary School in Mahtomedi, peeks between Corp. Perry Tholl, left, and Pvt. Michael Schudt, members of the First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, to see a Feb. 21 ceremony in the Rotunda celebrating the University of Minnesota's 150th birthday.

previous smart spending initiatives Feb. 19.

"There is always the concern of being accountable," University President Mark Yudof said. "My goal is to disprove that the university is a black hole for money."

Yudof explained to members of the House Higher Education Committee the ways in which the university has reprioritized \$112.7 million since fiscal year 1998. The number does not include internal reallocations by academic units to meet redirected faculty focus and effort.

"This is a serious degree of cutting costs and making hard choices," Yudof said.

Of the money reallocated, the largest amount (\$35.2 million) came in the form of institutional revenue sharing — assessing all units to cover common goods and institution-wide priorities. Using this plan, individual colleges contribute 2.25 percent of their total revenues into a central pool that administration spends as it sees fit to best meet needs.

Another aspect of institutional assessment was a \$17.9 million enterprise project that replaced human resource and student financial computer systems.

Other savings include \$17.1 million by self-financing a portion of compensation, and trimming administrative costs. "When I came here I thought we were top heavy," Yudof said.

Included in the \$33.1 million in administrative base budget reductions, is the elimination of two provost offices, the office of senior vice-president for finance, and the Office of Treasurer, consolidation of the Office of Information Technology, and other base budget reductions.

The remaining \$9.4 million is from academic initiatives instituted in 1998.

Under this plan, Yudof said, when the state puts money into an area, so does the university, and sometimes, external funds will also be allocated.

As an example, Yudof noted in the area of new media where the state allocated \$1.7 million in 1998 and the university kicked in \$567,000 to improve its program and facilities. Hubbard Broadcasting later donated \$10 million to the program. "I believe we would not have received that money had we not gotten the money to improve the program and Ford and Murphy Halls," Yudof said.

HUMAN SERVICES



Becoming compliant

The licensing division of the Minnesota Department of Human Services has fallen behind. Way behind.

Existing law requires site visits every two years, but according to budget documents, about 23 percent of the 3,642 programs licensed by the department are not being

visited as often as required. These include programs such as adult day care, foster care, and childcare.

"We are reprioritizing so we can put more licensors in the field," Jerry Kerber, director of the human services licensing division, told the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Feb. 19.

Department officials say the lack of timely reviews has been a result of laws that have increased the department's responsibilities without increasing funding. These increased demands have led to a redirection of funding designated for routine licensing inspections toward more pressing obligations.

Since 1990 the average caseload for a licensor has increased from 85 to 182 programs. To meet the statutory requirements for licensing reviews, the department said it needs to hire 14 new licensors.

To meet that need, the department is requesting new funding of \$1.1 million in 2002 and \$923,000 in 2003 from the general fund. The governor supports the request.

One concern Kerber voiced is the potential for lawsuits if people are injured in a facility that has not been visited.

"Will this amount of money bring you into statutory compliance?" asked Committee Chair Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead).

"We believe it will," Kerber said.

INDUSTRY



Texas energy plan

Minnesota legislators might have warmed to Texas' energy deregulation plan, but are still considering many possibilities for energy solutions in the state.

"He opened some interesting issues for consideration," said Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville), chair of the House Regulated Industries Committee. "I don't know where it will go. We're not shutting off any options."

On Feb. 19 committee members heard what Texas has done to encourage companies to build more power plants in the state and keep prices down for consumers.

"If you open the market they will come and build," said Patrick Wood, who, as chairman of the Texas Public Utilities Commission, oversaw a wholesale competition plan that deregulated energy suppliers during the past six years.

The plan has resulted in many clean, new power plants running today. As part of deregulation, retail rates reflect cost declines, the state's transmission grid is being upgraded, and standardized business rules have been put in place.

The state asked for the public's input, and



Patrick Wood III, chair of the Texas Public Utilities Commission, gives a presentation on electric deregulation and restructuring in Texas during the Feb. 19 House Regulated Industries Committee meeting.

Texas' residential and business communities responded, setting the stage for efficiency and renewables, Wood said. In Texas, conservation was very popular, which surprised them, he added.

Wood, who reviewed Minnesota's three energy proposals, said the state has "a lot of the basics in place," and gave several suggestions to the committee.

Wood recommended starting with a solid infrastructure, having clear market investment signals for generation, and an organized management system, admitting that "managing risk is our biggest failure." In Texas, he said, there were "too many dukes, and not enough kings."

Saying Americans generally take short-term solutions over long-term ones, Wood advised the Legislature to set goals for efficiency and renewables, and to use market methods to get there. He especially emphasized wind power, which has been very successful in Texas and could be just as successful in Minnesota.

Marya White, manager of energy planning and advocacy for the Department of Commerce, said she and others studied the Texas model while putting together the department's energy plan. Their proposal would not deregulate, but requires considerable efficiency and conservation measures.

"We agree that conservation is best," and that there are good wind resources in the state, White said.

"The Texas example gives us a lot of reason to move to a competitive market," said Bill Blazar,

senior vice president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber's plan is the only one currently proposing deregulation.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) asked how Minnesota can have competition without supply. Blazar replied the state needs to have certainty in new generation, and Texas ultimately knew where they wanted to go.

Michael Noble, representing the POWER campaign, said there is a difference in how the two states see efficiency — in Minnesota it's a main player, but it doesn't factor into Texas' plan much.

"Nothing really is as cost effective as efficiency," Noble said.

LAW

Halal bill passes

By a 130-1 vote, the House passed a bill Feb. 15 to provide legal protection to foods prepared according to Islamic law.

HF149, sponsored by House Majority leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), prohibits the sale or serving of food falsely labeled "Halal," or prepared according to Islamic religious law, called Sharia.

The bill's prohibitions are identical to the provisions protecting the Jewish community from food falsely labeled or improperly prepared as Kosher.

Rep. Philip Krinkie (R-Shoreview) was the lone opposition vote. He later said he opposed the measure, which he characterized as "another form of excessive government regulation," in part because of the cost of enforcing the regulation.

On the whole, members expressed admiration for the Jewish-Islamic partnership leading to the bill's support. Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) echoed the sentiments of several members, suggesting "this cooperation should be a model for peace in the Middle East."

Matthew Ramadan, an Islamic authority known as an Imam, opened the first Halal market in Minnesota in North Minneapolis in 1986. He had previously explained to the House Agriculture Committee that "Halal is basically a word that means lawful, or legal." He said 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.

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

The bill's sponsors say that halal requirements are determined at the local level by Muslim authorities and are commonly enforced in other major American cities.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

Simplifying state rules

Legislators are considering adjusting state law so defendants found liable for 50 percent or less of the damages in a tort case would be responsible for only the percentage of the plaintiff's damages that is equal to the defendant's percentage at fault.

Under existing state law, a judge may order a defendant found 15 percent or less at fault to pay a portion of the plaintiff's damages up to four times that defendant's fault.

The rule does not apply in environmental torts, where defendants are not protected by limits on liability, but rather are always responsible for up to 100 percent of the damages they may cause. Such an arrangement, known as "joint and several liability," is a legal doctrine that each party bearing some responsibility for an injury may be held responsible for all the injured party's damages.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) sponsored a bill (HF369) to address what he described as "a fundamental question of fairness."

Bishop told a Feb. 21 meeting of the House Civil Law Committee his bill would move Minnesota law closer to a national trend of curtailing joint and several liability. He also emphasized that his bill "simplified the law."

The bill maintains existing law for environmental torts, but eliminates a current provision preventing government entities from being ordered to pay more than \$300,000 per person or \$1 million per incident. Defendants found liable for less than one-half the damages would be responsible only for the percentage of the plaintiff's damages that is equal to the defendant's percentage of fault. Also, joint and several liability is upheld for a person who commits an intentional tort.

The bill has the support of municipalities and the business community.

The Civil Justice Coalition, a coalition of businesses and government entities, wrote that Bishop's "modest and reasonable change will dramatically reduce the number and amount of settlements paid" to plaintiffs.

Opponents suggest the bill would impede

the legitimate collection of funds to compensate tort victims.

Chris Messerly, a member of the Minnesota Trial Lawyers Association, said, "Taxpayers would pay hundreds of millions of dollars that would otherwise be paid by insurance companies."

The House Civil Law Committee approved the bill, sending it to the House floor.

RECREATION



Science Museum funding

Science Museum of Minnesota President James Peterson has asked the Legislature for additional funding beyond the governor's recommendation for the 2002-03 biennium.

Speaking before the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee Feb. 16, he asked that they endorse an increase of \$250,000 in the base appropriation for the museum, as well as a 3 percent adjustment for inflation.

The governor's biennial recommendation includes no change in the base funding of \$1.2 million. That level of funding has remained the same since 1991. State support for the science museum currently accounts for 4.5 percent of its overall funding, compared to 7 percent in 1991.

Most of the museum's funding comes from private contributions, county appropriations, fees, memberships, and on-site restaurant and store proceeds. The museum also realizes income from exhibits and films it produces and distributes internationally.

In June 2000, Ramsey County cut its appropriation to the museum by 50 percent, or \$250,000.

Ventura has recommended a request for \$495,000 for two environmental education projects that would come from the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) Fund. No action has been taken on either request.

The two new environmental projects would both be outdoors. The first, called Water-scapes, will teach about outdoor non-point source pollution and demonstrate ways to improve water quality.

The second project, a demonstration of upland habitat restoration, would entail the acquisition of eight acres of property adjacent to the St. Croix watershed research station.

In December 1999, the museum opened in its new downtown St. Paul location closer to the Mississippi River. While the building has changed, the mission has not: to encourage people of all ages "to experience their changing world through science."

Attendance during the museum's first year in its new location grew to 1.2 million, up from

around 700,000 in the old downtown site. Officials project that attendance will “settle down” to about 850,000 per year. Memberships increased from 19,000 to 32,000.

★ SAFETY

Housing help for firefighters

Cities would be allowed to offer a housing incentive to attract public safety personnel under a measure heard by the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee Feb. 19.

The committee approved an amended version of the bill and referred it to the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Committee without recommendation.

HF172 sponsored by Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake) originally applied only to the city of Mahtomedi. That city is attempting to address a shortage in volunteer firefighters.

The bill allows cities to provide housing assistance to any public safety personnel.

Jon Hohenstein, the Mahtomedi city administrator, said the city has had a difficult time finding volunteer firefighters because most of the department’s members work outside the community during the day and there is a small employer base from which to recruit other daytime volunteers.

Mares said the legislation is necessary

because of a precedent established by a 1952 state attorney general opinion, which held that the city of Newport did not have the authority to provide living quarters to its police chief unless the Legislature granted special authority.

After the committee heard the bill Jan. 24, Mares sought an opinion from the current attorney general to see if the previous opinion still held. That office ruled there is no current statute that specifically gives the city authority for expenditures for volunteer firefighter housing and therefore legislation is needed.

The bill was amended to include all cities and expanded to also apply to the recruitment of police officers.

Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji), a volunteer firefighter, said he was concerned about expanding the legislation to include full-time paid positions in addition to the original intent, which was aimed at volunteer services.

Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), agreed with Fuller’s concerns, saying the expansion of the bill would lead to cities competing against each other for employees.

“If the original legislation was a slippery slope then this amendment is a free fall from 30,000 feet,” Buesgens said.

The committee approved an amendment to the amendment that would limit the bill to statutory cities wishing to provide housing assistance to volunteer firefighters and ambulance personnel.

concentration legislation); \$1.5 million for staff in the CrimNet system; \$5 million for the CrimNet integration analysis, options, and suspense file; and \$7.4 million in state matching funds for federal disaster assistance.

Many of the change items are located in the bureau’s budget. However, legislators were aware of adjustments for the CrimNet system, which would integrate law enforcement data from around the state, because of a task force report presented earlier this year outlining anticipated costs.

That report suggested a need of about \$41.5 million for the system. Gov. Jesse Ventura is recommending \$27 million.

At the Feb. 15 meeting, members wondered about the DWI enforcement dollars.

Frank Dolejsi, director of the BCA lab, said the 2000 Legislature removed base funding from the trunk highway fund for basic DWI analysis, which employs 18 scientists. The plan, according to the budget, is to replenish most of that money from the general fund and the rest from the trunk highway fund.

Without the money, those scientists would be laid off.

Other major functions seeking general fund dollars under the Department of Public Safety include: \$6.6 million for the State Fire Marshal, \$9.8 million for law enforcement and community grants, and \$14.8 million for emergency management.

The committee will evaluate the requests and determine what to include in its omnibus bill.

★ SNAKE CHARMER



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie) gets up close and personal with a 28-pound boa constrictor named Rosey Feb. 22 in the State Capitol Rotunda. Rosey’s handler, naturalist Kevin Wier, was at the Capitol with other Minnesota Zoo staff and animals, as part of an event designed to increase awareness of the zoo, its programs, and to promote the zoo’s legislative requests.

Public safety request

Officials from the Department of Public Safety are requesting \$164.6 million in general fund appropriations for its fiscal year 2002-03 budget, an increase of \$15.2 million from the previous biennium.

They made their requests to the House Judiciary Finance Committee during the past several weeks and wrapped up testimony Feb. 15.

The biggest share of the budget, \$62.8 million, would go to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. A close second is the Crime Victims Services Center, which is requesting \$62.2 million, most of which would go to support centers around the state.

Those centers provide victims services in several categories, including general crime, battered women, and sexual assault.

Laurie Ohmann, executive director of the center, said grants are distributed to centers according to agreements that they meet certain needs and criteria.

Major general fund change requests for the department overall are as follows: about \$2.7 million for DWI enforcement (not connected with any felony or .08 blood-alcohol

★ TAXES

Taxed for travel

A provision of Gov. Jesse Ventura’s property tax reform proposal would allow cities to impose a new transportation utility fee to fund the upgrade and maintenance of roads and bridges.

Under the proposal the fee would be based on the road traffic generated by the property. A public hearing of the proposed fee would be required before the fee could be imposed.

Members of the business community expressed concern with the proposed new fee Feb. 21 as the House Taxes Committee continued hearings of the governor’s tax bill (HF511), sponsored by House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon).

Scott Lambert, representing the Minnesota Auto Dealers Association, said the transportation utility fee would, in essence, establish a new property tax with no cap that would exist outside any levy limits.

He said the proposal left it unclear what restrictions would be imposed on how the revenue could be used.

Annette Henkel, representing the Minnesota Retailers Association, said the tax would put Main Street businesses at a competitive disadvantage with Internet retailers.

"This is a local option property tax on businesses with very little accountability," Henkel said.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), the committee chair, said the governor's continued support of reducing motor vehicle license registration fees while creating the new fee was "an interesting policy choice."

He said the desire to switch from "what is basically a user fee to a new property tax" for funding road improvements is "absolutely mind boggling."

★ TRANSPORTATION

More rail options

In his pursuit of a multi-modal transportation system for Minnesota, Gov. Jesse Ventura has recommended \$115 million in general obligation bonding for a commuter rail line between Minneapolis and St. Cloud.

Officials from the Department of Transportation presented the plan for the Northstar Corridor commuter line to the House Capital Investment Committee Feb. 15. The committee took no action on the measure.

The line is projected to cost \$231 million, with a funding formula of 50 percent state, 40 percent federal, and 10 percent local.

The 80-mile corridor would use existing tracks owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad to carry state-of-the-art trains at 79 mph beginning in 2004. Twelve stations are planned, most with bus service and park-and-ride lots.

The trip time, including stops, is estimated at 83 minutes during peak commute, said Tim Yantos, executive director of the Northstar Corridor Development Authority. Ridership is estimated at 2.8 million in the line's first year.

"There is a tremendous amount of community support for this," Yantos said.

Support in the committee was mixed.

"Everyone benefits from highways, even if they don't drive," said Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska). "Goods and services have to come down that highway. The question is whether people using this train will get to go where they want to go."

Ken Stevens, of the development authority, said commuter rail is very flexible. "If you want to add capacity to this system you simply add cars."

Yantos said the corridor to be served is the

fastest growing area in Minnesota. Population is expected to grow by 49 percent in St. Cloud, 402 percent in Becker, and 232 percent in Elk River by the year 2025.

"I think there are a lot of opportunities with the Northstar Corridor," said Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover). "It's definitely a wise use of taxpayer dollars."

Upon completion of the North Star line, a link would be built to connect it with the Hiawatha Light Rail Transit station in downtown Minneapolis.

That project, the first light rail line in Minneapolis since the streetcars, is now under construction. The 11.6-mile line will link downtown Minneapolis, Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, and the Mall of America when it's completed in the fall of 2004.

Bob Winter, assistant division engineer with the Department of Transportation, said the trip from end-to-end will take 30 minutes, with stops at 17 stations. Bus service will provide access to the stations, and timed transfers will be available. Park-and-ride lots will be located at the Fort Snelling station and the Mall of America.

Bridge funding sought

Legislators are taking steps to improve the bargaining positions of municipalities in negotiations with railroads regarding rail bridges over publicly owned roads.

Railroads now routinely refuse to voluntarily lengthen bridges for the benefit of localities wanting to expand roads beneath them, says Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul). Since state law now prohibits local agencies from spending money to extend bridges owned by railroad companies, municipalities must purchase bridges in order to lengthen them. The resulting maintenance costs bear heavily on cities and counties.

Hausman introduced a bill (HF672) to give local agencies the ability to enter into partnerships with railroads so public money could lengthen bridges. The plan would prevent local taxpayers from having to purchase an entire bridge simply to expand the roadways below them.

House Transportation Policy Committee Chair Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen) expressed concern about spending money for corporately held property during a Feb. 22 meeting. Ramsey County Department of Public Works Director and Engineer Ken Haider responded that the public funds would still be appropriated by the state and authorized by county regulators. "This is not free reign to funnel money to railroads," he said.

Hausman said the Minnesota Department

of Transportation currently has the ability to spend money to extend railroad bridges. In the long run, Haider told the committee, allowing local officials this discretion could decrease the cost to local taxpayers while still allowing for road improvement and not harming railroads.

The committee approved the bill and referred it to the House Transportation Finance Committee.

Advice from Washington

Members of the House and Senate transportation committees got a lesson from a Washington, D.C. ally of Minnesota transportation projects.

U.S. Rep. Jim Oberstar (DFL-Chisholm) told a Feb. 20 joint meeting of state lawmakers that he is concerned that federal tax cuts could jeopardize funding for transportation projects. Oberstar is the ranking Democrat of the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

He spoke of his travels to Europe, China, and American cities where major transportation projects helped ensure the long-term economic viability of local workers. "If we in Minnesota are going to be players on this global scene, we have to keep our infrastructure competitive and our people and products mobile," he said.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Chaska), chair of the House Transportation Finance Committee, asked about what she described as "a crisis in port development in America." Oberstar echoed her concern, noting U.S. saltwater ports cannot accept the largest seafaring cargo ships today, a problem that would only become more acute without infusion of federal dollars to bolster port functions.

He also endorsed Molnau's suggestion that the Minnesota Legislature pass memorials supporting federal funding of waterway improvement, something the House Transportation Policy Committee has already done. "We would welcome the support and interest to help our cause," Oberstar said.

Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) broached the topic of metro area transit. "In urban areas, pouring more concrete has its limits," she said. "Those citizens who want alternatives have not had their voices heard in this state."

Oberstar said he is "a strong advocate for smart growth, not by zoning, but by creating mobility." Endorsing transportation plans such as light rail and commuter rail, Oberstar said, "If you pour another yard of concrete south of Interstate 494, the whole state's going to sink."

On to the floor

Amended Krinkie bill limiting the outside income of constitutional officers moves beyond House committee process

BY DAVID MAEDA

Minnesota's constitutional officers would be expected to demonstrate moonlighting opportunities are not a conflict of interest with their elected duties under a measure approved by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee Feb. 19.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

HF111, sponsored by Rep. Philip Krinkie (R-Shoreview), originally would have prohibited the state's six constitutional officers — the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, state auditor, state treasurer, and attorney general — from engaging in outside activities for which the officer receives income for providing personal, professional, or other services.

Krinkie later offered an amendment, that the committee approved, that would create a "presumption of a conflict of interest" in income earning outside activities.

Under the measure, it is presumed that outside income earning activities are a conflict of interest with official duties unless the official can demonstrate otherwise in a hearing.

Krinkie said the bill is not specifically about Gov. Jesse Ventura's outside activities. The bill would not become effective until Jan. 1, 2003, when Ventura's term expires.

"This would provide that the constitutional officers, including the governor, put the duties of office first and foremost and not let anything dissuade them from those duties," Krinkie said.

He said the bill would clarify that the state's constitutional officers are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

The amended bill would establish the chief administrative law judge as the person responsible for determining whether an activity was a conflict of interest.

Under the original bill, the state's attorney general would have that duty and the governor would be charged with determining conflict of interest charges against the attorney general.

That provision led to a concern there might be a potential for political fighting between the two elected officials.

Krinkie said regardless of whom might ul-



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Former Gov. Arne Carlson, right, testifies for a bill sponsored by Rep. Phil Krinkie, left, that would prohibit executive branch and constitutional officers from engaging in outside work during a Feb. 19 hearing of the House Government Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee.

timately decide conflict of interest charges against constitutional officers the situation needs to be addressed because two conflicting opinions have already created confusion.

Alan Gilbert, chief deputy and solicitor general from the Attorney General's Office, issued an opinion in response to an inquiry by Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine) that determined the governor is an employee of the state and thus bound by the state code of ethics.

But Julien Carter, the commissioner of the Department of Employee Relations, later ruled Ventura's new job is not a conflict of interest with his state duties because existing statute is confusing and contains ambiguous language.

Former Gov. Arne Carlson spoke in support of the bill on Feb. 19 saying the state has had a

"long and rich tradition" of the nobility of public service. He said those that run in an election know they might have to make sacrifices in order to serve the public.

"Those that seek public office all know what the compensation is and expectations are going in," he said. "This bill is a statement of the expectations and values we place on public service — that no office shall be used for the benefit or attainment of personal wealth."

He disagrees with Ventura's contention the state's current ethics law does not directly pertain to the constitutional officers.

"It's absurd that the janitor of this building is being held to a higher standard than the governor or state auditor," Carlson said.

Without the measure, the former governor said the problem of elected officials accepting inappropriate employment opportunities would only escalate.

"History has shown us that once the door of self-opportunity is open others will follow and open it wider," he said.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) said he was concerned that by limiting outside employment, the bill would require the constitutional officers to be "career politicians."


Carlson said the term "career politician" is subjective and pointed out that some labeled St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman a career politician after one term in office.

"There is no definition of career politician. The electorate makes that decision at election time," he said.

Noting the governor recommends a budget for the University of Minnesota, Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph) asked what the difference was between "whooping and hollering" at university football and basketball games and a governor announcing Xtreme Football League games.

Krinkie said the main difference was that Ventura's announcing job was an income producing activity.

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey) spoke against the bill because he said it addresses a specific issue brought up by the activities of one individual and voters ultimately determine if an office holder is violating public trust.

He said his father once advised him, "you never get ahead by knocking somebody else's success." We want people to be successful with enough gumption to have a second job if that's what their family needs," Solberg said. 

Medical records

State officials and legislators discuss the merits of access to patients' records for research purposes

By MARY KAY WATSON

A concern about the privacy of medical data has generated debate among state officials regarding access to patients' medical records for research purposes.

State officials, medical researchers, and concerned citizens appeared before the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Feb. 20 to address the issue.

Originally, the officials were set to offer testimony regarding a bill (HF405) that would prohibit the release of medical records to the state without patients' consent. However, the bill's sponsor, Rep. Luanne Koskinen (DFL-Coon Rapids), temporarily withdrew the bill.

That gave concerned parties an opportunity to exchange viewpoints and information related to the use of medical records for research into chronic and infectious disease.

Koskinen said the bill might not be brought back to the committee.

"I've asked both parties to continue their discussion, and, hopefully, they will come to a resolution that is agreeable to both," she said.

The bill speaks to a concern on the part of the attorney general's office that citizen's private medical records could be made available to someone who would misuse them. Koskinen said no allegations have been made that such a thing has occurred, but the potential exists.

The attorney general's office takes the view that the release of medical records should be up to the patient. Deputy Attorney General Ken Peterson said the rights of citizens to data privacy should outweigh the need of society for "unlimited access" to medical records.

"Medical documents are the most intimate

details of a person's life," he said. "They should be shared only with those the patient wants to share them with.

Peterson said the attorney general's office did not believe any misuse has occurred but believed the current approach was "flawed."

Twila Brase, from the Citizens Council on Health Care, said she was concerned people might avoid health care if the system does not protect their privacy. "Patients should not have to choose between care and confidentiality."

Julie Brunner, deputy commissioner of health, said patients don't have to make that choice. The Minnesota Department of Health does not collect individual medical records, she said, but only components of data pulled from billing records.

Current research relying on that data includes studies on asthma, occupational respiratory disease, hysterectomies, and cancer.

"The loss of the ability to gather this data would be a blow to public health in Minnesota," she said.

Lawmakers questioned why researchers needed to be able to identify people individually for their research.

Wendy Nelson, from the health department's health policy and systems compliance

division, said identifiers, such as social security numbers, are needed to be sure individual cases are not double or triple counted. She said data that would identify individuals is encrypted, and the codes are kept in a safe deposit box requiring two people to open it and another to put it in the system.

In addition, Nelson said, "We are prohibited by law from releasing any individual data — ever."

Acknowledging people's fears that their private records could be accessed, Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) asked about data security.

"The data is very secure," Brunner said.

The department had a thorough audit of its database system last year. Auditor Jeff Hall said the department had stringent controls on access and excellent control of the physical computer and data area. Low-risk vulnerabilities found by the audit are being remedied, he said.

"The probability of breaking the encryption code is 20 million to one," Hall said.

Timothy Church, a public health researcher and professor at the University of Minnesota, said the system cannot be any better than those who run it.

"The Department of Health people are 'bulldogs' when it comes to safeguarding people's medical records," Church said. "These are the people you want in charge of these records."

"Our fear is that restrictions on our ability to get good data would make it difficult or impossible for consumers to get information that will help them make better health choices," said Bill Blazer, chairman of the board of the Minnesota Health Data Institute.

Stuart Hanson, a physician and the board's vice chair, said aggregated data is essential for understanding the effects of infectious and chronic diseases.

"The Legislature needs to consider this issue very, very, very carefully," said Harry Hull, state epidemiologist. "If we do not have accurate and complete information, you are going to be put into the position of having to make decisions based on anecdotes and conjecture."

Bradley frequently asked testifiers to what extent the ability of patients to "opt out" of research would affect the results of that research. Most agreed with Hull, who said the results would be flawed and possibly even useless without universal participation.

"This potential inaccuracy is the crux of the concern for limiting access to medical records for research purposes," said Steven Jacobsen, an epidemiologist at the Mayo Clinic.

Bradley noted concerns the bill addresses are driven somewhat by fear.

"After this discussion there is another kind of fear," Bradley said, "The fear of health consequences if we don't give ourselves the ability to do the research that is needed."



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Dr. Steven Jacobsen, associate professor of epidemiology at the Mayo Clinic, testifies on health care data privacy issues during a Feb. 20 hearing of the Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Affordable housing

Growing concern prompts the governor to recommend \$24 million for low-income households and homeless

BY THERESA STAHL

An evaluation from the Office of the Legislative Auditor on affordable housing confirmed that housing for Minnesota residents is expensive, apartment vacancy rates are low, and rents are high.

As a result, housing industry conditions are prompting officials to improve resources to help all Minnesotans find adequate housing — particularly those who are homeless now.

The study was presented to the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee Feb. 21. The report is strictly informational and provides no recommendations. During the 2000 session legislators had requested more information regarding the affordable housing situation in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and statewide.

Another House committee, Jobs and Economic Development Finance, recently heard a budget presentation from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, which includes a recommended \$24 million one-time allocation from Gov. Jesse Ventura. The committee has also considered a bill that would appropriate money to a homeless prevention group.

Craig Helmstetter, co-author of the affordable housing report from the Legislative Auditor's office, said the percentage of a person's income devoted to housing costs is part of the report's definition of affordable housing. When people pay more than 30 percent of their total income, housing is not considered affordable.

Although Minnesota has the fourth highest median income and the lowest unemployment rate in the United States, the report said that 50 percent of jobs pay less than \$13.50 an hour. In addition, people who work in "13 of the 25 fastest-growing occupations cannot afford an average one-bedroom apartment," without spending more than 30 percent of their income on rent.

Numbers from the report show that between 1990 and 1999 the state's median home sales price increase was 61 percent, while the increase in median household income was 50 percent.

Average rent in the Twin Cities area increased by 34 percent, which contrasts with the median rental household income for the same area, which increased by 9 percent. Inflation during this period rose 27 percent.

Notably, vacancy rates in the Twin Cities dropped from 6.7 percent in 1988 to 1.5 percent in 2000.

Primary research for the report was gathered surveying developers, builders, and local housing organizations. "All survey groups generally agree that land, labor, and material costs are significant factors" in limitations to production of affordable housing, the report said. The same group agreed "they need government help — in the form of financial assistance and regulatory waivers — to build affordable housing in Minnesota."

Kit Hadley, commissioner of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, echoed the same financial need.

"We face a challenge in the future in revenue and expenses," she told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee Feb. 19.

Ventura has recommended a \$24 million "Affordable Housing Initiative" for the 2002-2003 biennium that would be distributed evenly between the two years. "These extremely low-income families often must pay such a large portion of their income for housing that very little money is available for other necessities," the recommendation reads.

The governor has also recommended consolidating several development and supportive housing-type programs to increase the production of affordable housing and housing for the homeless and for very low-income households.

Rep. Dale Walz (R-Brainerd) introduced a bill to the committee Feb. 21 that would provide an additional \$4.6 million to the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance program, which would be administered by the state's housing agency. The funds would be awarded over and above the program's base budget.

While there has been some concern that Walz's bill (HF626) would use tax money from Greater Minnesota for the metro area, Walz pointed out there are no emergency shelters in his north-central district.

"We're seeing across the state that (the program) does work," said Michael Dahl, executive director of the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless. "If we don't prevent homelessness, we'll pay for the cost elsewhere," such as in medical services.

Women and children make up the biggest group of homeless persons, Dahl said, and the

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PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

"Land, labor, and material costs are significant factors" as limitations to the production of affordable housing according to the Legislative Auditor's report, "Affordable Housing."

Taxing purchases

Proposals would eliminate sales tax imposed on local units of government, but would residents benefit?

By DAVID MAEDA

It may seem counter-intuitive, but existing law requires local units of government to pay sales taxes on its purchases.

Several proposals to eliminate that sales tax were heard in the House Taxes Committee Sales and Income Tax Division Feb. 15. However, legislators wondered whether the savings to those municipalities and school districts would actually be passed on to the residents of those communities in the form of a tax cut.

HF108 sponsored by Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria), HF166 sponsored by Rep. Scott Wasiluk (DFL-Maplewood), HF301 sponsored by Rep. Paul Marquart (DFL-Dilworth), HF314 sponsored by Rep. Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls), HF538 sponsored by Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins), and HF630 sponsored by Rep. Dale Swapinski (DFL-Duluth) were all presented to the committee. A seventh identical bill, HF188 sponsored by Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), was also on the agenda but was not officially presented.

The exemption is also part of Gov. Jesse Ventura's tax proposal.

Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson), the division chair, said the proposals would be considered for inclusion in the omnibus tax package.

Under existing law, Minnesota counties pay approximately \$20 million a year on sales tax. Douglas County Commissioner Pat Heldt said the money could be better spent on purchasing items such as additional squad cars for the sheriff or in providing essential services.

"It makes no sense to tax tax dollars," she said.

The Department of Revenue estimates the cost of the sales tax exemption on local governments would be around \$99 million in 2002 and \$112 million in 2003.

The committee adopted an amendment to HF166 that would exclude goods and services from the local government exemption provided they are in direct competition with a private sector business. Examples of these include city-run cafes, restaurants, laundromats, golf courses, campgrounds, and liquor stores.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Deanna Ulven, center, vice-mayor of Hawley, testifies for a bill that would exempt the payment of sales tax by political subdivisions during a hearing of the House Sales and Income Tax Division. Breckenridge Mayor Cliff Barth, right, waits to testify for the bill sponsored by Rep. Paul Marquart, left.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka) said in the early 1990s, when the state was facing budget deficits, representatives from local government chose the sales tax on their purchases as a better alternative to a reduction in the amount of the Homestead Agricultural Credit Aid.

HACA provides \$480 million to counties, cities, towns, school and special districts.

Abrams was concerned that none of the bills provided a mechanism that would guarantee property tax payers would actually see a tax cut, rather than allowing local units of government to merely increase spending as a result of sales tax savings.

"I'm not interested in growing government," he said.

Abrams suggested a better solution may be to exempt the local units of government from sales tax, but balance that with a reduction in the amount of HACA aid by \$100 million.

Harder said Abrams' idea perhaps would appeal to local officials since the costs of sales tax continues to grow but HACA aid is capped,

and thus making it easier to deal with on an administrative level while budgeting.

Franklin Denn from the Minnesota Township Association was one of several local officials to speak in favor of the bills.

He said when the sales tax was implemented on local government purchases in 1992, it was supposed to be a temporary measure that would be removed once the state's budget situation improved.

"The dollars spent on sales tax is money not spent on services," he said.

Rep. Dale Swapinski (DFL-Duluth) said the number of bills being introduced by members of both parties proposing to eliminate the tax was an indication that there is widespread bipartisan support for the measure.

Duluth Mayor Gary Doty, also representing the League of Minnesota Cities, said local officials are held responsible for their decisions by their accessibility with their neighbors.

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Monday, February 19

HF962—Cassell (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
County hospital board membership provisions modified, and county hospital borrowing authority provided.

HF963—Sykora (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Microenterprise grants provided and money appropriated.

HF964—Gunther (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Minnesota Investment Fund appropriated money.

HF965—Gunther (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Minnesota Investment Fund project eligibility modified and revolving loan account established.

HF966—Erickson (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Voting in the wrong precinct penalties increased, automatic and optional recount provisions modified, and presidential electors meeting procedures modified.

HF967—Mulder (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
School-sponsored potluck events authorized.

HF968—Juhnke (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Ambulance service personnel provided state supplemental benefits, and amount and limits on supplemental benefits increased.

HF969—Clark, K. (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Rental housing pilot program established to encourage landlords to rent to high-risk tenants in specified counties, and money appropriated.

HF970—Dawkins (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Lifetrack resources grant provided and money appropriated.

HF971—Bishop (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
County urban service areas established, zoning authority priorities clarified, and business incentives restricted.

HF972—Jennings (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Local highway assistance fund created and portion of revenues from the motor vehicle sales tax credited to the fund.

HF973—Stang (R)
Higher Education Finance
State educational financial aid eligibility requirements modified, child care grant award increased, and specified Edvest data classified.

HF974—Solberg (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 698, Floodwood, capital loan authorized and money appropriated.

HF975—Rukavina (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Mineral lease payments deposited in mineral lease account and permanent school fund, taconite mining company grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF976—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Chiropractors; licensing requirements and grounds for disciplinary action modified.

HF977—Leppik (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities technical and community college employee unions merged.

HF978—Stang (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District Nos. 739, Kimball, and 75, St. Clair, indoor air quality grant provided and money appropriated.

HF979—Paymar (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Commercial corridors revitalization in central cities grants provided and money appropriated.

HF980—Osthoff (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Park buildings construction and remodeling projects exempted from legislative notice and review requirements.

HF981—McElroy (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Legislative commission on metropolitan government established, oversight of Metropolitan Council provided, and legislative authorization required for council budget and programs.

HF982—Sykora (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minnesota State Retirement System service credit purchase authorized for a specified department of transportation employee.

HF983—Wagenius (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Aerial pesticide application regulated.

HF984—Wasiluk (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Pollution Control Agency programs funded and money appropriated.

HF985—Knoblach (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Respite care for family adult foster care providers program established.

HF986—Holsten (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Bayport storm sewer system reconstruction grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF987—Greiling (DFL)
Health & Human Services Finance
Mental health services funding provided for children and adolescents who have emotional disturbance and exhibit violent or destructive behavior, and money appropriated.

HF988—Mulder (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Candidates not to be charged a fee for participation in a public parade unless all other units participating are charged similar amounts.

HF989—Buesgens (R)
Education Policy
Resolution memorializing the President and Congress to cease imposing on the states unwelcome mandates under Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act.

HF990—Dawkins (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
St. Paul community center and armory grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF991—Osthoff (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Como Park Zoo and Conservatory operation grants provided and money appropriated.

HF992—Skoglund (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Negligent fire resulting in injury or property damage definition modified.

HF993—Nornes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Central Lakes Trail established in Otter Tail, Grant, and Douglas counties.

HF994—Dorn (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Hospital waiver or variance request procedure established.

HF995—Buesgens (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Horse racing license applicant requirements modified, and anti-inflammatory medication content maximum amount increased.

HF996—Dempsey (R)
Crime Prevention
Supreme Court judicial education program to include training on the mandatory fine for failure to produce proof of insurance.

HF997—Wagenius (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Full-day kindergarten phased in for all students, first-grade preparedness grants provided, and money appropriated.

HF998—Lieder (DFL)
Transportation Finance
Greater Minnesota transit assistance funding provided and money appropriated.

HF999—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Local government correctional service retirement plan coverage extended to probation officers and 911 dispatchers employed by counties.

HF1000—Erickson (R)
Taxes
Mille Lacs County aggregate materials production tax imposed.

HF1001—Ness (R)
Agriculture Policy
Ethanol producer payment program expanded and extended, ethanol production goal repealed, payment cap increased, and money appropriated.

HF1002—Ness (R)
Agriculture Policy
Agricultural utilization resource institute board of directors additional member provided.

HF1003—Gunter (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Displaced homemakers program funding provided and money appropriated.

HF1004—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Supportive housing and managed care pilot project county and individual eligibility provisions modified and money appropriated.

HF1005—Marquart (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Becker County nursing facility rate adjustment provided.

HF1006—Dawkins (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Mental illness and chemical dependency facility supplementary service rate increase deadline for county negotiation extended and money appropriated.

HF1007—Davids (R)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Gas sales below cost prohibited and enforcement authority provided.

HF1008—Juhnke (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Integration revenue provided for school districts implementing an integration plan.

HF1009—Finseth (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Agricultural land definition clarified.

HF1010—Thompson (DFL)**Taxes**

Sales tax rate reduced.

HF1011—Walker (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Powderhorn Lake in Minneapolis restoration and aeration provided and money appropriated.

HF1012—Buesgens (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Scott County Housing and Redevelopment Authority statutory references clarified, and economic development authority powers specified.

HF1013—Huntley (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Provider surcharge offset provided for erroneously paid charges, and money appropriated.

HF1014—Boudreau (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Medical assistance reimbursement for special transportation services provisions modified.

HF1015—Mares (R)**Education Policy**

Omnibus family and early childhood education and K-12 education programs and funding provision modifications.

HF1016—Holberg (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

City and county obligations payment by electronic transfer or credit card authorized.

HF1017—Walker (DFL)**Taxes**

Taxpayer assistance services provided to low-income taxpayers through grants to nonprofit entities and money appropriated.

HF1018—Milbert (DFL)**Taxes**

Access to amusement devices removed from definition of a taxable service.

HF1019—Workman (R)**Transportation Policy**

State contract procedures modified, highway construction and maintenance bids and records posted electronically or over the Internet, seasonal highway weight limitations modified, and clarifying changes provided.

HF1020—Wagenius (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Hennepin County nursing facility rate increase to median provided.

HF1021—Buesgens (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Casino licensee authorized to detain persons suspected of cheating.

HF1022—Biernat (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

First degree manslaughter definition modified to prohibit a conviction in cases where the provocation was caused only by words.

HF1023—Biernat (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Merchant Marine and Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) service plaques authorized on Capitol grounds.

HF1024—Abeler (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Referendum revenue subject to equalization amount increased.

HF1025—Entenza (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

State board of investment member disclosure provisions expanded.

HF1026—Kielkucki (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

County boards and municipalities prohibited from adopting official controls that conflict with local land use plans.

HF1027—Olson (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Membership organizations required to provide notice and refund on request portion of dues spent on political activity, and reporting to ethical practices board required.

HF1028—Olson (R)**Education Policy**

Freedom from censorship in Minnesota public schools act enacted.

HF1029—Gray (DFL)**Crime Prevention**

Racial profiling by law enforcement prohibited, study on racial profiling required, certain information provided motorists involved in a traffic stop, providing training, advisory committee created, reports required, and money appropriated.

HF1030—Lenczewski (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Bloomington nursing facility replacement exception to moratorium provided, rate increased, and money appropriated.

HF1031—Hackbarth (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Local community forest ecosystem health program, community forestry assessments, and tree planting funding provided and money appropriated.

HF1032—Bernardy (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Referendum equalization allowance increased.

HF1033—Goodwin (DFL)**Education Policy**

Pupil unit counting methods modified.

HF1034—Bernardy (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Secondary vocational programming funding restored and money appropriated.

Thursday, February 22**HF1035—Peterson (DFL)****Taxes**

Agricultural homestead property residency location requirement exception provided for employer-provided housing.

HF1036—Bishop (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Casino; state-operated casino authorized, 21st century economic development fund established, and money appropriated.

HF1037—Anderson, B. (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Dental assistant licensure established.

HF1038—Clark, J. (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Minnesota Inventors Congress grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1039—Solberg (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

City public utilities commission abolition or transfer of jurisdiction to city council authorized.

HF1040—Harder (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Soil survey updating grants provided to Cottonwood, Lincoln, Nobles, and Pipestone counties, and money appropriated.

HF1041—McElroy (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Workforce development tax increment financing districts authorized.

HF1042—Howes (R)**Taxes**

State tax share payments to counties with tribal casinos increased.

HF1043—Bishop (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Health care provider tax research credit increased.

HF1044—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Volunteer ambulance attendant training reimbursement provisions modified, grants provided, rural ambulance service advisory committee created and study required, and money appropriated.

HF1045—Olson (R)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Seatbelt use insurance premium discount required, and mandatory seatbelt use requirement for adults repealed.

HF1046—Clark, J. (R)**Education Policy**

Schools notified of student possession of drug paraphernalia.

HF1047—Solberg (DFL)**Higher Education Finance**

University of Minnesota research and outreach centers capital improvements provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1048—Bishop (R)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Sunday sales by motor vehicle dealers prohibition repealed.

HF1049—Hausman (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Unicameral legislature provided with 135 members and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF1050—Nornes (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Cities and townships hosting mixed municipal solid waste transfer stations authorized to impose fees.

HF1051—Smith (R)
Civil Law
Medical malpractice expert review certifications regulated.

HF1052—Leighton (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 500, Southland, disabled access levy extended.

HF1053—Abrams (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Private health care coverage regulations revised, specified regulatory controls transferred, and managed care plan requirements established.

HF1054—Johnson, J. (R)
Transportation Policy
I-394 “sane lanes” use by single-occupant vehicles study and report required, and money appropriated.

HF1055—Mares (R)
Judiciary Finance
Peace officers’ overtime grants provided for St. Paul, Minneapolis, and statewide departments, and money appropriated.

HF1056—Smith (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Local government correctional service plan benefit formula percentage increased.

HF1057—Seifert (R)
Taxes
Regional emergency response and fire training center construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF1058—Mares (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Gifted and talented revenue established as permanent education funding and money appropriated.

HF1059—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Property tax refund provided for specified homeowners age 65 or over.

HF1060—Erhardt (R)
Transportation Policy
Light rail; local approval required for location of commuter rail through residential areas.

HF1061—Erhardt (R)
Transportation Policy
Single license plate required for registered motor vehicles.

HF1062—Kielkucki (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 625, St. Paul, best practices grant provided for training to address diverse school populations.

HF1063—Jacobson (R)
Taxes
Sales tax rebate provided, automatic rebate enacted under specified circumstances, and money appropriated.

HF1064—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Consumer support grant services expanded, waivers provisions clarified, and developmental disabilities services provisions modified.

HF1065—Walker (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Rental application fees prohibited.

HF1066—Thompson (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Real property loans regulated, prepayment penalties prohibited, escrow account interest required, and private mortgage insurance and lending practices regulated.

HF1067—Boudreau (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Social work licensure examination requirement exception provided for certain persons who are refugees or immigrants to the United States and for whom English is a second language.

HF1068—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Crisis nurseries development and expansion funding provided and money appropriated.

HF1069—Osskopp (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Lawful gambling organization annual audit requirements modified, noon hour bingo authorized, and natural disaster relief expenditures permitted from gambling proceeds.

HF1070—Osskopp (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Lawful gambling premises permits to run concurrently with license of organization and permit fees clarified.

HF1071—Bakk (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
State park and recreation area boundaries modified and boathouse lot leases in Soudan underground mine state park administration provided.

HF1072—Entenza (DFL)
State Government Finance
Employee compensation costs provided for executive, legislative, judicial, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and University of Minnesota employees; and money appropriated.

HF1073—Clark, J. (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Minnesota river trail established and money appropriated.

HF1074—Johnson, S. (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
Pig’s Eye dump in St. Paul cleanup grant provided and money appropriated.

HF1075—Boudreau (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Home-sharing grant program funded and money appropriated.

HF1076—Kuisle (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Urban town annexation limited.

HF1077—Rukavina (DFL)
Taxes
Aggregate material removal tax extended to counties that vote to impose the tax and rate of tax increased.

HF1078—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Social work board authorized to limit enforcement activities, social work licensure fees set, and surcharge imposed.

HF1079—Slawik (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School District No. 6067, Tri-District, magnet school grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1080—Thompson (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Gender-specific language replaced with gender-neutral language in the constitution, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF1081—Jacobson (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Health care review organization provisions modified, participation in Internet-based information sharing systems authorized, and specified data release permitted.

HF1082—Erhardt (R)
Taxes
Long-term care insurance income tax credit maximum increased.

HF1083—Fuller (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
Beaver damage control grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1084—McElroy (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Financial institution investment authority and recordkeeping requirements modified; rates, charges, fees, and disclosures regulated; and after-hour drop boxes exempted from detached facilities regulation.

HF1085—Workman (R)
Transportation Policy
Motor home and other defined recreational equipment width limitations modified and maximum length of motor homes prescribed.

HF1086—Gunther (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Community foundation grants provided for management and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations, and money appropriated.

HF1087—Mares (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Minnesota Education Finance Act of 1992 repealed.

HF1088—Seagren (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Family, early childhood, and K-12 education program funding provided and money appropriated.

HF1089—Gleason (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport airline gate limit imposed, exception provided, and transition period defined.

HF1090—Smith (R)
Taxes
Independence public safety building construction materials and equipment sales tax exemption provided.

HF1091—Johnson, J. (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Environment and natural resources trust fund advisory committee sunset repealed and task force created.

HF1092—Dawkins (DFL)
Transportation Finance
University Avenue corridor in St. Paul transit improvements provided, and money appropriated.

HF1093—Stanek (R)
Crime Prevention
DNA; biological specimen collection and analysis from criminal offenders expanded.

HF1094—Marquart (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
Marginal cost pupil unit count increased for districts with declining enrollment.

HF1095—Koskinen (DFL)**Taxes**

Convenience store videocamera security requirements prescribed, tax credit provided, and penalties imposed.

HF1096—Leighton (DFL)**Taxes**

Electric generation facility property tax exemption limited to facilities constructed by specified laborers.

HF1097—Solberg (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

“Grace” photograph, taken in Bovey, designated as the state picture.

HF1098—Dawkins (DFL)**Civil Law**

Eviction records expungement requirements provided.

HF1099—Osthoff (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

St. Paul technology infrastructure bonds authorized.

HF1100—Smith (R)**Civil Law**

Government data practices act expanded to include metropolitan area towns.

HF1101—Schumacher (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

County water implementation tax and base grant amounts increased and money appropriated.

HF1102—Greiling (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Family access to mental health patient records provided, statement required for emergency hold, and specified family members allowed to participate in aftercare plan preparation.

HF1103—Gleason (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Agencies assessed for cost of administrative hearings not covered by general fund appropriations.

HF1104—Vandever (R)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Real estate task force work plan funded and electronic filing of real estate documents initiated.

HF1105—Rukavina (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation commissioner authorized to acquire discontinued mining property.

HF1106—Paymar (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Highland Park pavilion restoration funded, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1107—Rukavina (DFL)**K-12 Education Finance**

Nonmining vocational education programs expanded in specific school districts and money appropriated.

HF1108—Smith (R)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Sunday sales by motor vehicle dealers prohibition repealed.

HF1109—Smith (R)**Civil Law**

Political subdivision regulation and causes of action against the firearms industry limited.

HF1110—Abeler (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Contract alternative schools funding increased and alternative contract revenue defined.

HF1111—Bakk (DFL)**Transportation Finance**

Lake County Forest Highway 11 completion provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1112—Bakk (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Registration and tagging of pelts and fur-bearing animals required.

HF1113—Clark, J. (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Brown County nursing facility rate increase provided and money appropriated.

HF1114—Schumacher (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Sand Dunes State Forest trail system construction provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF1115—Haas (R)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Minnesota comprehensive health association regulated, contributing member definition modified, writing carrier contract period extensions permitted, subsidies provided, and money appropriated.

HF1116—Jennings (DFL)**Regulated Industries**

Cellular and other wireless services excluded from definition of telecommunications right-of-way use; mandating that providers have no authority to erect towers in public right-of-way.

HF1117—Jennings (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Pine City nursing facility replacement bed moratorium exception provided.

HF1118—Workman (R)**Transportation Policy**

Design-build method of state transportation project delivery provided.

HF1119—Erhardt (R)**Taxes**

Homestead property tax computed using household income and money appropriated.

HF1120—Pugh (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Dakota County tax-forfeited land conveyance free of the trust in favor of the taxing district authorized.

HF1121—Pugh (DFL)**Regulated Industries**

Metropolitan area transmission line siting regulated.

HF1122—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nonmetropolitan county prepaid medical assistance and prepaid general assistance medical care program capitation rates increased.

HF1123—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nonmetropolitan county prepaid medical assistance program capitation rates increased.

HF1124—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nonmetropolitan inpatient hospital rates for certain diagnosis-related groups adjusted.

HF1125—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nonmetropolitan inpatient hospital rates for certain diagnosis related groups adjusted.

HF1126—Haas (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Virtual school district program created and money appropriated.

HF1127—Mulder (R)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Lewis and Clark joint powers board rural water system funded, and money appropriated.

HF1128—Jennings (DFL)**Regulated Industries**

City and joint venture telecommunications service providers authorized.

HF1129—Abrams (R)**Taxes**

Sales and use tax regulations clarified.

HF1130—Leppik (R)**Higher Education Finance**

Electronic library for Minnesota funded and money appropriated.

HF1131—Goodwin (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

High-risk youth placement advisory task force established and report required.

HF1132—Goodno (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Medical assistance income standard and asset limitations for medical assistance eligibility for the elderly and disabled increased, and basic needs benefits disregarded as income for TEFR medical assistance eligibility.

HF1133—Swenson (R)**Transportation Policy**

Gross weight seasonal increase for transporting sweet corn and peas provided.

HF1134—Osthoff (DFL)**Transportation Finance**

St. Paul downtown advanced parking information system expanded and money appropriated.

HF1135—Seagren (R)**Education Policy**

Alternative competency-based licensing for school administrators provided.

HF1136—Seagren (R)**Education Policy**

Reading competency grants provided to assist with ensuring children's reading competency by the end of third grade, and money appropriated.

HF1137—Clark, K. (DFL)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Youthbuild program grants provided and money appropriated.

HF1138—Huntley (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Inpatient hospital rates adjusted for facilities located outside of the metropolitan area.

HF1139—Huntley (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Prepaid medical assistance and prepaid general assistance medical care program capitation rates increased for nonmetropolitan counties.

HF1140—Pugh (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Unicameral enactment of non-appropriation bills provided, legislative terms modified, and constitutional amendments proposed.

HF1141—Thompson (DFL)**Taxes**

Income tax rates reduced.

HF1142—Kubly (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Ethanol producer payments extended to three new ethanol plants, payment program extended two years, ethanol production goal repealed, payment cap increased, and money appropriated.

HF1143—Knoblach (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Local tax increment financing contribution modified to avoid state aid offset.

MONDAY, Feb. 26

8:15 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: SF142/HF387 (Walker) Black Minnesotans council membership increased. HF389 (Dempsey) Mississippi River Parkway Commission extended and membership modified.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: Minnesota Department of Human Services deep budget overview of Agency Management, Health Care Management, Continuing Care Management and Economic Support Management.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: Budget review of IRRRB. HF47 (Rukavina) Iron mining; Closed iron mines and facilities required to be maintained for two years. HF520 (Sertich) Northeast entrepreneur fund microenterprise development grant provided and money appropriated.

Joint House and Senate Children's Environmental Health Working Group

123 State Capitol
Chrs. Rep. Kathy Tingelstad, Sen. Jane Krentz
Agenda: Indoor air quality in schools. Presentation by the Department of Children, Families and Learning and the Minnesota Department of Health.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: Office of Traffic Safety budget presentation, Kathy Swanson, Director. Metropolitan Council Report on Metro Mobility/ADA Paratransit Service, Nacho Diaz, Met Council Transportation Planning Director; Dave Jacobson, Metro Mobility General Manager; public testimony will also be taken.

10:15 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: HF239 (Lipman) Real property ownership and application clarifications provided, Minnesota common interest ownership act modified, and torrens proceedings representation provided. HF767 (Holberg) Business discrimination provisions modified, and discretionary disclosure permitted during investigation.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget presentation: Parks and Recreation.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: MnSCU Board Level Administration and Management Legislative Study overview. Witnesses: Judy Grew, Senior Management Consultant, Management Analysis Division, Department of Administration; Jim Jarvis, Management Consultant, Management Analysis Division, Department of Administration; and Michael Vekich, Chair, MnSCU Board of Trustees.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: HF836 (Walz) Relating to education; authorizing a fund transfer for Independent School District No. 182, Crosby-Ironton. HF216 (Bernardy) Relating to education finance; establishing permanent funding for gifted and talented programs as a component of general education revenue. HF578 (Pugh) Relating to education; authorizing a grant to Special School District No. 6, South St. Paul, for a full day kindergarten program; appropriating money. HF602 (Leighton) Relating to education; modifying the base year upon which special education revenue is calculated. HF605 (Leighton) Relating to education finance; authorizing Independent School District No. 492, Austin, to carry a deficit in its operating capital account for a limited number of years. HF880 (Solberg) Relating to libraries; authorizing additional levy for Independent School District No. 319, Nashwauk-Keewatin.

HF889 (Solberg) Relating to education finance; authorizing a levy for Independent School District No. 318, Grand Rapids.

Property Tax Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt
Agenda: HF820 (Erhardt) Watershed districts authorized to increase levies for enforcement purposes. HF914 (Kuisle) Manufactured home parks property tax class rate reduced, and homestead and agricultural credit aid adjustment provided. HF668 (Lenczewski) In-lieu property tax payments provided for state-owned property. HF929 (Wenzel) Vacant platted land assessment provided.

10:30 a.m.

Sales and Income Tax Division/TAXES

Department of Revenue Tour
600 N. Robert St.
St. Paul, Minn.
Chr. Rep. Elaine Harder
Agenda: The tour will include a general tour of the department, an overview of sales and income tax audit procedures, and an explanation of the Revenue Department's re-engineering project. We will have a van leaving from the State Office Building parking lot at 10:15 a.m. to transport members and staff to the Revenue Building.

11:45 p.m.

NOTE TIME AND ROOM

REGULATED INDUSTRIES

118 State Capitol
Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf
Agenda: Presentation by Pennsylvania Representative Frank Tulli, Jr. on Electric Deregulation/Restructuring in Pennsylvania. Discussion and analysis of major energy proposals (HF492, HF659, and HF710) before the committee.

12:15 p.m.

NOTE TIME

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD

EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: Childhood Development - Dr. Megan R. Gunnar, Professor of Child Development, University of Minnesota.

*****NOTE TIME*****

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jerry Dempsey

Agenda: Presentation (continued): Legislative Auditor's Report: Affordable Housing.

1:30 p.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

TUESDAY, Feb. 27

8:15 a.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF478 (Sykora) 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.

HF1015 (Mares) CFL Administrative Bill. Presentation of the bill only. Testimony and action on the bill will be scheduled for a future date.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF648 (Abeler) Birth centers regulatory system study required.

HF1123 (Mulder) Nonmetropolitan county prepaid medical assistance program capitation rates increased.

HF1124 (Mulder) Nonmetropolitan inpatient hospital rates for certain diagnosis-related groups adjusted.

HF1132 (Goodno) Medical assistance income standard and asset limitations for medical assistance eligibility for the elderly and disabled increased, and basic needs benefits disregarded as income for TEFRA medical assistance eligibility.

Reading of the Adoption Proclamation.

Note: If necessary, this meeting will continue at 4 p.m. in 10 State Office Building.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: Budget overview for the Department of Corrections continued - Community and Juvenile Services.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF9 (Ruth) A bill for an act proposing an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution by adding a section to article XIV; dedicating all revenue from the sales tax on motor vehicles to the highway user tax distribution fund.

HF11 (Westerberg) A bill for an act proposing an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution, by adding a section to article XIV; dedicating not less than 32 percent of revenue from the sales tax on motor vehicles to the highway user tax distribution fund.

HF860 (Marko) A bill for an act relating to transportation; establishing multimodal transportation fund for highway and transit projects; proposing constitutional amendment to dedicate revenues from motor vehicle sales tax to multimodal transportation fund.

10:15 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. John Tuma

Agenda: HF51 (Goodno) Lowering the blood alcohol concentration level for *per se* DWI offenses from .10 to .08.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF455 (Ozment) Clean fuel (biodiesel) use marketing and education program established, and money appropriated.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: HF218 (Krinkie) State Government Finance Bill.

Section 25, proposed budget for Board of the Arts;

Section 26, proposed budget for Humanities Commission.

TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: Continuation of public testimony on HF511 (Sviggum) Governor's Tax Bill.

12 noon

Major Transportation Projects Commission

400N State Office Building

Chr. David Jennings

Agenda: Review Minnesota Statute/definition of a major project.

Discussion/presentation of the Metro Division's Transportation System Plan (TSP).

Review funding information (handouts).

Setting of time, place and agenda for next meeting.

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 Knoblach

Agenda: Overview of Maximum Effort School Loan Program.

COMMERCE, JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: HF701 (Gunther) Relating to drug and alcohol testing; permitting the use of on-site testing under certain circumstances.

HF618 (Kubly) Relating to tornado relief; providing disaster relief and other assistance for counties designated a major disaster area due to the July 25, 2000, tornado; appropriating money.

1 p.m.

Joint House and Senate Solid Waste Working Group/ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

454 State Office Building

Chrs. Rep. Tom Hackbarth, Sen. David Tomassoni

Agenda: House/Senate researchers giving overview of solid waste issues.

(Informational meeting - no public testimony.)

5 p.m.

REDISTRICTING

Winona City Council Chambers

207 Lafayette

Winona, Minn.

Chr. Rep. Erik Paulsen

Agenda: Tom Gillaspay, State Demographer: Analysis of Minnesota's population shifts.

Robin Anthony, Minnesota Secretary of State's Office: Local government's redistricting timeline.

Open Microphone: Comments, questions and input from the audience.

7 p.m.

Property Tax Division/TAXES

Jewish Community Center

4330 Cedar Lake Rd.

St. Louis Park, Minn.

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF511 (Sviggum) Governor's Tax Bill.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 28

8:15 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: HF724 (Rhodes) State professional service contract procedures specified.

HF429 (Bakk) State agencies authorized to allow commercial wireless equipment on state-owned property.

**HEALTH & HUMAN
SERVICES FINANCE**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: Continuation of Monday's agenda.
Minnesota Department of Health deep budget
overview of Health Care Access Fund accounts
and Management and Support Services.

**JOBS & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy (Vice Chair Rep. Bob
Gunther will chair this meeting.)
Agenda: Overview of YouthBuild program.
HF20 (Mullery) Youth intervention program
grants authorized and money appropriated.
HF348 (Gunther) Youth intervention program
grants provided and money appropriated.
HF878 (Luther) District 287 Foundation grant
provided to develop supportive housing to
provide independent living opportunities for
adults with disabilities and money appropriated.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: Metro Transit budget presentation, Ted
Mondale, Met Council Chair; John Byrd, Interim
Metro Transit General Manager; Nacho Diaz,
Met Council Transportation Planning Director.

10:15 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: Professor Robert E. Oliphant, William
Mitchell College of Law, Family Law in the Civil
Justice System presentation.

**ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL
RESOURCES FINANCE**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: Department of Natural Resources
budget presentation: Fisheries, Wildlife,
Ecological Services.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik
Agenda: HF442 (Opatz) Public post-secondary
annual compensation treatment provided in state
budget and appropriations.
Witness: Jim Pehler, President, Inter-Faculty
Organization.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: Continuation of public testimony on
HF511 (Sviggum) Governor's Tax Bill (if
needed).
Additional agenda items may be announced.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth
Agenda: HF558 (Swenson) Johnes Disease
money appropriated.
HF640 (Ness) Extending date for Farmer Lender
Mediation.
HF285 (Ness) Regulating Ag Liens.

**Economic Development and Tourism
Division/COMMERCE, JOBS &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner
Agenda: HF262 (Walz) Camp Knutson
renovation and construction grant provided and
money appropriated.
HF608 (Harder) Independent School District
No. 2884, Red Rock Central, Internet access
grant provided and money appropriated.
HF475 (Wenzel) Little Elk heritage preserve
designated as a historic preserve, and money
appropriated.

**FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
FINANCE**

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: Community Education.
After-school Enrichment Grants.
HF646 (Sykora) A bill for an act relating to
community education; providing for youth
programs; appropriating money.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN
AFFAIRS**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jerry Dempsey
Agenda: HF662 (Rukavina) Aurora housing and
redevelopment tax increment financing district
extended.
HF669 (Rhodes) St. Louis Park local contribution
authorized for specified tax increment financing
districts.
HF828 (Mullery) Hennepin County employees
granted disaster volunteer leave.
HF871 (Erickson) City purchases on credit cards
authorized, and personal liability established for
unauthorized purchases.
HF1012 (Buesgens) Scott County housing and
redevelopment authority statutory references
clarified, and economic development authority
powers specified.

1:45 p.m.

**Subcommittee on Metropolitan Council
and Agencies/
LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN
AFFAIRS**

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Buesgens
Agenda: Continued Hearing:
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.

7 p.m.

Sales and Income Tax Division/TAXES

South Central Technical College
Heritage Hall
1920 Lee Blvd.
North Mankato, Minn.
Chr. Rep. Elaine Harder
Agenda: HF511 (Sviggum) Governor's Tax Bill.

THURSDAY, March 1

8:15 a.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Harry Mares
Agenda: Read Across America presentation.
HF910 (Dempsey) Educational administrators
board established, duties transferred, rulemaking
authorized, and money appropriated.
HF770 (Carlson) State board of education
established, membership provided, and powers
granted.
HF881 (Buesgens) State board of education
established, elected state superintendent
provided, education responsibilities realigned,
and task force recommendations on resources
and duties required.

**HEALTH & HUMAN
SERVICES POLICY**

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: HF713 (Boudreau) Day training and
habilitation services medical assistance coverage
provided.
HF775 (Boudreau) Day training and habilitation
service variance request mediation process
established, rate structure pilot project provided,
county responsibilities defined, task force
extended, and money appropriated.
HF711 (Penas) Rural hospital grants provided
and grant provisions modified, health care
technician and rural hospital nurse loan
forgiveness programs established, telemedicine
coverage sunset repealed, and money
appropriated.
HF811 (Swenson) Rural hospital capital
improvement grant and loan program
established and money appropriated.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: Budget overview for the State Public Defenders.

Budget overview for the Uniform Laws Commission.

Department of Public Safety: Presentation on the Bomb Disposal & Domestic Terrorism Plan.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: DM&E Report.

HF366 (Gleason) A bill for an act relating to motor vehicles; authorizing special registration plates for retired veterans.

HF423 (Greiling) A bill for an act relating to veterans; exempting combat-wounded veterans from the special motor vehicle license plate design that identifies eligibility groups using decal stickers.

HF439 (Marko) A bill for an act relating to motor vehicles; authorizing special motor vehicle license plates for retired veterans.

HF799 (Osskopp) A bill for an act relating to motor vehicles; authorizing special motorcycle license plate for combat wounded veteran.

HF936 (Finseth) A bill for an act relating to motor vehicles; authorizing special license plates for veterans who served in both World War II and the Korean Conflict.

10:15 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. John Tuma

Agenda: HF783 (Stanek) Deadly Force definition modified to exclude use of less lethal munitions by peace officers.

HF372 (McGuire) Crime victim notice of expungement proceedings required.

HF704 (Fuller) Emergency medical services personnel provided exemption from criminal rehabilitation provisions.

HF865 (Fuller) Community service authorized in lieu of criminal fines.

HF953 (Fuller) Child abuse list of offenses modified to include violations from other states.

HF570 (Hilstrom) Peace officer license revocation provisions and other Peace Officer Standards and Training Board proposals.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF274 (Dorman) Mercury thermometer sales prohibited.

Sales and Income Tax Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Elaine Harder

Agenda: HF502 (Paulsen) Sales tax exemption for certain items dispensed through vending machines.

HF858 (Erhardt) Exempts certain food sold in vending machines from sales and use taxes.

HF359 (Murphy) Exemption for sales tax on materials used in constructing a Proctor community activity center.

HF367 (Murphy) Exemption for sales tax on materials used in constructing a Hermantown indoor sports & physical education complex.

HF409 (Seifert) Exempts the purchase of property for use as a law enforcement and family service center in Yellow Medicine county.

HF443 (Westerberg) Exempts the purchase of property for use as a city hall and police department facility in Blaine.

HF498 (Holberg) Sales and use tax exemption for construction of a police station and central maintenance facility in Farmington.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: HF218 (Krinkie) State Government Finance Bill.

Section 12, Subd. 7., proposed budget for Public Broadcasting;

Section 24, proposed budget for Amateur Sports Commission.

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 Knoblach

Agenda: To be announced.

COMMERCE, JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: HF323 (Haas) Relating to motor vehicle fuel franchises; removing an expiration date.

HF655 (Wolf) Relating to unemployment insurance; making technical and substantive changes; providing that certain applicants on leaves of absence are ineligible for benefits; modifying definitions; clarifying procedures; providing eligibility for benefits for certain victims of domestic abuse; instructing the revisor to renumber sections and change terms.

HF694 (Davids) Relating to insurance; no-fault auto; regulating income loss benefits to senior citizens.

HF850 (Mariani) Relating to the environment; appropriating money for ethanol plant odor control.

3 p.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

FRIDAY, March 2

8:15 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota Department of Human Services deep budget overview of Family Planning and Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Budget review of the Department of Trade and Economic Development.

10:15 a.m.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget presentation: Enforcement.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: To be announced.

12 noon

Property Tax Division/TAXES

Duluth City Hall City Council Chambers
Third Floor

411 W. 1st St.

Duluth, Minn.

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: HF511 (Sviggum) Governor's Tax Bill.

Sales and Income Tax Division/TAXES

Marshall City Hall

344 W. Main St.

Marshall, Minn.

Chr. Rep. Elaine Harder

Agenda: HF511 (Sviggum) Governor's Tax Bill.

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biggest factor that determines whether they will be homeless as an adult is if they are homeless as a child.

Traci Roberson works at Hennepin County Shelter as a rapid exit worker, which means she tries to get people out of the shelter and into more stable housing within 14 days of their arrival. Roberson, who has been homeless before, said she is glad for prevention dollars.

"Rising costs are making it more difficult to (get people into housing)," she said. "We need a lot more resources."

Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley) said he supports the bill but wondered how they derived the \$4.6 million figure, rather than a rounded-off number.

Dahl responded that he asked the coalition to request an amount, and had received an actual cost estimate from them.

Gerlach also asked if the money could be used to provide for any abortion services. Dahl said the coalition is not using funds for such purposes. But the coalition does offer pregnant women the opportunity to meet with counselors.

Still, Gerlach requested an amendment. "I would be open to amendments that would clarify so funds wouldn't be available for abortion services," he said. Dahl maintained the amendment would not be relevant. The bill was tabled. 🐼

Continued from page 18

"We take our spending decisions very seriously. We're not a wealthy community. Most communities outside the metro area live on a shoestring (budget)," Doty said.

Keith Carlson, representing the Metropolitan Inter-County Association, said Abrams' concern over local government spending held those units up to a different standard than other organizations that have appeared before the Taxes Committee.

Carlson cited a recent proposal heard in committee repealing the corporate franchise tax applied to banks that have elected subchapter S status under the IRS tax code. Carlson said the bankers testifying were never asked whether the tax break would mean lower costs to their customers.

Rep. Andy Dawkins (DFL-St. Paul) said the taxing of government purchases was not a good policy. He said it made even less sense on a state level with state agencies paying the state taxes "moving money from this pocket to that pocket."

Dawkins said he shared Abrams concern about increased local spending, but it is an accounting issue that needs a solution. 🐼

Reflections

Winter 2001 in Minnesota has not been a pleasant one.

An average of 54 inches of snow has fallen across the state with no melting in sight. Coupled with average low temperatures in January and February hovering between 3.7 and 9.1 degrees, many have found it uncomfortable getting to the Capitol to conduct legislative business.

It has not been Minnesota's worst winter, and in no way does it compare to battling the elements encountered by the Bancroft-Arnesen Expedition in Antarctica.

On Feb. 12, Minnesota explorer Ann Bancroft and her Norwegian teammate, Liv Arnesen, were the first two women to successfully ski across the frozen Antarctic landmass. Bancroft had already led a women's expedition to the South Pole and was the first woman to reach the North Pole. Arnesen was the first woman to ski solo to the South Pole.

The two explorers would have welcomed Minnesota's weather for they spent 90 days in temperatures down to 30 degrees below zero, with storms creating winds as high as 100 mph as they traversed the desolate, ice-covered continent.

When sub-freezing temperatures and snow and winds arrive at the Capitol complex, legislators, staff, lobbyists, and others enjoy much more comfort than a polar expedition. They walk the two-block trek from the State Office Building to the House and Senate chambers through part of an underground system that connects all the buildings around the complex.

The "tunnel" as it is called, becomes the subterranean mode for most people to get where they are going without having to confront the outside during many days in winter.

While Bancroft and Arnesen only saw each other and three birds during the first, 60-day leg of the journey, the opposite is true for tunnel users.

During any of the 60 or more official legislative days in an annual session, the tunnel not only gets used by those in the Legislature, but also by thousands of others who use it as a shortcut to downtown or to get to off-campus government buildings.

The 1.18-mile tunnel system in no way compares to the distance Bancroft and Arnesen skied and ski-sailed to the South Pole, then to the Ross Ice Shelf, 1,688 miles from their starting point. Nor is the entire distance of the tunnel used by everyone on a daily basis, except for exercisers who speed-walk a mile or more.

The tunnel was built to avoid inclement weather. It was constructed in sections as eight buildings were added to the complex. The first, built in 1913, connects the old Historical Center with the Capitol. The section that gets the most traffic was built in 1931 and connects the Capitol to the State Office Building.

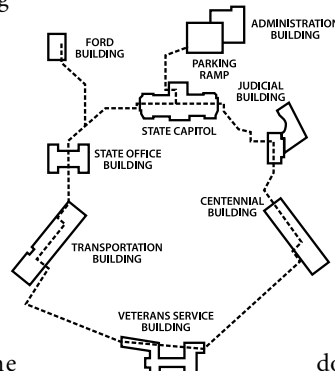
Tunnel users walk or exercise with ease throughout its route, even along the gradual descent to its lowest point of 75 feet below ground at the Veteran's Service Building.

In contrast, the trek across Antarctica was no easy task.

Bancroft and Arnesen successfully crossed the landmass by spending a night in a blizzard, then portaged and ski-sailed down two glaciers, including one from 7,398 feet above sea level. They reached the Ross Ice Shelf before winter set in.

The thought of such an amazing Bancroft-Arnesen adventure in brutal weather helps one to greatly appreciate the use of the tunnel in getting around when Minnesota's winter is not just harsh, but mean.

— LECLAIR GRIER LAMBERT



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

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

MINNESOTA INDEX

2001 state official salaries

Governor	\$120,303
Ranking among U.S. states as of January 2000	9
Salary of highest paid governor (California)	\$165,000
Salary of lowest paid governor (Nebraska)	\$65,000
Minnesota governor salary in 1990	\$98,914
In 1980	\$62,000
Attorney General	\$93,983
In 1990	\$77,274
State Auditor	\$72,187
In 1990	\$59,362
Lieutenant Governor	\$66,168
In 1990	\$54,413
Secretary of State	\$66,168
In 1990	\$54,405
Treasurer	\$66,168
In 1990	\$51,470
Most recent salary increases for constitutional officers (July 1997 and January 1998), each, as percent	2.5
Supreme Court Chief Justice	\$122,098
In 1990	\$86,210
Supreme Court Associate Justice	\$110,998
In 1990	\$80,010
Most recent salary increases for judges (July 1999 and January 2000), each, as percent	3
Legislators (House and Senate)	\$31,140
Ranking in the United States	12
Average legislator's salary in 50 states	\$22,796
Legislator's salary in 1990	\$25,138
In 1980	\$18,500
Legislators' daily per diem	\$56
Most recent salary increase (January 1999), as percent	5
Salary for Speaker of House, majority and minority leaders as of March 24, 1999	\$43,596
Maximum salary for most state cabinet agency heads, as percent of governor's salary	95
In year 2000, dollars	\$114,288
Number of state cabinet agency heads making that amount as of Aug. 1, 2000	0
Maximum salary of state cabinet agency head as of Aug. 1, 2000	\$108,393
Number of cabinet agency heads (of 24) making that amount	21

Source: House Research Department Information Briefs (August 2000 and September 2000), CQ's State Fact Finder 2001, The Minnesota Legislative Manual 1979-1980, 1989-1990, and 1995-96, and The Book of States 2000-01.

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