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In this issue:

STATE EMPLOYEE CONTRACTS

CREDIT SCORING, HEALTH CARE COSTS, AND MORE

HF3126-HF3433

Session Weekly

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On the cover: College and university students from around the state rally on the State Capitol steps Feb. 13 as part of the annual student lobby day. The students wore yellow helmets to signify avoiding being hit by any higher education budget cuts.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

A clear message

House warns that it will likely reject state employee contract providing same-sex domestic partner benefits

By MICHELLE KIBIGER

The House passed a resolution Feb. 13 that clearly states it will not support collective bargaining agreements ratified by the two largest state employee unions last fall, because they contain benefits for same-sex domestic partners.

Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) offered the resolution, saying that the language in the contracts is vague and does not specifically define what a domestic partner is.

"I'd be voting to approve the contracts" without the same-sex domestic partner benefits, Bishop told the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee Feb. 13.

If the Legislature fails to ratify the contracts, it would be the first time it resorted to such actions in the 27-year history of state

contracts will not stand and they should pursue some remedies.

"It's a very quick way to express the sentiment of the House early in the session," Pawlenty said. He added that he hoped it would give various people associated with the issue an opportunity to come up with some real solutions to the dispute.

The resolution passed the House 75-54 after more than two hours of debate. Earlier that day, the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee, which Pawlenty chairs, approved the resolution 11-9.

Specifically, the resolution indicates the intent of the House to ratify the compensation plan for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) administrators and the labor agreement between the state and the

to adjourning this year.

In addition to health insurance, same-sex domestic partner benefits would include sick leave and bereavement leave used on the behalf of a domestic partner of a state employee.

Members questioned the tactic, wondering why Bishop chose to put forward a resolution, rather than merely putting the sentiment in bill form.

Bishop said the resolution "gives some notification to the bargaining parties that (the agreements) are in jeopardy."

The House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee approved a bill (HF3407), sponsored by Bishop, that mirrors the resolution by rejecting all of the collective bargaining unit agreements, with the exception of the engineers council. That contract did not include same-sex benefits. It also would not preclude certain MnSCU employees from using sick or bereavement leave on the behalf of a domestic partner.

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

Others said the resolution sends the message that the House does not respect state workers by not providing equal benefits for equal work. Critics also said it jeopardizes the benefits of all state employees unnecessarily.

"What I object to is putting all of these people at risk," said Rep. Bob Milbert (DFL-South St. Paul).

Merrill Evans, an employee at the Department of Transportation maintenance facility in Jordan, echoed Milbert's concerns.

"If you reject this contract," Evans said, "it's my job. It's my paycheck. It's my benefits. And it's my family."

However, much of the criticism surrounding the resolution was the perception that it interferes with the collective bargaining process established by state law.

The law authorizing collective bargaining for state employees — The Public Employment Labor Relations Act — was passed by the Legislature in 1971. It wasn't used widely until the mid-1970s.

Under current law, the following guidelines govern state employee contracts and Legislature ratification:

- If a collective bargaining agreement is reached when the Legislature is not in session, the Legislative Coordinating Commission Subcommittee on Employee Relations can review the contract and provide interim approval. If it does not reject the contract, it



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Members of House Rules Committee debate a resolution indicating the House's intent to reject 2001 collective bargaining agreements for state employees because they contain same-sex domestic partner benefits.

employee collective bargaining negotiations in Minnesota.

House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan) said the resolution, which does not carry the force of law, is intended to send a message to the parties who negotiated the agreements — the Ventura Association of Professional Employees (MAPE) and the American Federation of State, County, and Federal Employees (AFSCME) — that the current

Minnesota Government Engineers Council.

The resolution further indicates the House's intent to reject the MAPE and AFSCME agreements, and to modify non-union, managerial and commissioner's compensation plans, with the removal of same-sex domestic partner provisions.

It was amended to provide a bridge for state employees to continue to be covered under the existing health insurance plan in the event the Legislature does not ratify the contracts prior



Numbers game

1850 territorial census far from an accurate representation

In the 2000 census, Minnesota's population was nearly 4.92 million people, a 12.4 percent increase from 10 years prior.

The count is intended to be a reflection of every man, woman, and child living inside the state's borders.

But it has not always been that way.

Prior to Minnesota becoming a state in 1858, the Minnesota Territory was included in the 1850 census. At the time, the territory covered approximately 166,000 square miles, since more than one-half of the current North Dakota and about one-third of what is now South Dakota was part of the territory. The territory's western border was the Missouri River.

At the time, Minnesota had nine very large counties, and census takers counted 6,077 residents. But it was not an accurate representation. For example, one of the seven census counters forgot to include himself. Ten years later the population was 172,072 — a 2,813 percent increase.

According to the Minnesota Historical Society, approximately 84 percent of the 1850 residents were not counted. Those were primarily the American Indians living in the territory, the land's first inhabitants. Just 136 people were identified as having Indian ancestry because census takers did not consistently record that information. Those of both white and American Indian descent were considered white for survey purposes. People were counted as either "white" or "free colored."

The census conducted more than 150 years ago did not measure whether women were employed, or the marriages and school enrollment in the area, like modern censuses do. However, it was the first to include all members of a household, not just the head.

Of the occupations listed for 2,371 people — all men — the most common was laborer, followed by farmer. Hunters also ranked high. About 10 percent of those listing an occupation were involved in the building trades.

No professors were listed, but 209 people were listed as attending school. Illiterates in the state numbered 649 — 259 of which were native-born. The 1850 census identified people older than age 20 who were unable to read.

Of the 47 11-year-old girls counted, just 19 percent had attended school in the previous year. For children age 6-16, the number who were going to school was 14.8 percent. Those numbers helped contribute to the fact that one-quarter of all women counted could not read.

Approximately two-thirds of residents were born in the United States. Only 18.8 percent of the people counted in the census were born in Minnesota, 8 percent (481) were from New York, and 4.9 percent (296) in

Wisconsin. Canada was the birthplace of 23.1 percent of residents, while European nations accounted for less than 10 percent.

Mary was the most common women's name (259), and John (334) for the men. Three people were named Polite.

Governor Alexander Ramsey was one of just 256 landowners. All were men. His brother, Justus, was one of the youngest landowners at age 26. The value of each man's land was estimated at \$2,500. The census reported that only one non-white man was a homeowner — a 29-year-old mulatto.

Of the 36 people married within the year, only one was above age 40. The average age of the groom was 26 and the bride 20. Louis St. Pierre was the youngest male to marry at age 20. His wife, Mary, was the youngest bride at age 15.

The average age of Minnesotans counted was 24, four years younger than the national average, and 11.4 years below the median age in 2000. More than 46 percent of those counted were under age 21, with 29.2 percent younger than age 10. The oldest Minnesotan at the time was Joseph Montreulle, a 98-year-old voyager.

(M. Cook)



Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society

A group of school children in front of the post office at Dassel, Minnesota.

becomes effective within 30 days on an interim basis.

- However, all contracts must be ratified by the full Legislature.
- If the full Legislature ratifies the contract it is immediately effective.
- If the full Legislature rejects the contract, further bargaining may be required. State employees do have the right to strike in this instance.
- If the full Legislature does not act before adjourning, the contract ceases to be effective immediately, forcing further bargaining and possibly a strike.

Labor officials testified during the rules committee meeting that the resolution shows disrespect for the process established by the law and sets a very dangerous precedent.

Several members agreed.

"We are, in my mind, certainly saying fairly strongly that we are willing to interfere with the negotiating process," said Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato).

"They're (labor leaders) asking us to respect something that they bargained in good faith," said Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls).

However, Bishop and several other House members countered by saying the House already made it clear that the Ventura administration should not offer same-sex partner benefits.

They pointed to an amendment that was placed on the omnibus state government finance bill when it was debated on the floor May 3, 2001.

At that time, the House voted 74-58 to accept an amendment that would limit the benefits state employees get to only cover an employee, the spouse, dependent child, or dependent grandchild of an employee. Other allowances would have been made for legally adopted children and other similar arrangements.

Debate surrounding the amendment suggested it was targeted at Gov. Jesse Ventura's expressed desire to provide benefits to same-sex domestic partners of state employees.

Although the measure did pass the House initially, it was removed in conference committee and was not included in the final product that became law.

At the time, House members argued that major private employers in the state have provided domestic partner benefits for many years and the state should use the benefits as a recruiting tool.

"We would be foolish not to try to compete with those companies for those workers," said Rep. D. Scott Dibble (DFL-Mpls) during the May 3, debate. Dibble, who is one of two

Continued on page 35.

★ AGRICULTURE

Focusing priorities

The House Agriculture Policy Committee approved a bill Feb. 13 that would require the University of Minnesota Extension Service to place less emphasis on "human development" programs and devote more attention to other priorities.

Among those priorities are agricultural finance and economics, nutrition, and youth and rural leadership development, which would include 4-H programs.

"Our intent is to try to preserve the fabric of rural Minnesota," said Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), sponsor of HF2708, which outlines the definition of county extension work.

Ness said he's concerned that the extension service is shifting its focus away from agriculture programs.

Other committee members voiced similar concerns.

Rep. Greg Blaine (R-Little Falls) cited a 1998 newspaper advertisement that promoted the university's commitment to gardening and other programs as evidence that agriculture has fallen down on its list of priorities.

The vote came after some members of the committee accused University of Minnesota officials of misrepresenting their intent for the bill by saying legislators favored cutting 4-H programs. Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison) demanded a public apology from the university.

Members said they had received several phone calls and e-mails from constituents concerned that HF2708 would result in cuts to 4-H and county fairs.

Charles Casey, dean of the university's extension service, later apologized for offending members of the committee. Casey said he stood by the university's plan for the extension service, which was released in January.

The plan calls for a 17 percent reduction in staff by 2006, but Casey said each county in the state will continue to have an office. It focuses extension's efforts on programs related to community development, agriculture, natural resources, youth development, and family living, including 4-H.

Casey said that striking the words "economic and human development" from the definition of county extension work would limit their mission.

"Rural communities are more than just farms," he said.

Charles Muscoplat, dean of the university's College of Agriculture, Food, and

Environmental Sciences, and Bob Bruininks, university executive vice president and provost, also spoke out in favor of the service's new plan.

"Agriculture is changing and becoming more sophisticated than ever before," Muscoplat said. "The old model doesn't work."

He said the university is increasingly providing rural communities with guidance on precision farming, organic agriculture, and environmental law.

The bill was referred to the House Higher Education Finance Committee.

★ ARTS

State picture sought

A proposal to make Eric Enstrom's "Grace" photograph the Minnesota state picture was approved by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee Feb. 13.

The photograph shot by the Bovey native in 1918 features an elderly man sitting pensively with bowed head and folded hands at a table with a pair of spectacles resting atop a dictionary. Also on the table are a bowl of gruel, a loaf of bread, and a knife.

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey), the sponsor of HF1097, also sponsored a successful resolution in 2001 that urged the U.S. Postal Service to create a postage stamp reproduction of the photograph. That stamp has not yet been made.

Solberg said he didn't include the proposal to make the picture the state photograph at the same time because he wanted to give an opportunity to anyone else who might have another picture to put forward. He said the Minnesota Historical Society indicated that nobody else has done so.

Brian Carlson, an Itasca County resident who served on a committee that supports the



A bill would make Eric Engstrom's "Grace" photo, pictured here, the official state photograph.

designation, said the picture is known throughout the world.

"It's a piece of Americana and it's a piece of Minnesota," he said. "It has worldwide renown yet so few people recognize that it came from Minnesota."

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) offered a successful amendment changing the word "picture" to "photograph." Solberg supported the amendment and said that it's a common misconception that the original work is a painting rather than a photograph.

The bill, which now goes to the House floor, would require the secretary of state's office to display the photograph.

★ BUSINESS

Contract regulations

A bill that would have allowed contractors to seek recovery of costs on public contracts where delays are caused by the public entity passed the House and Senate during 2001 but was vetoed by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Now sponsors are bringing the issue back with a similar bill.

HF3205, sponsored by Rep. James Clark (R-New Ulm), would prohibit clauses in public works contracts that limit the rights of a contractor to recover costs or damages caused by acts or omissions within the contracting public entity.

The House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee approved the measure Feb. 13 and referred it to the House Civil Law Committee.

Clark said that not only did the measure pass unanimously last session but the Senate also overrode the governor's veto on a "straight party line vote of 63-1." Sen. Bob Lessard (Ind.-Int'l Falls) was the lone dissenting vote.

He added that fears the bill would somehow affect the light-rail project led to the House's failure to override the governor's veto.

Those concerns have now been addressed, Clark said, and one of the lawmakers who voiced concern during the House debate, Rep. Bernie Lieder (DFL-Crookston), was now a co-sponsor of the bill.

In his veto message, Ventura wrote that the "no damage for delay" clause is commonly used in public works contracts and the legislation would lead to increased litigation and higher contract costs.

Richard Thomas, representing Associated General Contractors, said that those involved did not know of any concerns with the

proposal until the governor vetoed the bill. He said no groups testified against the bill.

Thomas said that the Metropolitan Council remains against the bill, but it is unclear why.

★ CHILDREN

Trimming funds

The House Family and Early Childhood Education Finance Committee approved their omnibus budget bill during a Feb. 13 meeting.

HF2901, which cuts \$15 million from the general fund budget through fiscal year 2003, will now go to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Committee chair Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), the bill's sponsor, said the plan protects proven programs and makes minimal cuts to low income families.

It would also not hurt Head Start and would continue to encourage self-sufficiency, she said.

The bill reduces early childhood family education aid, reduces aid for child care, violence prevention program grants, and adult basic education aid.

Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Flacon Heights) said the committee should not be making such large cuts to programs that help children, nor should it be making some of those cuts permanent.

The bill calls for several programs' funding to be stopped for a few years and then reinstated.

McGuire said a temporary halt in funding is the same as cutting the program, since agencies would still have to pay rent and workers while they are waiting for funding to be reinstated.

"If we cut their funding, they go," she said.

Sykora pointed out that Gov. Jesse Ventura's plan called for the permanent elimination of some programs, and the committee's plan to cut funding only temporarily is preferable to that.

Gov. Ventura recommended cuts of \$20.2 million for 2002-03, \$7.1 million of which would be general fund money. However, Ventura projected cutting family and early childhood base funding by \$83 million in 2004-05 and the committee indicated it would only cut the base by \$30 million in those years.

Sykora said the committee had some difficult decisions to make and she wasn't given much feedback about where to trim money from the budget.

McGuire said she intentionally did not suggest any cuts because none should be made.

"I'm not going to help do something I don't think we should be doing," she said.

★ CONSUMERS

Setting glass prices

Insurance companies would be required to pay "fair and reasonable costs" on auto glass repair claims, under a measure approved by the House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Policy Committee Feb. 12.

Current law requires insurance companies to pay market price for glass replacement as determined by a survey of costs charged in communities around the state.

HF2570, sponsored by Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville), would eliminate the market survey of auto glass shop prices. The bill adds a "fair and reasonable standard" in the amount a company must pay on a claim to the "competitive price" standard in current law.

Wolf said that in 1991 the state changed its

the law so that auto glass claims were treated differently from auto body claims. The law required insurance companies to pay all "reasonable" costs, which he said led to companies being required to pay the cost of whatever was billed.

A compromise between the auto glass repair and insurance industries led to Wolf sponsoring the law that created the market survey, but he said that law is not working.

According to information provided by American Family Insurance on 20 claims filed between Jan. 1, 2001 and Oct. 31, 2001, the range of the claims was from \$334 to \$1,064.

Guy Selinske, a Prior Lake auto glass repair shop owner speaking in support of Wolf's bill, said the issue is about "greed, smoke, and mirrors."

"(Current law) rewards inefficient

REMEMBERING REP. LUTHER



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

U.S. Rep. Bill Luther, *right*, hugs his son, Alex, *left*, after addressing the House Feb. 11, telling members that "besides being a mother, Darlene's highest honor in life was serving in the Minnesota House of Representatives." The House recessed in order to view a video Alex and his sister, Alicia, had made for their mother this past December. Rep. Darlene Luther died Jan. 30 from the effects of stomach cancer.

companies and gets the government to protect their excessive profits,” he said. “In the end it’s the consumer that gets hurt by the over-billing of greedy repair shops.”

Gary Potzin, another auto glass repair shop owner, spoke against the measure. He said the quality of work is the most important part of the business and insurance companies are just interested in “price, price, price.”

“Consumer choice will be gone. Consumer safety will be damaged as margins are squeezed to cut corners,” he said.

Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls) offered a successful amendment that addressed concerns in the committee about insurance companies “steering” business to preferred repair shops. The amendment prohibits insurance companies from recommending auto glass companies unless the consumer requests the information.

Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley) said the bill was another “band-aid” to the problem, and the entire issue could not be resolved unless consumers become more connected with the actual costs of the repairs.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

★ CRIME

Registering offenders

A bill that would require more repeat offenders to register with the state for the rest of their life earned approval from the House Crime Prevention Committee Feb. 12.

HF3049, sponsored by Committee Chair Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield), would allow the state to consider crimes that were committed before registration laws were set in place 11 years ago.

Currently, lifetime registration is required only if the previous offense was one for which lifetime registration was required at that time. Crimes that require previous offenders to register for life include kidnapping, criminal sexual conduct, and other predatory crimes.

Under the bill, residents convicted of similar crimes in other states, or convicted of federal crimes, would also be required to register with the state, as would those who live in other states but work or attend school in Minnesota. It would also pull in offenders who were not listed within the more narrow list of offenses that previously existed.

Laurie Beyer-Kropuenske, is the project coordinator of State Agencies Focused on Effectiveness, or SAFE, an agency that coordinates efforts among the state’s crime, violence, and drug abuse prevention efforts.

She told committee members a change in law is needed to allow the state to look back on crimes committed prior to 1991.

State laws requiring certain criminals to

register for 10 years went into effect in 1991, but lifetime registration was not added until 2000, Beyer-Kropuenske said. At that time, 1991 was the cutoff for considering previous offenses. The proposed change would allow the state to pull in offenses from pre-1991.

The state also needs to make the change or risk losing about \$850,000 in federal grant money from the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance program, she said. The state receives about \$8.5 million annually in federal assistance from the grant program.

The bill goes next to the full House.

Implied consent hearings

The House Crime Prevention Committee approved a bill (HF2840) Feb. 7 that would provide several minor adjustments to the state’s criminal code.

The bill is sponsored by Rep. James Clark (R-New Ulm).

Among the changes in the bill would be to require that implied consent hearings, which occur as part of a drunken driving case when a driver’s license is confiscated, be held in the county where the alleged offense occurred.

The state attorney general’s office handles implied consent hearings. However, a ruling from the Minnesota Court of Appeals suggests that if a city or county attorney was notified of a hearing and they do not appear — though state law does not specifically allow them to address the court at the hearing — they are bound by the decision of the court, said Phil

Carruthers from the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office.

Carruthers said some cities and counties only have one attorney and that person may not be able to attend the hearings, particularly if they are located many miles away. In addition, they are not actually parties to the case — the state is.

Another part of the bill would change child endangerment provisions to include permitting a child to be present where drugs are sold, manufactured, or products the offender intends to use to manufacture drugs are present. Existing law considers using and possessing a controlled substance in the presence of a child to be child endangerment.

Removing an electronic monitoring device or fleeing while on electronic monitoring would be considered an escape from custody, under the bill. People guilty of such crimes would also be subject to escape penalties.

Members were concerned that broadening the escape from custody statute would increase the number of offenders needing incarceration, since electronic monitoring is an alternative to incarceration to begin with.

The bill now goes to the House Civil Law Committee.

★ EDUCATION

Reciting the pledge

A bill that would require public and charter school students to recite the pledge of allegiance and learn about flag etiquette is moving through the House.



Orville Otterness, a veteran with the American Legion, holds up a United States flag code of etiquette in support of HF2598, a bill that would require the recitation of the pledge of allegiance in all public schools and provide United States flag respect instruction. The bill was heard Feb. 12 by the House Education Policy Committee.

The Education Policy Committee sent the bill (HF2598), sponsored by Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria), to the House floor Feb. 12.

The House passed a similar bill last session but it did not have a Senate companion. The lone difference is the enactment date, as the new bill calls for instruction to begin no later than the 2003-04 school year, rather than the 2002-03 school year previously proposed.

"It's time we put patriotism back on the curriculum agenda," Cassell said.

Orville Otterness of the American Legion of Minnesota said the legislation would "help strengthen and safeguard our future."

Under the bill, students would have to say the pledge of allegiance in school classrooms at least once a week, but any student or teacher who objects could be excused. It also would give a local school board authority to waive the requirement or adopt a different district policy regarding the recitation.

The bill would also require instruction in "the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag, and in patriotic exercises," the bill reads.

The bill had originally required the instruction to be part of a district's fifth-grade curriculum, but the specific grade was brought into question. The bill was then amended to recommend, instead of require, the instruction in the fifth grade. According to Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton), schools have curriculum standard for American history in that grade.

Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls) asked why private school students were not included in the bill. Cassell replied that the Legislature has limited its control and mandates for private schools and that many private schools are already saying it. He added it could be "a potentially contentious issue" and might be a barrier to getting the bill passed.

Funds may be optional

The House might waive a mandate that requires schools to spend 2 percent of their budget on staff development, allowing them to prioritize their spending, under a bill presented to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee Feb. 13.

HF3068, sponsored by Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville), would remove the legal requirement to set aside a certain amount for staff development and would allow districts to set aside whatever amount they choose.

The bill raised mixed reactions, from those who wanted to let school boards decide how best to use their funds, to those who said a state mandate is needed especially now when budgets are tight, to ensure minimum funding for staff development.

"Current limitations in K-12 funding have created an economic environment in which it is hard to justify that school districts continue to reserve 2 percent of revenue dedicated solely to staff development," said Tom Berge, director of finance and operations for Minnetonka schools. "We need maximum flexibility to manage our way through this dilemma."

Jan Alswager, representing Education Minnesota, opposed the legislation.

"We are cannibalizing by eating out of our staff funds," she said. "Staff development is so critical. We feel the set aside is essential."

Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan) said he was offended by Alswager's comments. "Taking away the requirement does not imply that professionals will stop acting professional," he said.

Alswager maintained that by taking away the mandate, the bill would remove many opportunities for teachers.

However, Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton) said the change would be "an opportunity for (teachers) to focus on what it is they need to improve," since student achievement is in the hands of every teacher.

Berge said Minnetonka schools have cut 6.3 percent of their budget so far this year, or just under \$7 million. He told committee members if the bill were to become law, staff development would probably be halved.

Bob Meeks, representing the Minnesota School Boards Association, said he's been getting requests from unions across the state to give staff development money back.

"Let us weigh that with all the other requirements," Meeks said. Schools have always had staff development, and "staff development should be prioritized with everything else," he said.

★ ENVIRONMENT

Program cuts proposed

A pair of environmental groups testified before the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee on Feb. 8, calling on members to spare programs from proposed budget cuts.

The committee took no action on the proposals at the meeting.

A day after Republican House leaders unveiled a plan that calls for \$653.5 million in reduced spending for the 2002-2003 biennium, Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), the committee chair, said the committee would move quickly to propose agency spending cuts.

The Department of Natural Resources has proposed trimming more than \$15 million

from its budget this biennium, about 5.6 percent of its general fund money.

The Minnesota Conservation Corps, a 20-year-old program modeled after the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps, is slated for elimination. Cutting the program is expected to save the DNR \$6.8 billion this biennium.

Youth involved with the corps help build trails, work on improving wildlife habitat, and assist the state in other environmental projects. There are two basic programs: one for 18- to 25-year-olds that runs year-round and a summer program for 15- to 18-year-olds.

Rusty Schmidt, a former corps supervisor, urged the committee to continue funding the program and said that program participants are hard-working, environmental stewards.

"They are the muscle behind a lot of the projects implemented by the DNR," Schmidt said. "They would be severely hamstrung without the (corps)."

The committee also heard testimony bemoaning Gov. Jesse Ventura's plan to cut the Forest Resource Council's funding by almost 80 percent, from \$900,000 to \$200,000.

Wayne Brandt, representing Minnesota Forest Industries, said the proposed cut would effectively kill the council, a group that promotes sustainable forest management in the state.

The council, which includes members from the logging industry, stage agencies, nonprofit organizations, and local governments, was established with the passage of the 1995 Sustainable Forest Resources Act.

Brandt said without the council, the state would likely see increased litigation and conflict between industry and government.

Trash talk

Waste generation has grown faster than the state's population, and Minnesotans continue to throw away many items that could be recycled, according to a legislative auditor's report discussed in the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee Feb. 7.

In 1999, paper and organic waste accounted for about 60 percent of the state's total garbage, waste that could have been recycled or composted.

On average, Minnesota residents and businesses recycle about 40 percent of the waste they produce.

The state has also failed to meet a 1994 goal adopted by the Legislature to reduce per capita waste generation by 10 percent between 1993 and 2000. In 1991, Minnesotans threw away an average of 0.95 tons of garbage per person. In 2000 that number was up to 1.14 tons.

If the trend continues, the Office of Environmental Assistance estimates that Minnesotans will annually generate 13 million tons of waste by 2020 as each individual would toss out 2.5 tons of garbage.

The report put into context efforts by members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee to adopt new goals for solid waste management.

After reviewing the report, the committee approved HF2888, sponsored by Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris). The bill articulates a goal of recognizing that waste has "value," meaning the state should promote projects that find enterprising ways to reuse trash instead of simply focusing on burying or burning it.

Further, the bill also outlines a waste management hierarchy with waste reduction and reuse as a top priority. At the bottom would be disposing trash in landfills.

The measure would also direct the Office of Environmental Assistance to develop state-wide, five-year goals to improve management of solid waste and work with local governments to improve data collection that would track waste management practices.

The state Pollution Control Agency would also be required to present a report to the Legislature in 2003 reviewing the long-term liability of depositing waste in landfills, under the measure.

The bill is largely the result of recommendations made by the Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee, which included members from several state and local agencies, the private sector, and nonprofits.

The Jennings bill now moves to the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

GAMBLING

Bingo goes global

Bingo games would have an added element of technological advancement, under a measure approved by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee Feb. 13.

A provision of HF3073, a gambling policy bill sponsored by Rep. Mike Oskopp (R-Lake City), would allow linked bingo games in the state.

Oskopp said that currently an American Legion post, a VFW, and an Elks Club might be holding separate bingo nights each with a \$500 prize pool. The bill would allow those establishments to link themselves via satellite or other technology so the multiple sites could combine their pools into a \$1,500 pot.

"Maybe some extra folks will come out and it would be good for the local charity," he said.

King Wilson, executive director of Allied Charities of Minnesota, said after a few years of stagnant numbers bingo revenues had a sizeable drop from 2000 to 2001.

Wilson said that a number of places have ceased bingo games because of a lack of participation, a trend he says is unfortunate.

"Bingo is the most social form of gambling," he said.

The bill would also allow electronic bingo devices to be used in the state. Oskopp said those devices allow players to play multiple cards at the same time. The player punches the bingo caller's selection into a device that determines which cards contain the number-letter combination.

Rep. Eric Lipman (R-Lake Elmo) asked if there is any concern that compulsive gambling problems would increase due to the proposed changes in what bingo games are allowed, despite the slower pace of the game.

Oskopp said studies have shown it is the pace and not the amount a person can win that drives many compulsive gamblers.

Another provision of the bill would increase from \$500 to \$599 the maximum prize for a single pull tab. Oskopp said that forms would need to be filed with the Internal Revenue Service if the amount was \$600 or greater and that's why the bill establishes the \$599 cap.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

Redirecting profits

The House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee approved a bill Feb. 13 that would allow veterans organizations more flexibility in spending net profits from lawful gambling.

Current law lists a number of purposes in which organizations such as VFW or American Legion posts may use lawful gambling profits including paying taxes, contributing to a community arts organization, or helping a person or family suffering from poverty or homelessness.

Sponsored by Rep. Carl Jacobson (R-Vadnais Heights), HF3004 would add the paying of utility bills for a building owned or leased by and used as the primary headquarters of a veterans organization to the list.

Jacobson, a certified public accountant, said that over the years he has audited books for charitable organizations and has learned that many veterans organizations are struggling as their membership ages and attracting new members becomes difficult.

"Quite frankly they are hurting," he said. "If we don't do something we will lose a significant number of these clubs."

The bill would also allow the organizations to pay up to \$5,000 per year in net costs for meals and other membership events, limited to members and spouses. Jacobson said that provision of the bill was meant as a "memorial to my dad," a Korean War veteran.

"Some of the happiest moments of his later life was getting to go to dinner with some of the members," Jacobson said.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) said that although she would support the bill, it would be significant shift in the state's lawful gambling approach.

She said that over the years the Legislature has tried to ensure that as much money as possible goes to charitable purposes.

Tom Barrett, executive director of the Minnesota Gambling Control Board, said the board is neutral towards the plan but he was concerned that if veterans organizations were allowed greater use of profits that other charitable organizations would want the same rights. He said that allowing functions closed to the public was also a shift in policy.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

GOVERNMENT

Clean air oversight

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) says most of the complaints in his district come from constituents who say state agencies issue too many onerous regulations, particularly when it comes to the state's Clean Indoor Air Act.

So Seifert has sponsored HF2625, a bill that would bar the Minnesota Department of Health from issuing rules related to the act without legislative approval.

The House Health and Human Services Policy Committee approved the bill Feb. 12 after a couple of members sounded off about what they deemed an encroachment by state agencies into legislative territory.

Rep. Kevin Goodno (R-Moorhead) said the department has gone way beyond its scope in establishing rules related to the Clean Indoor Air Act.

"It's absolutely not your place to change public policy," Goodno said, arguing the agency has followed a rule-making process that doesn't recognize the separation of powers in government.

Committee Chair Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) added that the committee wouldn't have approved the 1999 changes to the Clean Indoor Act had they included the agency's regulations imposed on private businesses. Bradley said the intent of the Legislature was to limit the regulations to warehouses.

Seifert said Department of Health regulations have forced small restaurant and café

owners to choose between installing costly ventilators or going smoke-free.

Speaking in opposition to the bill, Linda Bruemmer, who works in the environmental health division of the Minnesota Department of Health, said the agency has followed the Legislature's guidelines for rulemaking. The department considers new scientific research and legislative changes when implementing new rules, she said.

Bruemmer outlined the process for establishing rules, which includes seeking input from a voluntary advisory committee, conducting a hearing before an administrative law judge, posting a 20-day comment period, and finally allowing a judge and the commissioner to issue recommendations.

She said Seifert's bill might harm efforts to protect Minnesotans who are exposed to second-hand smoke.

Bradley pointed out that the bill doesn't question the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. He said it simply focuses on safeguarding legislative intent.

Addressing Bruemmer, Bradley said: "With the logic you use, the Department of Health could close McDonald's."

Border battles

Minnesotans are generally a neighborly sort when it comes to municipal boundary adjustments, the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee heard Feb. 11.

Dean Barkley, director of the Minnesota Planning agency, presented the findings of a report on the boundary adjustment process that was mandated by a 2000 law.

The agency assumed responsibility of overseeing the municipal boundary adjustment process after the Minnesota Municipal Board sunset on June 1, 1999.

Since the sunset of the board through June 30, 2001, there were 691 municipal boundary adjustments in the state — the vast majority of which went without dispute. Only 22 were filed as contested proceedings, of which 10 went to a hearing.

Barkley said that while mediation has been accepted as a positive addition to the process, arbitration, because of its binding nature on all sides, has not. He said that in some instances, mediation has settled some cases that would not otherwise have been settled.

He said that over the long term the Legislature might wish to revisit giving the agency the responsibilities since the director is given "a lot of discretion," and that it is important for someone with that much say to remain neutral, something he has made a conscious effort to do.

FREEDOM RALLY



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Civil liberties groups rally on the State Capitol steps Feb. 14 to protest additional powers given to officials and public restrictions proposed in various measures to address anti-terrorism initiatives.

The Office of Administrative Hearings or the Office of Dispute Resolution may be more appropriate agencies to handle the boundary adjustment process, Barkley said.

Another area of concern is the increasing costs of contested proceedings since the sunset of the board. According to the report, board members used to receive a \$50 per diem while the current process involving an administrative law hearing involves judges who are paid on a fee-for-service basis at \$150 per hour.

As a result recent proceedings involving the city of St. Cloud and St. Augusta Township cost approximately \$29,000. The board's estimated costs for the same time would have been \$1,800.

Filling vacancies

Town boards would be allowed to fill vacancies through temporary appointments, under a measure approved by the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee Feb. 11.

HF2637, sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), would authorize townships to appoint another person to serve in place of a board member who is unable or unwilling to serve after a 90-day period.

Kent Sulem, an attorney representing the Minnesota Association of Townships, said that in many of the state's smaller townships the board consists of three members. He said in one instance a board member had a stroke and another member had a heart attack a short while later thus leaving the town board without a necessary quorum to act on town matters.

Sulem said the bill would give townships the same authority that cities and counties already have to address vacant positions.

Rep. Debra Hilstrom (DFL-Brooklyn Center) said the issue of filling a vacant position occurred while she served as a city council member. She said one concern she had was whether the bill would supercede the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. If so, a board member's pay and benefits might be affected by the absence and subsequent filling of the position.

Ozment said it was his understanding that the bill would not supercede the federal act, and that in many cases town board members are only paid a per diem for their services.

Under the measure, town boards, by resolution, would declare a vacancy exists and would make an appointment to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term or until the absent member is able to resume duties, whichever is earlier.

"This will allow for undisputed situations to go forward," he said.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

★ HEALTH

State grant changes

Organizations that provide family planning services that include abortion services or referrals for the procedure would be banned from receiving state grants, under a bill approved Feb. 14 by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee.

Specifically, the bill would preclude grant-seeking organizations from engaging in

“public advocacy” of abortion, which includes lobbying abortion-related legislation, endorsing candidates based on their views on the subject, or suing a unit of government to bar the enforcement of an abortion regulation.

The bill would also require that the organization submit its most recent independent audit when applying for the grants.

Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville), sponsor of HF3130, said the bill is modeled after a Missouri statute and is designed to encourage traditional childbirth care.

Andrea Rau, who represents Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, said the measure “protects taxpayers from funding something that is morally wrong.”

Those who testified in opposition to the bill said it would restrict other family planning services intended to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Critics of the measure also challenged its constitutionality.

Connie Perpich, spokeswoman for Planned Parenthood of Minnesota and South Dakota, said the organization receives about 5 percent of its overall funding from the state. She said those dollars are strictly monitored and diverted from abortion services.

“It is simply not true that your tax dollars fund abortions,” Perpich said.

Others critical of the bill questioned whether it would limit health care options for lower income women.

Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) pointed out that Planned Parenthood serves a number of uninsured women, providing them with annual physicals and other health care services at a low cost.

Challenging that point, Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) said other state providers that don’t receive family planning grants won’t be barred from serving women who seek the full range of family planning options.

“This bill would not preclude any of these services for any woman in the state,” Mulder said.

The bill now goes to the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

Nursing compact

Minnesota would become part of a 17-state nurse-licensing compact, under a bill approved by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Feb. 13.

Under the compact, a Minnesota nurse wouldn’t have to attain a license in the other states to practice, but he or she would be obligated to follow the state’s nursing regulations.

Currently, the four states bordering Minnesota participate in the 16-state compact.

It also calls for the participating states to work together on a shared database with

information about the licensed nurses, including any disciplinary actions taken against them.

Proponents of HF2702, sponsored by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), heralded the bill as an opportunity to address the state’s nursing shortage in the border cities and ease care for out-of-state patients. Many Minnesota providers care for patients who live in neighboring states that require phone consultations when they return home.

Critics of the bill argued that it could undermine the state’s quality of patient care.

Ranee Cronquist, assistant director for nursing practice with the state’s Board of Nursing, said it’s not a fix for the state’s overall nursing shortage. But she added that it would help hospitals move nurses to areas of critical need.

The state currently has about 3,000 registered nursing position vacancies.

Cronquist compared the compact to individual state driver’s licenses. Under the arrangement, nurses wouldn’t be burdened with duplicative licensing requirements, she said.

The compact would also make it easier for nurses to consult with patients living in other states by phone or electronically, said Margaret Perryman, president of Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare in St. Paul. The provider primarily cares for disabled children.

However, Erin Murphy, a bill opponent, said the compact could expose Minnesota nurses to added liability when they care for out-of-state patients.

Murphy, executive director of the Minnesota Nurses Association, said the drafters of the bill couldn’t answer how it would improve the practice of nursing in the state. She said border communities face legitimate concerns about the difficulty of moving nurses to different hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes.

The committee defeated an amendment by Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) that would have replaced the compact with a reciprocity agreement with the border states.

The bill now moves to the House Civil Law Committee.

Deadline extension

The Minnesota Board of Physical Therapy would have extra time to complete their rulemaking process, under a measure approved by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee Feb. 11.

Stephanie Lunning, the board’s executive director, said the board was established in 1999. Among its duties are to administer, coordinate, and enforce state laws relating to physical therapists, and investigate people

engaging in practices that violate those laws.

Minnesota law defines physical therapy as the evaluation or treatment by the use of physical measures and the use of therapeutic exercises and rehabilitation procedures with or without assisting devices for the purpose of preventing, correcting, or alleviating a physical or mental disability.

The governor appoints the nine board members, which are four physical therapists, one licensed doctor of medicine, one physical therapy assistant, and three members from the public.

The 1999 law that established the board required the organization to develop rules for a code of ethics of physical therapists within 18 months. That would have meant the rules must be in place by Feb. 1, 2001. The board approved rule making in December 2000 but because of a requirement of a 60-day comment period, was unable to meet the 18-month requirement. Lunning said the time extension request was due to an administrative oversight.

The bill (HF2698), sponsored by Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie) would give the board an additional 18 months to complete the rules.

Lunning said the board worked with the Board of Medical Practice on the rulemaking process and would continue to do so if granted the extension requested.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

HIGHER EDUCATION



Appropriation cuts

Compared to recommendations by the Senate and Gov. Jesse Ventura, the budget cuts approved Feb. 13 by the House Higher Education Finance Committee are less severe to institutions.

The bill now goes to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Faced with a reduction target of \$50 million, the committee cut almost \$20 million from the University of Minnesota appropriation for fiscal year 2003 and \$19.2 million from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. The institutions were cut by an equal percent of their total appropriation.

It also clipped \$10.9 million from the Higher Education Services Office.

The Senate also proposed cuts totaling \$50 million, but didn’t cut the office as much. The governor seeks \$70.6 million in higher education budget cuts for the 2002-03 biennium.

The bill anticipates the trio would also get a combined \$100 million less in the 2004-05 biennium under the bill (HF3286), sponsored by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), the



Justin Klander, state chair of the Minnesota State University Student Association, shares concerns of college students with the House Higher Education Finance Committee Feb. 13. The hard hat represents students looking out for higher education budget cuts.

committee chair.

Throughout the plan the committee's goal was to effect students as little as possible.

"We are still fully funding the state grant program," Leppik said as an example.

Language in the bill calls for both MnSCU and the university to minimize student impact "by decreasing administrative expenditures and reserve balances before increasing student tuition." Representatives from both institutions said they could adhere to that.

But there is bad news for students as the bill calls for the elimination of new matching grants for those enrolled in the Minnesota College Savings Plan. Those who have already invested dollars will receive their grant.

A program that was to give a grant to high school students earning a specified score in advanced placement or international baccalaureate classes was cut for the current and next biennium. No monies had yet been paid.

In addition, any positive state general fund balance at the end of the current biennium would first be used to restore appropriation reductions to MnSCU and the university, under the bill.

Much discussion also took place regarding reciprocity, and how to reduce the money Minnesota pays Wisconsin and North Dakota, which totaled about \$3.8 million in 2001.

Rep. Joe Opatz (DFL-St. Cloud) offered a successful amendment that prevents HESO

from negotiating any agreements that allow students from reciprocity states to pay less than Minnesota students at a Minnesota institution.

He estimated that if the policy were changed, the university would generate about \$7 million during the biennium and MnSCU about \$1 million.

"When we're looking for pennies under the couch this would help," said Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall).

Two other Opatz-sponsored bills (HF2824 and HF3259) are headed for the House Civil Law Committee, and if approved there would likely be offered as amendments during floor debate. They seek to have students about to graduate from a Minnesota college or university to give permission to have their data tracked for purposes of where they end up living.

"This way we can try and get a better handle on migration patterns to and from the state," Opatz said. Other states would be required to do the same.

HOUSING



Initiatives proposed

On a night in November 2001, nearly 1,200 individuals were turned away from homeless shelters in Minnesota, according to the quarterly shelter survey conducted by the state's education department.



Jimmie Coulthard, president and CEO of the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, testifies during a Feb. 13 hearing of the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee for a bill that would bond for the construction of housing for homeless veterans and single adults.

Two bonding proposals aim to lower that number dramatically. One bill (HF2644), sponsored by House Majority Leader Tim Pawlenty (R-Eagan), would use \$23.7 million to construct two housing developments for veterans.

Under the bill, 218 single units would be constructed for \$14.5 million in Minneapolis, and 120 units would be built in St. Cloud using \$9.2 million.

"By creating housing opportunities ... we would open up other shelter space for others to use," Pawlenty told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee Feb. 13.

The housing units in Minneapolis would be located on the outskirts of the city, moving many veterans out of the downtown area. Former Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles-Belton indicated this was a priority when the bill was drafted.

During 2001, legislation for the housing projects passed the House but not the Senate. Committee members expressed full support again this year and a desire to see that the Senate moves the bill forward as well.

Rep. Dale Walz (R-Brainerd) said the bill is his highest priority for the committee and he was disappointed with the governor's \$4.4 million recommendation for the project.

Michael Dahl, executive director of the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, said his organization's top priority is to make sure the veterans housing proposal gets funded, but his group is looking out for others as well. The housing initiatives "will help those who are hardest to serve," he said.

In a separate bill, Dahl is asking for \$10 million in bonding funds to build transitional housing. HF3017, sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls), would provide those funds.

"Homelessness has been rising dramatically in the past four to five years," Dahl said. He brought a blanket to the hearing, explaining to members that the housing coalition used to hand out surplus blankets, but because of the war, they have none to give.

There are many shelters in the state, but "we want (the homeless) to be in something much more stable," Dahl said. The fund provided in the bill would primarily help families, about 300 people per night, he said.

The committee approved both bills and sent them to the House Capital Investment Committee, where they will be considered for inclusion in the bonding bill.

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

★ HUMAN SERVICES

Full disclosure

Child-placement agencies would be required to disclose a child's communicable diseases to foster parents, under a bill approved by the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee Feb. 12.

Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), the sponsor of HF2932, said the disclosure requirement is necessary to ensure foster parents are equipped with enough information to best care for the child.

"This is something we need to do," Sykora said. "Foster care parents are a real treasure. This bill will make it easier for them to do what they do."

Hennepin County Commissioner Penny Steele said the genesis of the bill came from concerned foster parents in the county who said they were troubled by the lack of information about children's health.

A section in the bill, however, concerned Rep. Neva Walker (DFL-Mpls). The provision requires the placement agency to determine that the foster parent has the requisite "knowledge and skills" to care for the child.

Walker said she was concerned that a social worker would have too much discretion in establishing criteria assessing the foster parent's abilities.

Other members said the bill should be drafted so as not to reduce the number of eligible foster care parents.

The committee later approved an amendment that requires the foster parents to have the "ability" to care for the child with the communicable disease.

Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) said the burden should be on the counties to make sure foster parents are properly trained before they take children into their homes.

The committee referred the bill to the House Crime Prevention Committee.

★ INSURANCE

Ovarian cancer screening

Insurance companies may soon be required to provide coverage for ovarian cancer screening for women at risk, under a bill (HF3234), sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls).

"Early detection makes all the difference for women," said Clark, a survivor of ovarian cancer. Current law already requires insurance companies to cover screening for most cancers.

However, at the Feb. 12 hearing of the House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Committee, members cautioned proponents

of imposing another insurance mandate in the state.

Minnesota has "many, many mandates," said Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville). "I'm very concerned that this approach may have a different result than you anticipate," he told bill supporters.

Mandates do not apply to most people insured through their employer, because they use company plans, which are self-insured plans the state cannot regulate.

Insurance companies may also raise the rates of their plans if the bill becomes law because it would be an additional mandate to fund. However, if cancer is detected in an early stage, it costs much less to treat than cancer discovered at a late stage.

Under HF3234, "at risk for ovarian cancer" includes having a family history of one or more close relatives with the disease or of clusters of female relatives with breast cancer.

Molly Cade, president of Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance, said ovarian cancer is a "sneaky cancer" because it usually presents itself at a very late stage.

Kay Banister-Schaeffer is one example of receiving a late diagnosis. She was diagnosed in stage 3C (stage four is "the end," she said), and was given a 33 percent chance of living five years.

"Because (ovarian cancer screening) was not covered by insurance in some cases, the doctors decided to hold off," she said. "All these costs together are a very small price to pay."

Dr. William Cliby, a gynecologist at the Mayo Clinic, said one study of ovarian cancer screening has shown that survival doubled when women received early screening. He said the average risk is 50 out of 100,000 women.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester) asked how many women in Minnesota would qualify for the screening. Cliby didn't have any hard data, but he said it is a small segment of patients at the Mayo Clinic.

Bradley is chair of the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee, where the bill is headed next.

★ LAW

Legalizing fireworks

A plan to legalize the use of fireworks in Minnesota set off sparks at the House Crime Prevention Committee meeting Feb. 14.

Rep. Mark Holsten (R-Stillwater), the sponsor of HF1543, said Minnesotans already use fireworks and regulating them would allow the state to make sure they are used safely and responsibly.

Opponents said fireworks are dangerous, a fire hazard, and disproportionately injure children.

The bill would allow fireworks approved by the federal government to be sold by licensed dealers from May 1 to July 15 and Dec. 1 to Jan. 2 and used on private land from July 1-7 and Dec. 25 to Jan. 2.

Fireworks would be sold only to adults who have never been convicted of felonies, and would allow novelty devices such as snakes and sparklers to be sold at any store.

Public Safety Commissioner Charlie Weaver said the bill has the full support of Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The governor likes fireworks and believes the bill takes a cautious approach by limiting who can buy them, when they can be purchased, and where they can be used, Weaver said. Ventura is also tired of seeing Wisconsin and other neighboring states collect tax dollars from Minnesota residents, he added.

Patrick Carlon, development director with fireworks manufacturer B.J. Alan Co., said fireworks are safer now than they have ever been, adding that fireworks could go off in a person's hand without them losing any fingers.

But others said that doesn't mean fireworks are safe.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) pointed out that most fireworks injuries affect someone other than the person who lit the firework.

Nyle Zikmund of the Minnesota State Fire Chief's Association said children are most at risk to be injured by fireworks.

He said the bill isn't a restricted approach to legalization, since the state has had a complete ban for 60 years and is now considering legalizing all types of fireworks.

Zikmund and Anne Finn, representing the League of Minnesota Cities, said enforcement and fire suppression would be expensive to state and local communities already strapped for cash with the budget shortfall.

The committee approved the bill and sent it to the House Judiciary Finance Committee.

Commitment redefined

The House Civil Law Committee approved a bill Feb. 11 that would change the law regarding when people can be detained or held in an institution for the mentally ill.

By deleting the word "imminent" from the phrase, "imminent danger," the bill would allow law enforcement agents to detain those who are judged to be in danger of hurting themselves or others.

Current law requires a mentally ill person to be in "imminent danger" of hurting themselves or others before they are restrained or placed in an institution.

Rep. Mindy Greiling, (DFL-Roseville), sponsor of HF2735, said the bill simply cleans

up a bill passed by the Legislature in 2001. Although a conference committee from last year removed the word “imminent,” somewhere along the line, a mistake was made and the word made its way back into the bill.

But opponents of the bill said it is more than a cleanup since removing that word would allow people to be committed more easily.

Nancy Schumacher, executive director of the Citizen’s Commission of Human Rights, said there are many examples of people being committed and held with no evidence that the person is a danger to themselves or others.

Even a man who hasn’t been to the grocery store in a while and has no food in his house could be considered to be a danger to himself since there is evidence that he is not eating anything, she said.

Often, ex-girlfriends, ex-boyfriends, or landlords may attempt to have someone who is not mentally ill committed, said Louise Bouta, executive director of Well Mind Association of Minnesota.

Mental illness is also commonly misdiagnosed and the state should be very careful about whom they commit and how those committed are treated, she said.

The committee approved the bill, and it now goes to the full House.

Reporting gunshot wounds

The House Crime Prevention Committee approved a bill Feb. 7 that would require health professionals to notify the state when they treat gunshot wounds.

The bill (HF1908/SF1297*), sponsored by Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights), now goes to the House floor.

The bill was approved by the committee during the 2001 session but did not receive a vote in front of the full House. It passed the Senate 61-1 on April 18.

It would require that health professionals report any wounds connected with the discharge of a firearm — including bullet wounds and powder burns — to the state commissioner of health. The bill also would eliminate the need for health professionals to send a letter to law enforcement officials reporting the incident if the provider already notified authorities by phone.

The Department of Health would then be required to provide written information about gunshot wounds to law enforcement, under the bill.

McGuire testified the bill is intended to streamline the reporting process and help health officials gather accurate information about gunshot injuries.

Five kinds of trauma are currently reported to the Department of Health: kinetic brain

injuries, spinal cord injuries, firearms injuries, burns, and occupational trauma. Information collected is not broken down by specific individuals, either, officials say. They are viewed in the aggregate.

“I think crime is a public health issue and is something we should all be concerned about,” McGuire said.

★ LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Commission increase

People wishing to serve on the Shakopee Public Utilities Commission would see their chances increased, under a bill passed by the House Feb. 11 by a 123 to 4 vote.

HF2624, sponsored by Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan), increases the commission from three members to five.

Buesgens said that the city of Shakopee has seen tremendous growth over the past decade, as has the entire northern Scott County region. He said population in the city has doubled during the last 10 years and is expected to double again by 2010.

The commission is responsible for the management of publicly owned water and electric utilities in the city. Its members serve three-year staggered terms and are appointed by the city council.

The bill would maintain the staggered terms. One position would expire on April 1, 2004, while the second additional position would expire on April 1, 2005 under the measure.

The measure would prohibit more than one city council member from serving on the commission.

Buesgens said that there is precedent for the bill — the city of Grand Rapids received similar authority in 1999.

The bill, which has yet to be heard by the Senate, would become effective upon local approval.

★ SAFETY

Yield to emergency vehicles

Police should be given greater authority to ticket drivers who refuse to yield to emergency vehicles, a House committee decided Feb. 12.

The House Crime Prevention Committee approved HF2706, a bill that would allow emergency vehicle drivers to call in license plate numbers of vehicles whose drivers refuse to yield the right of way.

Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), the bill sponsor, said he has noticed drivers are increasingly refusing to yield to fire trucks,



St. Paul Fire Chief Tim Fuller testifies before the House Crime Prevention Committee Feb. 12 in support of a bill that would give police greater authority to ticket people who refuse to yield to emergency vehicles.

ambulances, and other emergency vehicles.

The bill is similar to a law that allows school bus drivers to call in license plate numbers of drivers who ignore the bus stop sign, Entenza said.

St. Paul Fire Chief Tim Fuller and about a dozen members of the city’s fire department attended the meeting to show support for the measure.

Fuller said he has been in the business for 31 years but the problem of people refusing to stop has gotten worse lately.

“Over the last few years, for whatever reason, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of vehicles that refuse to yield right of way to emergency vehicles,” he said.

Drivers who do not pull over cause accidents and put emergency workers lives at risk, he said, adding that the job of a firefighter is dangerous enough without having to worry about drivers not stopping.

Tim Regan, a St. Paul firefighter, also spoke in favor of the bill. He said he was involved in an accident last year after a driver tried to cut in front of an ambulance as it was responding to a severe asthma attack at a St. Paul school.

Not only did the driver put his own life and the life of the ambulance crew at risk, but the boy who was having the attack also could have died since another ambulance had to respond to the call, he said.

Rep. Doug Fuller (R-Bemidji) noted that although those testifying on the bill were from

St. Paul, the problem is not confined to the Twin Cities metropolitan area. He has seen drivers from his district disregard emergency vehicles as well, he said.

The bill now moves to the House Transportation Policy Committee.

Fire retardant cigarettes

Fire retardant cigarettes could be the norm in Minnesota by 2004 under a measure approved by the House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Policy Committee Feb. 13.

HF175 failed to win approval from the committee last session, but Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), the committee chair, said at the time he promised the committee would hear the bill again if nothing was done to address the issue on the federal level.

Davids sponsored a House resolution last session calling for Congress to take action on the matter.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), a retired firefighter, said if states begin adopting standards, it's likely there would be more movement federally and tobacco manufacturers would continue to develop cigarettes that extinguish themselves more readily than the current product.

The original bill required the state fire marshal to adopt rules for fire retardant standards for cigarettes before July 1, 2003.

Bob Dahm from the state fire marshal's office said the bill is patterned after legislation passed in New York. He said the New York process is on schedule and standards should be in place by July 1, 2003.

The committee adopted an amendment requiring that 75 percent of the product a cigarette manufacturer sells in the state must comply by July 1, 2004, with the extinction method identified in a document issued from an agency housed in the U.S. Commerce Department.

Mike Stockstead, representing the Minnesota Professional Firefighter's Association, said fires started by cigarettes are "by far" the leading cause of fire fatalities.

But not everyone agrees that the legislation is a good idea. Jim Gould, an attorney representing tobacco manufacturers, said the version of the bill voted down last year was "far less radical" than the amended bill.

"There are some risks that legislatures can't address," he said. "No cigarette will prevent fires from happening. As long as they are lit they are a fire hazard."

Tom Briant, executive director of the Minnesota Wholesalers Marketers Association, said no cigarette currently exists that would

meet the standards set in the bill. He said the bill could force consumers to drive to other states to buy cigarettes or buy them off the Internet.

But Ozment said if the standard is set, tobacco manufacturers will find a way to remain in the market.

"If the will is there, the industry can adapt," he said.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

Planning behind doors

The House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee approved a bill Feb. 11 that would allow public bodies to close their meetings when discussing some security issues.

HF2849, sponsored by Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield), is one of several anti-terrorism measures the House Crime Prevention Committee will compile into one bill after the measures receive the necessary hearings in various committees.

The committee adopted a delete-all amendment that Tuma said was a compromise reached between groups representing county, city, and township officials and groups representing newspapers.

It requires meetings closed because of discussions related to security information to be tape-recorded. If a newspaper or an individual challenges the decision to close the meeting, a judge would review the tape to determine whether it should become part of the public record. The recording must be preserved for two years, under the bill.

Under the bill the public body is only allowed to close the meeting when discussing issues related to security systems, emergency response procedures, and security deficiencies in public services, infrastructure, and facilities if disclosure of the information would pose a clear danger to public safety.

Financial issues related to security matters must still be heard in an open meeting, under the measure.

Current law states that public bodies can close meetings when evaluating the performance of an individual who is subject to its authority or when the closure is authorized by statute or permitted by the attorney-client privilege.

Tuma said the issue was brought to him by a city in his district that was in the process of updating its emergency response plan following Sept. 11, and discovered that all the discussions and information involved were a matter of public record.

The bill now goes to the House Crime Prevention Committee.

Mine inspection reports

Mine inspection reporting will become a little simpler, under the first bill passed by the House this session.

By a 127-0 vote on Feb. 7, the House passed HF2642, sponsored by Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley). It eliminates a requirement that a report produced by an inspector of mines be filed with the Department of Labor and Industry. The report would still be filed with the appropriate county auditor.

Gerlach said department officials, who said that they do not use the report, brought the measure to him and that all the information required is included in other sources. The bill merely removes the department from the distribution list.

The annual report includes information such as the number of visits and inspections made, the number of mines in operation and not in operation, the quantity of ore shipped, the number of workers employed, and the average wages paid for different kinds of work.

There is also some safety information included in the report including the number of accidents, fatal or otherwise, and the cause of the accidents.

In the Senate, the bill awaits a hearing in the State and Local Government Operations Committee.

★ TAXES

Bread tax correction

Some bakery goods were inadvertently added to the list of items subject to sales tax in a 2001 law, but that situation would change under a bill heard by the sales tax division of the House Taxes Committee Feb. 13.

HF2876, sponsored by the Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), would reverse a provision in the 2001 omnibus tax law that made bakery goods made by the seller subject to sales tax.

"When the sales tax was first enacted in 1967 the basic rule was if you eat it or wear it, it ain't taxed," Abrams said. "In the past 35 years there have been changes."

He said one of the most "vexing" decisions made by the Legislature in regards to the sales tax was deciding that food in restaurants would be taxed.

As part of the state's participation in an effort known as the "Streamline Sales Tax" project in 2001 the definition of prepared food was changed in law.

Forty-one states have been involved in the project. The goal is to simplify and modernize local and state sales taxes so vendors are more likely to comply with the laws.

A University of Tennessee study estimates



Sandy King of Jerry's Enterprises in White Bear Lake, *left*, Jim Almsted of Almsted Enterprises in St. Louis Park, *center*, and Lynn Shurman from the Cold Spring Bakery and president of the Minnesota Bakery Association, *right*, fill the table with baked goods as they testify Feb. 13 before the Sales and Income Tax Division of the House Taxes Committee for a bill that would exempt certain bakery products from the definition of prepared food.

that Minnesota lost \$271 million in uncollected sales tax from remote sales last year and that number will be around \$921 million by 2006.

One of the first steps in the streamline project was to come up with common definitions to be used by the states that participate in the project. The project's definition for prepared food included bakery goods made by the seller.

Abrams said it was never the intention for bakery goods to be taxed. "This is a mistake from last year and we ought to correct it," he said.

Jim Almsted, an owner of three Super Valu grocery stores in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, said customers don't understand why bread made in the stores is now subject to sales tax while bread made elsewhere remains tax free.

"As time goes on this will be a bigger and bigger issue," he said.

The Department of Revenue estimates the cost of exempting bakery items would be around \$561,000 in 2002, \$6.9 million in 2003 and more than \$7 million in the following years. Abrams said he believes that number is inflated because of assumptions made in determining the estimate.

HF2876 will be considered for inclusion in a possible omnibus tax bill.

Governor's plan defended

After several hearings in which groups representing various constituencies expressed concern over Gov. Jesse Ventura's proposal to

address the budget deficit, administration officials were given a chance to respond Feb. 12 before the House Taxes Committee.

Matt Smith, Department of Revenue commissioner, said there would be objections to any specific spending cuts or increased tax proposals, but he said Ventura believes it is of great importance to address structural deficits now rather than later.

"Putting the proposal on the table has frankly caused the governor to take a lot of hits on the chin," Smith said.

He said the number of people and groups testifying against the governor's proposal was like a "parade of horrors." But he said that should the Legislature choose to address the deficit for the current biennium by spending down state reserves and not addressing the long-term structural deficit, members would return next year to "another horror story."

Smith said a short-term fix would mean that county, city, school district, and higher education officials would set their budgets on whatever state budget the Legislature approves this session. If the current budget forecast is accurate or if the deficit becomes even larger, then the ability to address the shortfall would become even more difficult.

"The choices would be even starker than they are today with larger tax increases and deeper cuts," Smith said. "But the bad dream doesn't have to happen."

He said by addressing structural deficits this session lawmakers could make the long-term problem "manageable or even solve it."

Smith said Ventura's proposed tax increases, specifically an increase in the gas tax and tax

on cigarettes, were chosen because they are currently lower than the same taxes imposed in neighboring states. Most would take effect July 1, 2003.

Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin) said that if the governor is serious about addressing the long-term problem he could send a message to the Legislature threatening to veto any bill that doesn't deal with the projected shortfall for next biennium.

Information provided by nonpartisan House Research staff shows that only three other states are considering tax increases that far into the future.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), the committee chair, questioned whether the data meant lawmakers in other states were "ducking their responsibilities."

Smith said that he couldn't speak for what was occurring in other states but the administration's proposal dealt with Minnesota's deficit in a "reasonable manner."

Bleak picture

Essential county and city services may have to be cut if Gov. Jesse Ventura's proposed tax increases are approved, local government officials told the House Taxes Committee Feb. 7.

Jim Miller, executive director of the League of Minnesota Cities, said that the governor's proposed reductions in local government aids are "disproportionate and inappropriate."

Miller said the governor's proposal to have the largest aid cuts to those cities whose 2002 levy and aid growth was more than 25 percent above the three-year average local household growth and inflation would make providing essential services in those cities "very difficult."

He said that city levies in some cases increased at greater levels than in the past few years because of rising health care costs and security issues prompted by the events of Sept. 11.

In addition, Miller said because cities have already established their levies for the next year, they will not have the opportunity to make up the cuts in aids by increasing levies.

Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), the committee chair, said he doubted whether Sept. 11 played a role in the aggregate increases in city levy plus aid. Abrams said that the average increase in the past few years was around 5 percent but that same figure for the aggregate levy plus aid was around 9.5 percent.

Abrams said that cities are required to certify their levies by Sept. 15; therefore, the events of Sept. 11 were unlikely to affect levy decisions.

Curtis Jacobsen, the Isanti city administrator, agreed that cities should be expected to participate in helping solve the budget deficit, but he said that in some cities such as his own, cuts based on levy and aid growth were not fair.

Jacobsen said Isanti is experiencing a large population growth and a corresponding growth in housing startups. He said that if the proposed cuts are enacted the city would have to look to such budget savings as not hiring a new police officer, possibly selling the community center, eliminating training budgets, eliminating street lights, and raising building inspection fees.

"There is no pot of gold sitting in the city's coffers," he said.

★ TECHNOLOGY

Funding concern

Minnesota schools so far have no technology funding for this fall, and with the budget deficit, the Legislature is strapped for cash.

A new report has recommended that the state fund technology for schools differently, but House members said they're not ready to take that step.

"We have a serious problem in terms of what we're going to do for next year," said Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), at the Feb. 8 meeting of the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

In the 2001 budget year, the Legislature only appropriated technology funding for fiscal year 2002, deciding to take care of 2003 during this legislative session. But now the state is faced with a nearly \$2 billion deficit. Gov. Jesse Ventura did not include technology funding for schools in his budget recommendations.

Committee Chair Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington) said she wants a signal from the governor's office but no direction has been given.

Technology was not funded last year in part because the committee was waiting for more information, commissioned in a report from the Legislature. The report is titled Permanent Funding for K-12 School and Public Library Telecommunications Access.

To achieve a comprehensive statewide structure the report recommended several steps. Among them is a universal services fund, fueled by a statewide customer telephone surcharge that would generate the revenue needed to support school and library access.

A state agency would coordinate telecommunications infrastructure and local needs, as well as distribute money from the fund.

Seagren said it is a good plan, "but I don't know if we'll go along with a universal access charge to phones."

Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville) brought a different perspective to the table. Wolf serves as chair of the House Regulated Industries Committee, which last year considered legislation for wiring Greater Minnesota with broadband.

"High speed technology is not just a school issue, it's a Greater Minnesota issue," he said. But the bigger issue is, he said, "Who pays for it?"

"Sooner or later we will have some sort of universal service fund for economic development in Greater Minnesota," which would also serve schools and libraries, but, Wolf said, it won't pass Regulated Industries for just those two entities.

"A user fee for K-12 wouldn't happen?" Seagren asked. Wolf replied that it is "highly unlikely" due to little support.

★ TRANSPORTATION

Bus routes at risk

A plan to trim the state's transportation budget was approved Feb. 13 by the House Transportation Finance Committee.

It calls for \$10.5 million in cuts to the 2003 budget for the Department of Transportation, public safety, and the Metropolitan Council. It would also project reducing the base general fund appropriations to those agencies by \$11 million in 2004 and 2005.

Included in committee plan is a \$7 million reduction in operating funds for Metro Transit bus operations.

But Mike Setzer, general manager of Metro Transit, said increasing fares or decreasing service to make up the difference would drive off riders.

The number of people riding buses has risen in the past few years, and the state should encourage the trend, he said.

The Twin Cities is the 14th most congested metropolitan area in the country and encouraging people to ride buses will help alleviate the crowded streets, he said.

Metro Transit recently increased bus fares by a quarter, and raising them another quarter would mean prices would go from \$1 to \$1.50 in about 15 months, Setzer said.

"Fare increases drive riders away. Raising them steeply and often drives them away quickly and permanently."

Decreasing service will also cause people to stop riding, he added, noting there were about 1,500 complaints of overcrowding on buses last year, and reducing service could cause people to get fed up.

The plan also calls for a reduction in state assistance for bus service in Duluth.

Donna Allan, director of office transit with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, said the cuts could force Duluth to eliminate night and weekend bus service or increase fees.

Also at risk is the Riverview Corridor Project, a busway that would connect South St. Paul to the Mall of America.

The committee budget would reduce money previously set aside for the project from \$44 million to \$4 million.

Tony Schertler worked on the project with the Office of Planning and Economic Development for the city of St. Paul. He encouraged the committee to leave funding for the project in place.

The city has already spent time and money on the project and doesn't want to be stuck with an unfunded project, he said.

A bill reflecting the decisions of the committee was not formally introduced when this issue of *Session Weekly* went to press.

Expansion sought

Funding is being sought for a road reconstruction that proponents say would increase safety and would aid in expanding the economy in parts of southwestern Minnesota.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) presented HF2670 to the House Transportation Policy Committee Feb. 7. No vote was taken on the matter.

The bill would require the Department of Transportation to designate Highway 23 from St. Cloud to Interstate 90 as a high-priority interregional corridor, and to reconstruct it as a multi-lane divided highway. It calls for all segments to be completed, under construction, or included in the statewide transportation improvement program by Jan. 1, 2013. No project costs are included in the bill.

"This is a tricky bill in that specific road funding is sort of taboo around here," said Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), the committee chair. He expressed concern that approving the bill would set a precedent when dealing with other highway projects such as U.S. highways 14 and 212.

Gordon Crowe, director of government and community affairs for Marshall-based Schwan's, said the company ran more than 28,000 semi-tractor trailers in and out of Marshall last year. He said the company is totally dependent on over-the-road transportation of its goods and it is imperative that highways in the area be improved.

"We want to be able to adequately connect with other major state and interstate highways," he said.

Marshall is located on Minnesota Highway 23 in southwestern Minnesota.

In addition to economic concerns, Dan Thompson, president of Minnesota Corn Processors talked about safety. Noting that there were about 200,000 semi-tractor trailer trips in and out of the company's Marshall refinery last year, he said, "It's very unsafe to have 100,000 semis enter onto a 55 mph highway." He said a child of an employee was killed there when hit by a truck.

The stretch of Highway 23 between St. Cloud and Willmar, considered an at-risk corridor by MnDOT officials, is scheduled to become a four-lane roadway by January 2004, at a cost of \$72 million. However, the stretch from Willmar to Marshall will still be a two-lane road.

Randy Halvorson, director of MnDOT's program delivery group, said all interregional corridors in the state are to be revisited in 2003.

"We've heard this story before from other corridors," he said. "Ultimately the size of this pie (made available for road funding) must be increased."

What's on the Web

Tracking votes

The House Web site is offering a new feature that will help constituents track votes on specific pieces of legislation more easily.

If you are looking for a specific bill, follow these steps to find the vote totals on the Internet:

- Go to the main House Web site (www.house.mn).
- Either type in a bill number or go to the link labeled "Bills" and fill out the form.
- A screen will pop up with several links. The third link down says "Recorded Roll Call Floor Votes." Click on it to view the votes.

You will also find all roll call votes on amendments to any particular bill.

Previously, the only way to obtain vote totals was to look through the House Journal for the day on which the bill was heard.

New Web site addresses

World Wide Web addresses for the Minnesota Legislature are now shorter and easier to access.

Previously, the addresses were longer and more cumbersome. However, you can now access the pages through the following addresses:

- Minnesota House — www.house.mn
- Minnesota Senate — www.senate.mn
- Minnesota Legislature — www.leg.mn

If you have the pages bookmarked, you should be directed there automatically.

Although the Web addresses are shorter, this change does not affect e-mail addresses for representatives, senators, and staff. You must still use the full address.



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Chief Clerk of the House

211 Capitol 296-2314

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Sergeant at Arms, House

45 State Office Building 296-4860

Committee Hotline, House 296-9283

Information, Senate

231 Capitol 296-0504

Toll free 1-888-234-1112

TTY, Senate 296-0250

Toll free 1-888-234-1112

Secretary of the Senate

231 Capitol 296-2343

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Committee Hotline, Senate 296-8088

Legislative Reference Library

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Governor's Office

130 Capitol 296-3391

Attorney General's Office

102 Capitol 296-6196

Secretary of State's Office

180 State Office Building 296-2803

Capitol Security

B-5 Capitol 296-6741

Emergency 296-2100

What's the score?

Plan that alters the way insurance companies decide who to cover is headed for the House floor

By DAVID MAEDA

Personal borrowing and spending habits may be playing more of a factor in determining how much consumers pay for automobile insurance than the number of accidents or traffic violations people been involved in.

Some lawmakers don't think the insurance underwriting practice known as credit scoring is a fair way to determine premiums that drivers and homeowners pay.

However, insurance industry representatives say there exists a statistical correlation between those with poor credit histories and those who tend to file more claims.

As it was introduced, HF2492 sponsored by Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), would prohibit the use of credit scoring or other credit information for underwriting purposes for homeowners and automobile insurance.

The House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Policy Committee held hearings on the bill Feb. 5 and Feb. 13. Davids, the committee chair, said that to increase the chances of something being done this session he worked with all sides and incorporated their input into a successful amendment adopted Feb. 13.

The amended bill would prohibit insurers from rejecting, canceling, or not renewing automobile or homeowners insurance in whole or in part on the basis of credit information.

Davids, who is an insurance agent, said that in a perfect world credit scoring would be prohibited in underwriting policies but the amended bill only improved current state law.

"As amended this is the toughest credit scoring bill in the country," he said.

Commerce Commissioner Jim Bernstein said Feb. 5 that credit scoring is different from a credit report. Credit scoring was developed by mortgage lenders to determine the risk of an applicant in defaulting on a loan.

Bernstein said that despite numerous attempts the commerce department has been unable to get the industry to disclose what exactly goes into determining a credit score because it is proprietary information. While



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Bob Johnson, left, representing the Insurance Federation of Minnesota, Doug Franzen, center, representing the National Association of Independent Insurers, and Dominic Sposeto, right, representing the Minnesota Independent Insurance Agents, testify for a compromise bill on credit scoring during a Feb. 13 hearing of the House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Committee.

there may indeed be a statistical correlation between a person's credit score and their ability to drive, he said, such a correlation is "spurious" with no common sense connection between the two.

The amended bill would require insurers who use credit scoring in their underwriting to file the scoring methodology and information that supports the insurer's use of a credit score with the department.

It also prohibits credit scoring if the scoring incorporates gender, race, nationality, or

religion of an insured person or applicant.

Gary LaVasseur, a deputy commissioner of the department, said the use of credit scoring does not add to the overall costs of insurance premiums in Minnesota, but rather shifts costs from some payers to others.

"Some benefit, some will suffer substantially," he said. "It doesn't shift costs to those with traffic violations but to those with poor credit scores."

Bernstein said a recent issue of *Consumer Reports* indicates that around 40 percent of credit reports contain inaccuracies. He said it is therefore likely that many credit scores are also inaccurate.

John Lowe, who testified Feb. 5 in favor of the bill, said his son received a notice last November from his insurance company saying his automobile policy was being canceled. After some investigation they discovered there had been eight claims made on the policy in the past four years. Two of those were from others in the family, but six were unexplained.

Lowe said his son subsequently found another insurance company and around the same time qualified for a home loan. However, the new insurer dropped the automobile policy because his son received a poor credit score.

"His credit was good enough to qualify for a home loan, but not for auto insurance," Lowe said. "My son works hard. He is a responsible young man. But he can't afford higher insurance."


John Diehl, representing the Alliance of American Insurers, opposed the original bill but supports the amended version.

He said the industry is "closely looking" at the use of credit scoring. He said that data shows a correlation between a person's credit score with the number of claims that are filed. But he said that no underwriting data has a clear cause and effect correlation.

Doug Franzen, representing the National Association of Independent Insurers, supports the amended bill, saying that even though it was a "restrictive law" it did not make an absolute ban on the use of credit scoring in the industry.

"Politics is the art of the possible," Franzen said. "(The bill) places a significant burden on insurers, but for lack of a better phrase, it forces us to do the right thing."

Even though Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) said he would support the bill, he thought the amendment conceded too much to the insurance industry.

The bill now goes to the House floor. 

Change in the air

Plan would call for the Metropolitan Airports Commission to become a state agency

By DAVID MAEDA

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC), governing authority of the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport and its reliever airports, would become a state agency, under a proposal approved by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee Feb. 8. The key goal of the bill (HF2568), sponsored by Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan), is legislative oversight of the commission.

"The governing structure of the MAC is now outdated. It's time for the Legislature to take a more active role in its oversight," Wilkin said. If signed into law, the bill would take effect July 1, 2003.

Wilkin's original proposal was to have the commission become part of the state Department of Transportation. But the bill was amended to make it a standalone agency.

Created by the Legislature in 1943, the commission receives no state appropriation and is funded through user fees. Jeff Hamiel, the commission's executive director, said that Northwest Airlines pays approximately 80 percent of those fees.

The MAC consists of 14 commissioners and a chairperson, appointed primarily by the governor and also the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The commission sets policies for the operation of its airports, including Minneapolis-St. Paul International, Airlake in Lakeville, Anoka County-Blaine, Crystal, Flying Cloud in Eden Prairie, Lake Elmo, and the St. Paul Downtown Airport. The system is the third busiest in the country.

Under the bill, the commission makeup would be the same, with the executive director appointed by the governor, subject to legislative approval.

Wilkin said the airport is a "first class facility" that services the entire Upper Midwest, but changes over the years, and particularly the events of Sept. 11, have made it time to take control away from "a small quasi-governmental body with no accountability."

Hamiel said that prior to Sept. 11 the commission was proposing a budget of \$102 million for 2002. After the terrorism attack the proposal was cut to \$85 million.

He said there have been "dramatic cuts to reduce the costs of operations" at the airport including cutting 81 part-time or temporary employees. In addition, he said more than 2,000 workers expecting to work on airport construction projects were not working on those projects.



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

A bill proposed in the House would make the Metropolitan Airports Commission, governing body of the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport, a state agency.

Roger Cohen, managing director of state government affairs for the Air Transport Association, a trade organization for the principal U.S. airlines, said the industry is still suffering the effects of Sept. 11 and as a result the nation's economy continues to suffer.

"As the airlines go, so goes the nation. We are the first domino," Cohen said.

He said more than 80,000 airline employees nationwide have been furloughed because passenger traffic is down 14 percent from last year, airplane capacity has decreased 13 percent from one year ago, and ticket prices are at their lowest level since 1992.

Other states have already taken action to help the airline industry, he said. For example, Hawaii waived landing fees to "send a message that Hawaii cherishes a healthy airlines industry."

Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls) asked Cohen if he was testifying for the state to provide concessions to the industry.

Cohen said that he was providing background information so lawmakers can make decisions based on the importance of the relationship between the industry and those

that govern airport operations.

"The relationship between a hub airport and a hub carrier is like a marriage. There are good days and there are bad days. But you work together to make things succeed as a partnership," he said.

MAC Chairman Charles Nichols said the commission's current structure allows it flexibility to address issues that may arise.

Nichols said he wasn't sure why the changes in the bill were being proposed. "I'm very concerned when an organization prostitutes Sept. 11 for their own purposes," he said.

Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City) took exception to Nichols comments saying it was "symbolic of the problem" that exists between the MAC and the industry. Osskopp alluded to comments from airport tenants that the commission has not been responding to their

concerns adequately.

Wilkin said he was sorry if Nichols thought the bill was "exploiting Sept. 11," but the airline industry is "in peril right now" and the bill was


meant to address those concerns.

Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake) offered a successful amendment that would require the legislative auditor to conduct a financial audit of the commission. He said one of the goals and objectives of the bill was to gain "insight in the record keeping" and the amendment would further that goal.

Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) offered an unsuccessful amendment to Mares amendment that would have made the auditor's evaluation the entire bill. Kahn said before the Legislature makes any decision it should have that information.

Speaking in support of Kahn's amendment and against the bill, Rep. Mark Gleason (DFL-Richfield) said he was concerned about increasing the state budget by "\$100 million to \$200 million." He is also concerned that making the MAC a state agency would mean even less local control over issues such as noise mitigation.

No documents reflecting the fiscal impact of the bill were provided at the meeting.

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

The best deal

Health care providers seek aid in negotiating with insurance companies, but some say consumers would be neglected

By SARAH MCKENZIE

A health insurance company would be required to disclose terms of a contract with a health care providers, under a bill the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee approved Feb. 12.

Rep. Lynda Boudreau (R-Faribault), sponsor of HF2925, said the bill is the product of concerns raised by providers, who say they lack the power to negotiate with the insurance companies.

The bill comes on the heels of hearings held by the committee around the state last fall to address rising health care costs.

Supporters say the bill would arm providers with more information so they could better determine the best insurance plans for their needs. However, opponents argued that the bill would illegally interfere with the companies' rights to negotiate with the providers.

Some also criticized the bill for failing to address consumers or employers directly, both parties with an enormous stake in the contractual agreements made between insurance companies and health care providers.

"This legislation would perpetuate the ongoing battle between the providers and health plans at the expense of the consumers," said Carolyn Jones, representing the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce.

Provisions of the bill include:

- requiring claims administrators and insurance companies to respond to provider requests for prior authorization of health care services without "unreasonable delay;"
- mandating that insurance companies give a provider a copy of a contract and allow them to review it for 90 days before they agree to sign it;
- requiring health plan companies to give providers 90 days' notice of any proposed changes to the contract; and
- making health plan companies and other third parties give providers prompt notice if a claim is going to be delayed.

The committee also adopted an amendment that directs the commissioner of health to report to the Legislature by December 2002 on

how to best provide consumers with information about the costs of treatments from a particular provider.

While the potential cost savings of the regulations outlined in the bill are unclear, providers said it would make them more equal partners with the insurance companies at the bargaining table.

"If you're talking about cost-sharing, then you have to share information with consumers," said Liz Quam-Berne, executive vice president of Advocates for Marketplace Options for Mainstreet, a nonprofit organization made up of provider and business representatives.

Providers don't have the means to negotiate fair contracts, Quam-Berne said, leaving some feeling they have signed off on

dentists since 1993.

Proponents of the contract bill further said providers often face unreasonable delays in reimbursement even when the services have been authorized.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) said the providers have been squeezed financially over the past decade, seeing employee costs go up as reimbursement rates have gone down.

Abeler said he didn't understand why the insurance companies were apparently reneging on commitments to pay claims when that's the business they had agreed to go into.

Rep. Mary Ellen Otremba (DFL-Long Prairie) said she has heard from constituents who had been authorized for a particular treatment or procedure only to find out that the insurance plan had changed the codes and decided against covering it.

Meanwhile, opponents of the bill said it fails to drive down the cost of health care for employers and consumers.

Some even speculated that it would add administrative expenses.

Jan Lysen, who works on contracts at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, said the bill

***"There are two sides of the coin;
we have to look at cost and quality."***

— Rep. Bill Haas

"involuntary servitude" to the insurance companies.

Richard Davenport, representing the Minnesota Medical Group Association, said smaller health care providers, in particular, have a hard time securing fair commercial contracts.

"It's economic suicide for the provider to say 'no' to these contracts," Davenport said.

Dr. Kim Hart, a dentist in Farmington and a member of the Minnesota Dental Association, said dentists are often saddled with costs that aren't clearly outlined up front by the health insurance companies.

As a result, she said few dental school graduates in Minnesota, many of whom leave school heavily in debt, want to stay in the state and be burdened with the added costs.

Minnesota leads the nation in a declining per-capita rate of dentists, according to the American Dental Association. The state has seen a nearly 8 percent drop in the number of

would require her department to increase its staff size dramatically to keep up with information requests.


"This just affects the supplier and provider," said Duane Benson, representing the Minnesota Business Partnership, who predicted that employers would see higher costs.

On a similar note, Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) said the bill neglects to address all of the cost drivers of health care, particularly those passed on to consumers and employers.

"There are two sides of the coin," Haas said. "We have to look at cost and quality."

Michael Scandrett, representing the Minnesota Council on Health Plans, also voiced opposition to the bill.

"This would increase costs and interfere with the marketplace," he said.

The bill now moves to the House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Policy Committee. 

Not this year

Plan to increase competition for local telephone service is put on hold by a House committee

BY THERESA STAHL

Legislators have pulled the plug on two bills that would rewrite the rules for local telephone service, essentially giving smaller companies a chance for business in the residential market.

"I'm not comfortable pursuing legislation with having no clue of the unintended consequences," said Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville), chair of the House Regulated Industries Committee, after hearing testimony at the committee's Feb. 11 meeting.

The legislation would force local market dominators — Qwest in Minnesota — to break into smaller affiliates. The intent is to create a competitive residential marketplace, giving choice to consumers, and ultimately driving down prices.

HF2778 and HF2919, sponsored by Wolf and Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris) respectively, would require the structural separation of a carrier dominating the residential market, as well as establish penalties for local competition violations.

For example, a carrier could be fined \$100 to \$100,000 for each day it impedes the development of competition by "refusing or delaying interconnections or providing inferior connections to another telecommunications service provider," Wolf's bill reads.

Both bills would also establish quality service standards and a list of prohibited practices for all providers.

Wolf's bill would create a telecommunications "master," an administrative law judge who would be responsible for handling competition complaints and service issues.

Jennings' bill would require a certain standard of customer service and would require service providers to keep customer information confidential. Currently there are no restrictions in state law as to what telephone companies can do with customer information, such as who a person is calling and how often.

Anthony Mendoza, deputy commissioner of the Department of Commerce, said the

department is "generally supportive of both bills."

Teresa Lynch, representing AT&T, was in favor of the legislation. Lynch said that most Minnesota residents couldn't change their local service provider if they wanted to.

"These are competitors that want to give your constituents an option," she said, referring to proponents of the bills.

Presently, Qwest is the local service provider for about one-third of all the telephone lines in the state, according to the nonpartisan House Research Department. Lynch said AT&T wants to enter the local service market, but residents cannot switch providers as they can with long distance service.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) asked why the companies wanted residential customers. "Isn't all of the money in businesses?"

"The residential customer is very attractive when you consider high speed access," additional phone lines, and other services, Lynch replied.

Mark Joyce, a representative for MCI WorldCom, also testified in support of the legislation.

"If we would see better wholesale service, then companies would be competing for service and prices will be driven down," Joyce said.

But rates in the state aren't set by Qwest alone, said John Stanoch, vice president of Qwest Minnesota.

The Public Utilities Commission sets the rate for standard phone service because Qwest is a monopoly. However, there is little regulation of extra phone services, such as call waiting and caller identification.

Stanoch opposed both bills, saying "the provisions of the legislation goes way beyond structural separation."

Joanne Johnson, external affairs specialist for Frontier Communications, said her company is OK with the

idea of a telecommunications master, but she "always thought structural separation was an overzealous operation."

"We don't see the necessity for this legislation in either form," Johnson said. "We are very good citizens ... we like being part of the social fabric of communities."

Mitch Wilk, the former chair of the California Public Utilities Commission, presented a different perspective. He said the proposed telephone structural separation is parallel to California's energy deregulation plan, which failed and led to complete loss of energy in parts of the state.

"The way the scheme was developed is why it blew up," he said. "It was irreversible."

Wilk said the bill would ultimately raise rates, and government policy would be like drawing "artificial lines in the sand."

"So what happens if you're wrong? It will be, in my opinion, impossible to correct it."



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Teresa Lynch, who represents AT&T, testifies before the House Regulated Industries Committee Feb. 11 in support of two telecommunications bills.



Monday, February 11

HF3126—Evans (DFL)

Education Policy

Diesel fuel emissions notice provided to local school districts and parents.

HF3127—Mares (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Pension fund facilities lease authorized to deferred compensation service providers.

HF3128—Hackbarth (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Big game hunting ammunition provision modified.

HF3129—Holsten (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Individual sewage treatment classification clarified, and waste tire grant and loan program abolished.

HF3130—Holberg (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Family planning grant funds abortion services use prohibited, organizations receiving funds prohibited from engaging in certain activities, and audits required.

HF3131—Lenczewski (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Hennepin County supplemental retirement plan modified to allow county administrator to approve certain participant requests.

HF3132—Lenczewski (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Phosphorous lawn fertilizer sale and use limitations provided, and money appropriated.

HF3133—Lipman (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

State procurement competitive bidding for building and construction contract references codified.

HF3134—Erickson (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Green Lake floodgate project grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3135—Clark, J. (R)

Transportation Policy

Highways; three state highways transferred and one state highway vacated.

HF3136—Daggett (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Finance

Local natural and scenic areas and regional parks funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3137—Kuisle (R)

Transportation Policy

High-speed rail transportation provided.

HF3138—Swenson (R)

Civil Law

Family farm division provided in event of marriage dissolution.

HF3139—Dawkins (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Medical assistance spenddown standard increased for the aged, blind, and disabled.

HF3140—Murphy (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Local government aid city revenue base increased for certain cities.

HF3141—Mullery (DFL)

Taxes

Minneapolis library and planetarium construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF3142—Swenson (R)

Agriculture Policy

Food rules federal uniformity provided.

HF3143—Sertich (DFL)

Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development

Economic development obsolete provisions eliminated, world trade center use modified, urban initiative program modified, wastewater and drinking water funding coordinated, and bonding authority increased.

HF3144—Mariani (DFL)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Emissions limitations established for electric generating facilities, and emissions reductions evaluated and implemented.

HF3145—Anderson, B. (R)

Transportation Policy

Trunk highway corridor-protection demonstration project established, report required, and money appropriated.

HF3146—Stanek (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Scratch-off lottery game provided to fund anti-terrorism initiatives.

HF3147—Clark, K. (DFL)

Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Youth employment provisions modified for certain construction projects paid for with grant funds.

HF3148—Rhodes (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Speech-language pathologist and audiologist registration requirements modified.

HF3149—Sertich (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

St. Louis County civil service system repealed, and personnel administration system established.

HF3150—Seagren (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Kindergarten through grade 12 funding provisions referendum equalization levy provisions modified.

HF3151—Gunther (R)

Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy

State departments reorganized and restructured, Department of Workforce and Economic Development created, Department of Economic Security and Department of Trade and Economic Development eliminated, and duties transferred.

HF3152—Evans (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance

Special education cross-subsidy revenue levy authorized for unfunded special education costs.

HF3153—Wasiluk (DFL)

K-12 Education Finance

District referendum revenue allowance reduction process modified.

HF3154—Holsten (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Gaming machines provided, and horse racing purse payments provided.

HF3155—Fuller (R)

Higher Education Finance

Bemidji State University improvements funded, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3156—Fuller (R)

Higher Education Finance

Bemidji; headwaters regional science center construction provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3157—Ness (R)

Agriculture & Rural Development Finance

Environmental, natural resources, and agricultural funding and reductions provided; programs established and modified; activities and practices regulated; fees provided; and money appropriated.

HF3158—Gunther (R)

Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Greater Minnesota redevelopment program established.

HF3159—Rifenberg (R)

Taxes

Income tax; commissioner of revenue authority to terminate income tax reciprocity eliminated.

HF3160—Mares (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Local police and paid firefighter pension plan provisions clarified and obsolete provisions repealed.

HF3161—Mares (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Social security coverage provisions recodified for public employees.

HF3162—Marquart (DFL)

Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy

Petroleum products technical specifications modified.

HF3163—Lipman (R)

Civil Law

Revisor's bill correcting erroneous, ambiguous, and omitted text and obsolete references.

HF3164—Seifert (R)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Teacher early retirement incentive provided.

HF3165—Murphy (DFL)

Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy

Teachers Retirement Association administrative and technical provisions modified, survivor benefits enhanced, dependent child benefits expanded, and qualified part-time teacher program modified.

HF3166—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Human services continuing care programs technical provisions modified.

HF3167—Pugh (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
South St. Paul Port Crosby Mississippi riverfront park funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3168—Fuller (R)
Crime Prevention
DUI mandatory sentencing clarified, sex offender treatment co-payment provided, and incarcerated deaths record provisions modified.

HF3169—Vandever (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Housing; municipal low-income housing authority specified.

HF3170—McElroy (R)
K-12 Education Finance
School district building lease levy use expanded.

HF3171—Sykora (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Full-day kindergarten study required.

HF3172—Sykora (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Referendum revenue cap inflationary adjustment provided.

HF3173—Gunther (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Madelia business incubator building improvements grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3174—Wasiluk (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Gambling lawful purpose expenditures modified.

HF3175—Wasiluk (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
Student rental of materials policy requested of the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

HF3176—Hilstrom (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Insurance; use of “runners” to procure clients prohibited in certain cases involving motor vehicle insurance, and felony penalty provided.

HF3177—Hilstrom (DFL)
Education Policy
Single-member school board election districts established based on population.

HF3178—Slawik (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Child tax credit established.

HF3179—Slawik (DFL)
Taxes
At-home infant care program annual income clarified.

HF3180—Koskinen (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Medical assistance income eligibility modified, and modified sliding scale established for children in MinnesotaCare.

HF3181—Nornes (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Children’s mental health subcommittee to the state advisory council on mental health membership modified.

HF3182—Nornes (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Fergus Falls; Minnesota veterans home dementia/wander wing addition funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3183—Johnson, R. (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Pesticide application provisions modified.

HF3184—Mulder (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Facility grant provided to consolidated district representing Independent School District Nos. 411, 402, 403, 404, 418, 584, and 409; bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3185—Skoe (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Red Lake Indian reservation economic development facility construction funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3186—Skoe (DFL)
Taxes
Agricultural property tax class rate adjusted, and market value maximum and phase-out provisions modified.

HF3187—Paulsen (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Eden Prairie additional on-sale liquor licenses authorized.

HF3188—Harder (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 836, Butterfield, fund transfer authorized.

HF3189—Workman (R)
Transportation Policy
Street-sweeping vehicles defined as special mobile equipment for registration purposes.

HF3190—Stanek (R)
Civil Law
Juvenile courts required to send juvenile petition data to the statewide supervision system.

HF3191—Abrams (R)
Taxes
Taxation policy and administrative provisions modified.

HF3192—Bakk (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Cook County road and bridge levy expenditure authorized.

HF3193—McElroy (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Dentistry practice act violations reporting to the board of dentistry required, and complainant immunity provided.

HF3194—McElroy (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Economic development and jobs programs and appropriations modified, funds transferred, and programs eliminated.

HF3195—Pawlenty (R)
Taxes
Income tax credit provided for land donated to the state for conservation purposes.

HF3196—Mares (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
State procurement law ethical provisions clarified, state archaeology rulemaking authorized, obsolete technology authority repealed, and Citizens Council on Voyageurs National Park statutory authority repealed.

HF3197—Peterson (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Biodiesel fuel oil defined, and production incentives provided.

HF3198—Peterson (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Childcare assistance eligibility clarified relating to self-employed farmers.

HF3199—Kuisle (R)
Transportation Policy
Transportation provisions modified relating to closing highway right-of-way to all-terrain vehicles, motor carrier regulatory provisions, and budget reduction of construction district 1.

HF3200—Goodno (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Dentist and dental hygienist guest licenses and dental assistant guest registration established.

HF3201—Peterson (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Biodiesel fuel oil defined, and fuel tax reduction provided for the use of biodiesel fuel blends.

HF3202—Smith (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Delano Public Utilities Commission increased to five members.

HF3203—Kuisle (R)
Transportation Policy
Vehicle and bicycle registration provisions modified, dealer transactions regulated, motor carrier fuel tax provisions reorganized, snowplow driver license exemption modified, and driver’s license for emancipated minors authorized.

HF3204—Clark, J. (R)
Transportation Policy
Transportation public works contracts regulated.

HF3205—Clark, J. (R)
Transportation Policy
Public works contracts regulated.

HF3206—McElroy (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Health commissioner responsibilities eliminated in certain instances and penalty limits for certain violations increased.

HF3207—Kubly (DFL)
Agriculture Policy
Feedlot prohibition made permanent relating to open-air and other swine waste lagoons.

HF3208—Schumacher (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Seasonal, agriculture-related business sign placement in highway right-of-way authorized.

HF3209—Holsten (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Petrofund contractor and consultant provisions modified and application requirements for certain petrofund reimbursements modified.

HF3210—Erickson (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
White deer taking prohibited.

HF3211—Erickson (R)
Education Policy
Third and fifth grade comprehensive assessment system tests comparison provided.

HF3212—Goodno (R) Environment & Natural Resources Finance Red River basin water management funding provided, and money appropriated.	HF3223—Harder (R) Health & Human Services Policy Out-of-state facilities for children with severe emotional disturbance certification plan required.	HF3235—Murphy (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Volunteer firefighter statewide lump sum retirement plan task force created.	HF3247—Johnson, J. (R) K-12 Education Finance Kindergarten through grade 12 unneeded mandates eliminated.
HF3213—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Policy Mental health services coverage inconsistencies corrected for services under provided health plans.	HF3224—Abrams (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Hennepin County Health and Medical center contracting authorized with public or private organizations..	HF3236—Jacobson (R) Health & Human Services Policy Human services continuing care programs modified.	HF3248—Stang (R) Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Minimum wage; companionship services definitions modified.
HF3214—Johnson, J. (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Plymouth Volunteer Firefighter's Relief Association ancillary benefits made subject to general law.	HF3225—Sertich (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Finance Ironworld capital project bonds issued and money appropriated.	HF3237—Evans (DFL) K-12 Education Finance School building grant funding authorized, program criteria modified, bonds issued, and money appropriated.	HF3249—Hilty (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Alcohol and drug counselor licensing written case presentation and oral examination component waived for specified individuals.
HF3215—Abeler (R) Health & Human Services Policy Human services exclusions from licensure, due process, background study requirements, and training clarified; fair hearing requirements amended; and error provision relating to therapeutic conduct to vulnerable adults clarified.	HF3226—Workman (R) Transportation Policy Motorcycles authorized to run red light under certain circumstances.	HF3238—Johnson, J. (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Guaranteed energy savings contracts authorized.	HF3250—Wagenius (DFL) Taxes Bakery products including bread, and fruit products, specifically exempted from the prepared food sales tax.
HF3216—Dehler (R) K-12 Education Finance School board approval of additional operating revenue permitted.	HF3227—Workman (R) Crime Prevention Return of seized property required if criminal charges are not filed within 30 days.	HF3239—Otremba (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Children's preventive care quality standards required.	HF3251—Otremba (DFL) Agriculture Policy Grain inspection powers modified, interstate cooperation provided, and grain buyer definition clarified.
HF3217—Larson (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Gambling lawful purpose expenditures modified.	HF3228—Osthoff (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Finance Metro greenways and natural areas program funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.	HF3240—Clark, J. (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Electronic voting authorized for cooperatives.	HF3252—Harder (R) Regulated Industries Crop residue biomass electricity incentives provided.
HF3218—Molnau (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Design-build contracts and pre-selection construction contracts provided.	HF3229—Holsten (R) Taxes Income tax credit provided for land donated for conservation purposes, and property tax classification provided for certain unimproved land bordering a lake.	HF3241—Westrom (R) Agriculture Policy Livestock development program established.	HF3253—Davids (R) Environment & Natural Resources Finance Fillmore County farm acquisition provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.
HF3219—Seagren (R) K-12 Education Finance Federal education program annual appropriations required.	HF3230—Huntley (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Medical assistance eligibility clarified for children under the age of 19.	HF3242—Bernardy (DFL) K-12 Education Finance School district swimming pool operational costs levy authorized.	HF3254—Harder (R) K-12 Education Finance Independent School District No. 2898, Westbrook-Walnut Grove, disabled access levy extended.
HF3220—Buesgens (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Metropolitan local comprehensive plan housing requirements modified.	HF3231—Rhodes (R) Crime Prevention DWI test provisions modified, electronic forms permitted, and expedited approval of DWI testing devices authorized.	HF3243—Bernardy (DFL) Taxes Local government health care insurance premium levies not subjected to levy limits.	HF3255—Tingelstad (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Military service credit purchase payment amounts in the Minnesota state retirement system modified.
HF3221—Eastlund (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Minnesota Code of Military Justice revised.	HF3232—Clark, J. (R) Transportation Finance Minnesota transit operating and capital assistance funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.	HF3244—Kahn (DFL) Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Cuba; Congress memorialized by resolution to enact legislation to remove trade, financial, and travel restrictions relating to Cuba.	HF3256—Mullery (DFL) Civil Law Crane operation by individuals who do not possess crane operator certificates prohibited and penalties provided.
HF3222—Ruth (R) Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Property insurance; issuing or requiring excess property insurance prohibited, and real estate appraisals regulated.	HF3233—Haas (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Chartered performance organizations within state agencies authorized.	HF3245—Boudreau (R) Health & Human Services Policy Health care programs technical provisions modified.	HF3257—Davids (R) Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy Financial institution detached facilities, charges and fees, and mortgage prepayment penalties regulated.
HF3223—Clark, K. (DFL) Health & Human Services Policy Ovarian cancer surveillance testing health insurance coverage required.		HF3246—Goodwin (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy State government consultant use limited, savings added to the general education basic formula allowance, and money appropriated.	

<p>HF3258—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Policy County agencies not required to provide income support or cash assistance when specified state programs fail to do so.</p>	<p>HF3270—Krinkie (R) State Government Finance Department of Employee Relations abolished and duties transferred.</p>	<p>HF3282—Jennings (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Cities authorized to establish cartways.</p>	<p>HF3293—Swenson (R) Transportation Finance Minnesota Valley regional rail authority freight rail improvement funding provided, and money appropriated.</p>
<p>HF3259—Opatz (DFL) Higher Education Finance Tuition reciprocity agreement data collection required.</p>	<p>HF3271—Solberg (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Finance Nashauk stabilization pond facility wastewater diversion project funded, bonds issued, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF3283—Mahoney (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Election judges not affiliated with a major political party appointment authorized.</p>	<p>HF3294—Seifert (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Public pension prior service credit purchase authorization expiration date extended.</p>
<p>HF3260—Fuller (R) Environment & Natural Resources Finance Paul Bunyan state trail construction funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF3272—Mares (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Retirement provisions reorganized and revised.</p>	<p>HF3284—Goodno (R) Health & Human Services Finance Terrorism preparedness funding provided, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF3295—Abeler (R) K-12 Education Finance Health and safety program broadened to include school safety costs.</p>
<p>HF3261—Sertich (DFL) Jobs & Economic Development Finance Central range economic development grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF3273—Blaine (R) Transportation Policy North Star commuter rail corridor extension study matching funds provided, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF3285—Abrams (R) Taxes Sales tax exemption provided for delivery or distribution charges for printed materials.</p>	<p>HF3296—Thompson (DFL) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Social security administrative duties shifted from department of employee relations to the public employees retirement association and employee dependent data classified.</p>
<p>HF3262—Fuller (R) Crime Prevention DWI vehicle forfeiture standards and procedures clarified.</p>	<p>HF3274—Blaine (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Military service; protections provided under federal law for persons called or ordered to active service.</p>	<p>HF3286—Leppik (R) Higher Education Finance Higher education programs provided, and previous appropriations reduced.</p>	<p>HF3297—Rhodes (R) K-12 Education Finance School districts authorized to participate in the alternative facilities program.</p>
<p>HF3263—Holberg (R) Civil Law Sexual psychopath or sexually dangerous person civil commitment; commissioner data access authorized for purposes of determination.</p>	<p>HF3275—Gerlach (R) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Citizen water quality monitoring encouraged.</p>	<p>HF3287—Bakk (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Policy St. Louis County school trust land bordering public water public sale authorized.</p>	<p>HF3298—Swenson (R) Agriculture Policy Agricultural chemical response and reimbursement law provisions changed.</p>
<p>HF3264—Carlson (DFL) Education Policy School district employee early retirement incentive provided.</p>	<p>HF3276—Boudreau (R) Health & Human Services Finance Tribal health professionals established as medical assistance providers, and certain health services reimbursed.</p>	<p>HF3288—Abrams (R) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Metropolitan area transit and paratransit capital expenditures annual financing provided.</p>	<p>HF3299—Haas (R) Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy Political party independent campaign expenditures prohibited as a condition of receiving public subsidy.</p>
<p>HF3265—Davnie (DFL) Transportation Policy Eminent domain; appraisal fee reimbursement limit increased.</p>	<p>HF3277—Dorman (R) Taxes Food processing plant construction materials and equipment sales tax exemption provided.</p>	<p>HF3289—Wagenius (DFL) Taxes Low-income housing owned by a qualified nonprofit agency exempted from property taxation, construction and rehabilitation of low-income housing exempted from the sales tax, and payments in lieu of taxes provided.</p>	<p>HF3300—Kielkucki (R) Taxes Bakery products including bread specifically exempted from the prepared food sales tax.</p>
<p>HF3266—Cassell (R) Environment & Natural Resources Finance Native prairie bank easement acquisition funding provided, state bonds issued, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF3278—Walker (DFL) Civil Law Human rights sanctions added and standing to seek sanctions created.</p>	<p>HF3290—Abeler (R) Health & Human Services Policy Colorectal cancer awareness promoted by resolution.</p>	<p>HF3301—Ness (R) Regulated Industries Minnesota broadband access availability act adopted, and money appropriated.</p>
<p>HF3267—Workman (R) Transportation Policy Titling standards for motorcycles with new engines and similarly situated automobiles required to be the same.</p>	<p>HF3279—Dibble (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs Energy forward pricing mechanism use by Metropolitan Council authorized.</p>	<p>HF3291—Nornes (R) Health & Human Services Policy Health care resident reimbursement classifications modified.</p>	<p>HF3302—Stanek (R) Transportation Finance Trunk Highway 610 four-lane freeway segment construction funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.</p>
<p>HF3268—Workman (R) Crime Prevention Right of way failure to yield resulting in injury or death criminal penalties imposed.</p>	<p>HF3280—Kelliher (DFL) Environment & Natural Resources Finance Underutilized property cleanup for use as publicly owned parks and natural areas funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF3292—Winter (DFL) Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Telemarketing; telephone sales calls regulated, registration of telephone solicitors provided, telephone solicitation educational efforts provided, and money appropriated.</p>	<p>HF3303—Tuma (R) Crime Prevention Crime Victim Services Center reorganized as a division of the public safety department, and director authorized to administer grants.</p>
<p>HF3269—Murphy (DFL) Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs St. Louis County sale of state-owned real property authorized.</p>	<p>HF3281—Abrams (R) Taxes Franchise taxes cross-references corrected.</p>		

HF3304—Tuma (R)**Crime Prevention**

Vulnerable adults criminal abuse, financial exploitation, and sexual conduct crime definitions expanded, and penalties prescribed.

Wednesday, February 13**HF3305—Rukavina (DFL)****Transportation Policy**

Commercial motor vehicle traffic regulations modified, weight restrictions authority transferred to counties, fines reallocated, and previous appropriation reduced.

HF3306—Biernat (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Minneapolis Lowry Avenue corridor improvements funded, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3307—Olson (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Plumbing and sewage requirements established.

HF3308—Cassell (R)**Environment &****Natural Resources Finance**

Solid waste capital assistance grants program funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3309—Cassell (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Nursing home licensed bed lay away authorized during moratorium projects.

HF3310—Bradley (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Prescription drug medical assistance coverage requirements modified.

HF3311—Hausman (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

St. Paul; engineering study and pre-design of the historic connection of the Capitol through downtown St. Paul to the Mississippi River funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3312—Abeler (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Equalized aid and levy created to pay for portion of school district unfunded special education costs.

HF3313—Bakk (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

St. Louis County tax-forfeited land sales authorized.

HF3314—Seifert (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

State agencies and political subdivisions required to investigate use of existing buildings before proposing new construction, and availability of low-cost land and buildings publicized.

HF3315—Lieder (DFL)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Norman; nursing facility rate increases provided to offset county assessment, and money appropriated.

HF3316—Lieder (DFL)**Transportation Finance**

Local bridge replacement funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3317—Seagren (R)**Education Policy**

Education obsolete provisions amended and repealed.

HF3318—Anderson, B. (R)**Transportation Finance**

University of Minnesota personal rapid transit system funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF3319—Boudreau (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Minnesota state academy tuition provisions modified.

HF3320—Olson (R)**Transportation Finance**

University of Minnesota personal rapid transit system funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3321—Carlson (DFL)**Higher Education Finance**

Higher education budget priorities and biennial budget calculations provided.

HF3322—Johnson, J. (R)**Education Policy**

Parental notification of student surveys that may reveal personal information required.

HF3323—Johnson, J. (R)**Education Policy**

Statewide K-12 testing of academic knowledge ensured, and not students' values, attitudes or beliefs.

HF3324—Clark, K. (DFL)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Accessory dwelling units definitions provided, and separate permit totals reporting required.

HF3325—Rifenberg (R)**Taxes**

Agricultural mortgage registry tax provision modified.

HF3326—Wagenius (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Environmental sustainability policy and green government council established, and green standards developed for state product purchasing.

HF3327—Jennings (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Finance**

Rush City Correctional Facility adjacent lands acquisition provided for wetland mitigation and future wildlife management, bonds issued, and money provided.

HF3328—Molnau (R)**Transportation Policy**

Organ donors; organ donation education required as part of driver education programs.

HF3329—Lenczewski (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Tax Increment Financing grant funds transferred to the housing finance agency for use in the economic development and housing challenge program, and money appropriated.

HF3330—Bakk (DFL)**Environment & Natural Resources Policy**

Northern counties land use coordinating board authorized to promote cooperative efforts among county, state, federal, Canadian, and local units of government regarding land use management issues.

HF3331—Anderson, I. (DFL)**State Government Finance**

World War II veterans memorial completion funding provided, Capitol mall information kiosk constructed, and money appropriated.

HF3332—Anderson, B. (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Military service credit purchase sunset repealed.

HF3333—Wolf (R)**Education Policy**

Teacher contract; January 15 deadline date and penalty repealed.

HF3334—Mahoney (DFL)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Family homeless prevention and assistance program funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF3335—Seagren (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Charter schools authorized to purchase and own school facilities.

HF3336—Carlson (DFL)**Transportation Finance**

State Highway 100 utilities relocation and other infrastructure costs funding provided to local cities, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3337—Folliard (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Minnesota Family Investment Plan assistance extended to a minor child after the 60-month time limit.

HF3338—Walz (R)**Health & Human Services Finance**

Semi-independent living services allocation increased.

HF3339—Winter (DFL)**Commerce, Jobs &****Economic Development Policy**

Telemarketing; telephone sales calls regulated, solicitor registration required, no call list maintained, and money appropriated.

HF3340—Holsten (R)**Regulated Industries**

Prevailing wage required on specified electric energy generating plant or other energy facilities granted special tax treatment.

HF3341—Entenza (DFL)**Commerce, Jobs &****Economic Development Policy**

School employees authorized to collect unemployment benefits between academic years or terms under specific circumstances.

HF3342—Gerlach (R)**Commerce, Jobs &****Economic Development Policy**

Discrimination against older homes prohibited in manufactured home park lots.

HF3343—Bakk (DFL)**Taxes**

Ely sales and use tax authorized, revenue use specified, and bonds issued.

HF3344—McGuire (DFL)**Civil Law**

Second judicial district combined jurisdiction program authorized.

HF3345—Dorman (R)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Albert Lea Port Authority grant provided to remodel a building for use as a business incubator, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3346—Mulder (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Interstate telemedicine services regulated.

HF3347—Clark, K. (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Childcare assistance temporary ineligibility provided.

HF3348—Nornes (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Workers' compensation payment provisions and intervention procedures modified.

HF3349—Kuisle (R)
Agriculture Policy
Feedlots; number of animal units requiring a public meeting increased.

HF3350—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Dentistry; donated dental services program established, and money appropriated.

HF3351—McGuire (DFL)
Crime Prevention
Firearm possession lifetime ban imposed for certain violent criminals; licensing, transport, purchase regulation provided; local regulation authorized; criminal penalties imposed; and money appropriated.

HF3352—McGuire (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Early childhood learning and child protection facilities funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3353—Cassell (R)
Taxes
Local government aid city revenue base increased for certain cities.

HF3354—Gunther (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
Agricultural loan funding provided to the rural finance authority, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3355—Eastlund (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 911, Cambridge-Isanti, special education excess cost adjustment authorized.

HF3356—Westrom (R)
Health & Human Services Finance
Traverse County nursing facility rate increase provided.

HF3357—Westrom (R)
Higher Education Finance
University of Minnesota-Morris funding provided for social science building expansion and fire protection installation in student housing, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3358—Sertich (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Central iron range sanitary sewer district established.

HF3359—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nurse protocols modified.

HF3360—Murphy (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Proctor additional on-sale liquor licenses authorized.

HF3361—Swapinski (DFL)
Family & Early Childhood Education Finance
Teacher education and compensation helps, (TEACH), program established, and money appropriated.

HF3362—Stanek (R)
Transportation Policy
Black patrol vehicle use by municipal police departments authorized.

HF3363—Seifert (R)
Crime Prevention
Maximum stay of sentence extended indefinitely for offenders convicted of felony-level designated property offenses.

HF3364—Molnau (R)
Transportation Finance
Traffic control sign replacement grant program funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3365—Mullery (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Local government pension levies and contributions restriction exception provided.

HF3366—Paymar (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Advertising adjacent to certain highways regulated; and report required.

HF3367—Tuma (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
State and local government public notice required before transferring ownership or changing the use of publicly owned undeveloped land.

HF3368—Paymar (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Outdoor advertising prohibition by amortization authorized for cities of the first class.

HF3369—Swenson (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Wildlife shooting preserve provisions modified.

HF3370—Rifenberg (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Rushford institute for nanotechnology established, and money appropriated.

HF3371—Paymar (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Zoning; non-conforming use amortization by cities of the first class permitted.

HF3372—Jennings (DFL)
Regulated Industries
911 service access required by certain utilities providing service to non-subscribers, 911 fee discretion authorized, timely cost certification required, and money appropriated.

HF3373—Stanek (R)
Civil Law
Domestic fatality review team pilot project in fourth judicial district extension authorized.

HF3374—Larson (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Autism spectrum disorder intensive early intervention behavior therapy services for children defined.

HF3375—Seagren (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Hennepin County environmental response fund continued.

HF3376—Mullery (DFL)
Taxes
Low-income public housing units and developments materials and equipment sales and use tax exemption provided.

HF3377—Mahoney (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Hazardous substance piping installation and repair regulated.

HF3378—Daggett (R)
Taxes
Agricultural homestead property tax class rate decrease provided.

HF3379—Rhodes (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Campaign finance and public disclosure law provisions modified.

HF3380—Gunther (R)
K-12 Education Finance
Independent School District No. 458, Truman, fund transfer authorized.

HF3381—Davids (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
No-fault automobile insurance act applied to horse-drawn vehicles regularly operated on public roads.

HF3382—Hilty (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School district staff development revenue flexibility provided.

HF3383—Rukavina (DFL)
Taxes
Local government aid city aid base increased for certain cities, and money appropriated.

HF3384—Lenczewski (DFL)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Dan Patch commuter rail line-related actions regulated.

HF3385—Hausman (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Epinephrine treatment for allergic reactions required of all ambulance services, and EMT training requirements modified.

HF3386—Clark, J. (R)
Crime Prevention
Criminal sexual conduct in the second degree presumptive executed sentences required.

HF3387—Wagenius (DFL)
Taxes
Low-income housing projects construction materials exempted from sales and use tax.

HF3388—Jaros (DFL)
K-12 Education Finance
School building accessibility capital improvement grant act additional funding authorized, program criteria modified, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3389—Davnie (DFL)
Transportation Finance
Minneapolis 29th Street midtown corridor funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3390—Johnson, R. (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
South Central Technical College North Mankato campus teaching lab remodeling funding authorized, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3391—Finseth (R)
Agriculture & Rural Development Finance
St. Paul farmers' market hall project funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3392—Winter (DFL)**Taxes**

Southwest regional development commission debt retirement or service levy authorized, and local bonds authorized.

HF3393—Boudreau (R)**Civil Law**

Limited driver's license issued to a person whose license has been suspended for nonpayment of child support under certain circumstances.

HF3394—Opatz (DFL)**Higher Education Finance**

Teacher persistence study required.

HF3395—Stanek (R)**Judiciary Finance**

Public safety, criminal justice, and related agencies previous appropriations changed and reduced.

HF3396—Peterson (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

MinnesotaCare inpatient hospital costs subsidized supplemental coverage provided.

HF3397—Rukavina (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Northeast Minnesota economic protection trust fund expenditures regulated.

HF3398—Peterson (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance**

Dawson infrastructure work and flood prevention grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3399—Winter (DFL)**Transportation Policy**

Safety inspection sticker placement on windshields restrictions imposed.

HF3400—Seagren (R)**Education Policy**

Performing arts charter school city sponsorship authorized.

HF3401—Clark, J. (R)**Transportation Policy**

Barrier placement on roads prohibited more than 12 hours before initiation of improvement work.

HF3402—Clark, J. (R)**Transportation Finance**

Federal highway funding program Minnesota state withdrawal waiver required, motor fuel tax rate adjusted, and Metropolitan Council transportation planning authority transferred.

HF3403—Clark, J. (R)**Transportation Finance**

Motor vehicle sales tax revenue dedicated to the highway user tax distribution fund, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF3404—Clark, J. (R)**Crime Prevention**

Security interest on vehicles subject to DWI-related forfeiture required to be perfected to protect interest of secured party.

HF3405—Davids (R)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Certified public accountant relationships limited.

HF3406—Schumacher (DFL)**Agriculture Policy**

Farmers' market or community event prepared food sale limitations modified.

HF3407—Bishop (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Labor agreements and compensation plans rejected, and labor agreement ratified.

HF3408—Rukavina (DFL)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Labor agreements, plan amendments, and salary increase proposal ratified.

HF3409—Sykora (R)**K-12 Education Finance**

Referendum conversion adjustment for interest earned modified.

HF3410—Johnson, J. (R)**Civil Law**

Legislative enactments technical correction provided.

HF3411—Bakk (DFL)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

LTV steel mining pension plan termination delay by Pension Benefit Guaranty corporation encouraged by resolution.

HF3412—Holsten (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Inverse condemnation proceedings authorized when a governmental entity occupies the market.

Thursday, February 14**HF3413—Koskinen (DFL)****Transportation Finance**

Coon Rapids; Trunk Highway 10 and Hanson Boulevard interchange reconstruction funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3414—Harder (R)**Agriculture Policy**

Agricultural contract provisions clarified.

HF3415—Workman (R)**Transportation Policy**

Motor vehicle sales tax portion dedicated to the highway user tax distribution fund, motor fuel tax increased, bonds issued, money appropriated, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF3416—Molnau (R)**Ways and Means**

Transportation appropriations reduced, Greater Minnesota transit assistance formulas modified, and local peace officer and firefighter insurance coverage reimbursement abolished.

HF3417—Ruth (R)**Jobs & Economic Development Finance**

Waseca northeast park community recreation facility construction funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3418—Goodno (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Long-term care reform provisions modified.

HF3419—Schumacher (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

County reimbursement for landfill costs provided.

HF3420—Abeler (R)**Civil Law**

Child in need of protection placed with relatives when removed from home.

HF3421—Bakk (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Finance**

Grand Portage harbor of refuge planning provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3422—Walker (DFL)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Large institution for children moratorium imposed, and study required on children and families whose needs are not being met.

HF3423—Goodno (R)**Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy**

Stadiums; public corporation established, football stadium and parking ramp provided, taxes and fees imposed, and money appropriated.

HF3424—McGuire (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Finance**

Hennepin County Silver Lake environmental education center construction provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3425—Davids (R)**Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development**

Credit scoring procedures regulated.

HF3426—Nornes (R)**Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs**

Local government aid city aid base increased for certain cities.

HF3427—Lenczewski (DFL)**Environment &****Natural Resources Finance**

State park and recreation area improvements, restoration, and acquisition funding provided; bonds issued; and money appropriated.

HF3428—Ness (R)**Agriculture & Rural****Development Finance**

Health and agriculture joint laboratory facility construction provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3429—Abeler (R)**Health & Human Services Policy**

Deaf-blind services pilot project development provided.

HF3430—Bradley (R)**Commerce, Jobs &****Economic Development**

Mixed housing definition provided, mixed income development negotiation required, and collector street utilities authorized.

HF3431—Wolf (R)**Commerce, Jobs &****Economic Development**

Electrician licensing modified to require lighting and irrigation contractor licensing.

HF3432—Holsten (R)**Environment &****Natural Resources Policy**

Dry cleaner environmental response and reimbursement law provisions modified.

HF3433—Paymar (DFL)**Jobs & Economic****Development Finance Policy**

Stadium; St. Paul contribution provided for major league baseball park, special taxes imposed, exemptions provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

Other bills introduced Feb. 14 will be included in next week's issue. They are also available at www.house.mn.

Schedule is subject to change.
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MONDAY, Feb. 18

8:15 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

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

Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE

10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: The Governor's proposed budget cuts in HHS-related programs. If you want to testify, please contact Andy Gildea at 651-296-5065 or at andy.gildea@house.leg.state.mn.us

Note: The committee will reconvene 30 minutes after session. Room to be announced.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: HFXXXX (McElroy) Omnibus Jobs Finance Bill.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau

Agenda: HF2860 (Swenson) Rail service improvement program funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3293 (Swenson) Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority freight rail improvement funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF1287 (Ruth) Trunk Highway No. 14 four-lane expressway segment constructed, environmental impact statement prepared, and money appropriated.

HF647 (Westerberg) East Bethel; Trunk Highway No. 65 improvement bonds issued.

HF3019 (Hausman) Central Corridor Transitway bonds issued and money appropriated.

10:15 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

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

Agenda: HF3062 (Smith) Hennepin and Ramsey County juvenile court judge term of service limitations repealed.

HF2909 (Tuma) Terrorism prevention integrated public policy established, data classification and sharing authorized, penalties provided, and money appropriated.

HF2843 (Tuma) Sexual abuse damage action statute of limitations modified.

HF2792 (Ozment) Local governments indemnification provided for participating in household hazardous waste programs.

HF3117 (Ozment) Minnesota environmental response and liability act statute of limitations to recover response costs clarified.

HF3190 (Stanek) Juvenile courts required to send juvenile petition data to the statewide supervision system.

HF3373 (Stanek) Domestic fatality review team pilot project in fourth judicial district extension authorized.

HF3263 (Holberg) Sexual psychopath or sexually dangerous person civil commitment; commissioner data access authorized for purposes of determination.

HF3393 (Boudreau) Limited driver's license issued to a person whose license has been suspended for nonpayment of child support under certain circumstances.

HF2932 (Sykora) Communicable disease disclosure to a foster care provider required.

HF2824 (Opatz) Student employment upon obtaining a degree data collection provided.

Note: Any agenda items not completed in the morning will be heard in 300S State Office Building 15 minutes after session.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) capital request presentation.

Witnesses: Al Johnson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities, MnSCU; Phil Griffin, Griffin Government Consulting.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: HF2508 (Kalis) Providing for a facility grant to Independent School District No. 2860, Blue Earth Area Public School; authorizing the sale of bonds; appropriating money.

HF2831 (Tingelstad) Creating a high performance school facility grant program; authorizing the sale of bonds; appropriating money.

HF2856 (Skoe) Providing for a grant to Independent School District No. 38, Red Lake, for school construction costs and related improvements; authorizing bonds; appropriating money.

HF3035 (Boudreau) Providing for capital improvements at the Minnesota state academies; authorizing issuance of bonds; appropriating money.

HF3044 (Mulder) Authorizing the issuance of state bonds; appropriating money for a single school facility for a new consolidated school district.

HF3113 (Rhodes) Authorizing a grant for a metropolitan magnet school; authorizing state bonds; appropriating money.

HF3184 (Mulder) Authorizing a facility grant; appropriating money.

HF2803 (Ness) Authorizing spending to acquire and to better public land and buildings; providing for an agricultural and food sciences educational facility; authorizing issuance of bonds; appropriating money.

Property Tax Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Erhardt

Agenda: HF2977 (Hackbarth) Provides that certain real property used as a shooting range shall be classified as class 4c property.

HF2720 (Dempsey) Increasing city aid base for Red Wing.

HF2721 (Dempsey) Increasing city aid base for Hastings.

HF3353 (Cassell) Increasing city aid base for Alexandria.

HF2715 (Goodno) Allows cities to provide a two year property tax exemption for newly constructed homes in certain border cities; authorizing tax incentives.

HF3378 (Daggett) Decreases the class rate on certain agricultural homestead property.

12:30 p.m.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: HF3086 (Haas) Child care assistance data and information provisions modified. There will be a delete-all amendment to this bill.

HF2716 (Clark, J.) Youth enrichment activity facilities capital improvements funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF3352 (McGuire) Early childhood learning and child protection facilities funding provided,

bonds issued, and money appropriated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jerry Dempsey

Agenda: HF3007 (Olson) Local government state mandate opt out procedure provided.

HF2881 (McElroy) Tax increment financing deficit reduction provisions modified.

HF2978 (Cassell) Alexandria; lakes area economic development authority established, powers granted, and duties prescribed.

HF2995 (Howes) Water tank service contract bidding exception provided.

HF3074 (Ruth) Steele County recorder appointment authorized.

HF3224 (Abrams) Hennepin County health and medical center contracting authorized with public or private organizations.

HF2753 (Hilty) Carlton County recorder appointment authorized.

HF3269 (Murphy) St. Louis County purchase of state-owned real property authorized.

HF3192 (Bakk) Cook County road and bridge levy expenditure authorized.

HF2593 (Kahn) City council ward elections provided after reapportionment.

HF2830 (Osthoff) St. Paul local bonding authority limits set through 2008.

REGULATED INDUSTRIES

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ken Wolf

Agenda: HF2972 (Wolf) Relating to energy; making technical corrections to the 2001 omnibus energy bill.

3 p.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

15 minutes after session

WAYS & MEANS

Room to be announced

Chr. Rep. David Bishop

Agenda: To be announced.

4 p.m. or 30 minutes after session

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: Omnibus Budget Bill.

4 p.m.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF3226 (Workman) Motorcycles authorized to run red light under certain circumstances.

HF3265 (Davnie) Eminent domain; appraisal fee reimbursement limit increased when property is acquired by the Department of Transportation.

HF3267 (Workman) Titling standards for motorcycles with new engines and similarly situated automobiles required to be the same.

HF3203 (Kuisle) Vehicle and bicycle registration provisions modified, dealer transactions regulated, motor carrier fuel tax provisions reorganized, snowplow driver license exemption modified, and driver's license for emancipated minors authorized.

HF2851 (Seagren) Metropolitan Council activities relating to the Dan Patch commuter rail line prohibited.

HFXXXX (Workman) Utility relocation bill.

6:15 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

118 State Capitol

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Department of Commerce agency capital budget request.

HF2789 (Osthoff) Stadium; St. Paul Major League Baseball stadium construction provided, St. Paul food and liquor tax levied, ticket tax established, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HFXXXX (Paymar) Twins stadium.

Note: Meeting time may change depending on the length of session.

TUESDAY, Feb. 19

7:30 a.m.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF2813 (Molnau) Child care providers required to develop policies for reporting suspected child maltreatment.

HF3193 (McElroy) Dentistry practice act violations reporting to the board of dentistry required, and complainant immunity provided.

HF3213 (Goodno) Mental health services coverage inconsistencies corrected for services under provided health plans.

HF3258 (Goodno) County agencies not required to provide income support or cash assistance when specified state programs fail to do so.

HF3309 (Cassell) Nursing home licensed bed lay away authorized during moratorium projects.

HF2664 (Bradley) Supplemental nursing services agencies requirements modified.

HF3236 (Jacobson) Human services continuing care programs modified.

HF3249 (Hilty) Alcohol and drug counselor licensing written case presentation and oral examination component waived for specified individuals.

HF2953 (Abeler) Volunteer health care provider program established, and state employee status provided relating to tort claims.

HF3181 (Nornes) Children's Mental Health

Subcommittee to the State Advisory Council on Mental Health membership modified.

8 a.m.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF2939 (Workman) Motor vehicle sales tax fund established, proceeds dedicated to highways and public transit, highway bonding limitation removed, motor fuel tax increased, bonds issued, money appropriated, and constitutional amendment proposed.

8:15 a.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF3069 (Wolf) School district timely submission of teacher contract settlement information required.

HF2437 (Erickson) Wrestling teams required to be gender separated.

HF2304 (Kielkucki) Nonpublic school students required to be fully eligible to participate in extracurricular activities.

HF2801 (Ness) Charter school students allowed to fully participate in extracurricular activities of resident school district.

HF3057 (Kielkucki) Minnesota State High School League corporate partnerships permitted.

HF3097 (Folliard) School districts and charter schools required to use a uniform teacher employment application form.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: To be announced.

10:15 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. John Tuma

Agenda: HF2622 (Stanek) Minnesota Anti-terrorism Act of 2002.

HF3048 (Workman) Criminal penalties for persons who promote, advocate, and take responsibility for criminal acts.

HF3033 (Tuma) Minnesota Crime Victim Services Center housekeeping (continued from Feb. 12 hearing).

HF3231 (Rhodes) Department of Public Safety housekeeping bill - DWI test provisions modified, electronic forms permitted, etc.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: HF94 (Haas) Fish and game law gross overlimit violations criminal penalties

established, and restitution values determined.
HF3128 (Hackbarth) Big game hunting ammunition provision modified.
HF3025 (Peterson) Land acquisition procedures and certain local planning regulations modified, certain state parks and state recreation area land modified, state land sales in specified counties authorized, and money appropriated.
HF2707 (Skoe) State lands withdrawn from sale shoreline provision modified.
HF2729 (Rifenberg) Winona County surplus land sale authorized.
HF2914 (Ness) Meeker County sale of certain tax-forfeited land bordering public water authorized.
HF2926 (Schumacher) Sherburne County private sale of surplus state land authorized.
HF3063 (Cassell) Douglas County sale of tax-forfeited land bordering public water authorized.
HF3287 (Bakk) St. Louis County school trust land bordering public water public sale authorized.
HF3313 (Bakk) St. Louis County tax-forfeited land sales authorized.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie
Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: HF2875 (Abrams) Department of Revenue; Tax data classification and disclosure provisions, technical changes provided.
HF3191 (Abrams) Department of Revenue; Taxation; Policy and administrative changes.
HF2666 (Dorman) Tax amnesty program established.

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: Brown's Creek Trout Stream (Holsten). Southwest State University Fire (Seifert). Roy Wilkins Auditorium. People's Inc. (Kahn).

COMMERCE, JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Greg Davids
Agenda: HF1205 (Sykora) Wine; off-sale wine licenses authorized for supermarkets in metropolitan counties.
HF3082 (Jennings) Wage credits earned by school food service employees used for specified

unemployment benefit purposes.
HF3206 (McElroy) Health commissioner occupational safety responsibilities eliminated in certain instances and penalty limits for certain violations increased.
HF3348 (Nornes) Workers' compensation payment provisions and intervention procedures modified.
HF3447 (Knoblach) Housing and real property benefit data classified.

1 p.m.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

400S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek
Agenda: To be announced.

3 p.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

4 p.m. or 30 minutes after session

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

400S State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten
Agenda: To be announced.

6:15 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: Presentation of capital budget projects.
HF2811 (Abrams) Guthrie Theater.
HF3072 (Seagren) Bloomington Center for the Arts.
HF2421(Rukavina) Virginia central steam heating system repairs.
HF2552(Mariani) St. Paul neighborhood house immigration and community resource center.
HF2913 (Mariani) St. Paul Raspberry Island and Upper Landing capital improvements.
HFXXXX(Ruth) Waseca community center.
Other bills may be added.
Note: Meeting time may change depending on the length of session.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 20

8:15 a.m.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: To be announced.

HEALTH & HUMAN

SERVICES FINANCE
10 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno
Agenda: House proposals on HHS-related

spending options. If you want to testify, please contact Andy Gildea at 651-296-5065 or at andy.gildea@house.leg.state.mn.us
Note: The committee will reconvene 30 minutes after session. Room to be announced.

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

200 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy
Agenda: Presentation of capital budget projects.
HF2897 (Osthoff) Ramsey County purchase of Union Depot authorized.
HF2962 (Osthoff) St. Paul Roy Wilkins auditorium roof repair and ADA compliance funding provided.
HF3085 (Gunther) Fairmont athletic facilities expansion and improvement.
HF2917 (Kahn) Minneapolis empowerment zone subprojects improvements provided.
HF2864 (McGuire) Ramsey County predesign funding provided for the Gibbs museum of pioneer and Dakotah life.
HF407 (Howes) Wastewater infrastructure supplemental assistance provided.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Carol Molnau
Agenda: HF2589 (Ness) Corn-based highway de-icing solutions provided for snow and ice control on state trunk highways.
HF2769 (Swenson) County-state-aid highway priority reconstruction project funding provided for specific highways in specified counties, bonds issued, and money appropriated.
HF2754 (Wolf) Freight improvement projects funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.
HF3364 (Molnau) Traffic control sign replacement grant program funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.
HF2852 (Marko) High speed rail line funding provided for state share of St. Paul to Chicago rail line, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

10 a.m.

Legislative Audit Commission

118 State Capitol
Chr. Sen. Ann H. Rest
Agenda: Release and review of program evaluation report on State Employee Health Insurance; report of Special Subcommittee on Data Access and Topic Selection.

10:15 a.m.

CIVIL LAW

Basement Hearing Room
State Office Building
Chr. Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: HF2953 (Abeler) Volunteer health care provider program established, and state employee status provided relating to tort claims.
HF3163 (Lipman) Revisor's bill correcting erroneous, ambiguous, and omitted text and

obsolete references.

HF3278 (Walker) Human rights sanctions added and standing to seek sanctions created.

HF2840 (Clark, J.) Criminal prosecution estoppel provisions modified relating to certain license revocation hearings, juvenile jurisdiction provided, child endangerment definition expanded relating to controlled substances, and penalties prescribed.

HF3205 (Clark, J.) Public works contracts regulated.

HF2525 (Hackbarth) Employers required to allow unpaid leave for employees performing volunteer firefighter duties.

HF3034 (Holberg) School bus driver background check procedure modified, criminal history checks for certain liquor license applicants authorized, and use of data collected on employees of certain license holders clarified.

HF3079 (Holberg) Residential real estate sale disclosure requirements provided.

Note: Any agenda items not completed in the morning will be heard in 300S State Office Building 15 minutes after session.

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: To be announced.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: HF2708 (Ness) Minnesota Extension Service county extension work definition clarified.

Witnesses: Rep. Bob Ness; Charles Casey, Dean, University of Minnesota Extension Office; Charles Muscoplat, Dean, College of Agricultural, Food, and Environmental Sciences.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: To be announced.

Sales and Income Tax Division/TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Elaine Harder

Agenda: HF2777 (Juhnke) Allows quarterly sales tax filers to file paper returns.

HF2937 (Abrams) Phases-in corporate franchise taxation apportionment based solely on sales.

HF3050 (Westerberg) Provides that sales of smoking cessation devices are exempt from sales and use taxes.

HF 3009 (Olson) Requires sales tax on motor vehicles to be deposited in highway user tax distribution fund.

HF3285 (Abrams) Exempts certain delivery or distribution charges for printed materials from the sales and use tax.

12:30 p.m.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF3183 (Finseth) Changing certain pesticide provisions.

HF2770 (Johnson, R.) Changing eligibility criteria for RFA loan programs.

HF3107 (Blaine) Clarifying language concerning agricultural fund revolving accounts.

HF3142 (Swenson) Uniformity with certain Minnesota food rules with certain federal standards.

HF3251 (Otremba) Changing certain powers concerning grain.

HF3298 (Swenson) Changing provisions of the agricultural chemical response and reimbursement law.

Economic Development and Tourism

Division/COMMERCE, JOBS &

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Arlon Lindner

Agenda: Presentation on inclusionary housing initiatives, Tonja Orr, Intergovernmental Relations, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. Presentation on tourism and the Minnesota economy, John Edman, Director, Minnesota Office of Tourism, Department of Trade and Economic Development.

Presentation on tourism and Minnesota parks, Department of Natural Resources.

FAMILY & EARLY CHILDHOOD

EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Barb Sykora

Agenda: Library telecommunications report.

HF3005 (Howes) Mighty books grant program established, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2705 (Howes) Pine River city library renovation and expansion funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2700 (Nornes) Fergus Falls public library expansion project funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF2806 (Skoe) Fosston public library accessibility improvements grant provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jerry Dempsey

Agenda: HF3112 (Eastlund) Counties authorized to require dedication of land for public parks. Other agenda items to be announced.

3 p.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

Time to be announced

COMMERCE, JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: HF3143 (Sertich) Economic development obsolete provisions eliminated, world trade center use modified, urban initiative program modified, wastewater and drinking water funding coordinated, and bonding authority increased.

HF3158 (Gunter) Greater Minnesota redevelopment program established.

HF2641 (Bradley) Health plan company regulation modified, prescription drug discount program established, Minnesota provider tax and tobacco tax provisions modified, malpractice punitive damage limit imposed, and money appropriated.

HF2755 (Haas) Health insurance form and rate filing requirements modified, task force on small business health insurance extended, geographic premium variations modified, and renewal premium increases cap established.

HF3411 (Bakk) LTV steel mining pension plan termination delay by Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation encouraged by resolution.

THURSDAY, Feb. 21

8 a.m.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: HF2882 (Workman) Electric personal assistive mobility device roadway and sidewalk regulations established.

HF3189 (Workman) Street sweeping vehicles defined as special mobile equipment for registration purposes.

Bills to be added.

8:15 a.m.

EDUCATION POLICY

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Harry Mares

Agenda: HF2586 (Kielkucki) Enrollment options established for students at low-performing schools.

HF2877 (Harder) Shared time aid provisions modified relating to district of attendance.

HF3247 (Johnson, J.) Kindergarten through grade 12 unneeded mandates eliminated.

HF3317 (Seagren) Education obsolete provisions amended and repealed.

Other bills may be added.

**HEALTH & HUMAN
SERVICES POLICY**

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Fran Bradley

Agenda: HF3223 (Harder) Out-of-state facilities for children with severe emotional disturbance certification plan required.

HF3291 (Nornes) Health care resident reimbursement classifications modified.

HF1226 (Davids) Medical response unit registration provided.

HF3166 (Abeler) Human services continuing care programs technical provisions modified.

More bills may be added.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: To be announced.

10:15 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. John Tuma

Agenda: To be announced.

**ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL
RESOURCES POLICY**

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dennis Ozment

Agenda: To be announced.

STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Philip Krinkie

Agenda: To be announced.

TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 p.m.

**AGRICULTURE & RURAL
DEVELOPMENT FINANCE**

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Bob Ness

Agenda: To be announced.

AGRICULTURE POLICY

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tim Finseth

Agenda: HF2574 (McElroy) Extending the date by which a cogeneration facility at an ethanol plant must generate electricity using closed-loop biomass in order for the Commissioner of Agriculture to make cash payments to producers, etc.

HF3241 (Westrom) Establishing a livestock development program.

HF3038 (Penas) Requiring the Board of Animal Health to modify a certain rule.

HF3406 (Schumacher) Modifying limits on the sale of prepared foods at community events or farmers markets.

HF3052 (Peterson) Clarifying required permission for work in public waters, etc.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Knoblach

Agenda: To be announced.

**COMMERCE, JOBS & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda: HF3257 (Davids) Financial institution detached facilities, charges and fees, and mortgage prepayment penalties regulated.

HF2989 (Haas) Health information data classified, certain continuing education requirements regulated, contractor's recovery fund regulated, uniform conveyancing forms adopted, and obsolete rules repealed.

HF2988 (Haas) Insurance licenses, fees, and coverages regulated in certain instances.

HFXXXX (Davids) Creating Insurance Fraud Unit within the Department of Commerce.

**ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL
RESOURCES FINANCE**

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: To be announced.

3 p.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

6:15 p.m.

JOBS & ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

300N State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Dan McElroy

Agenda: Presentation of capital budget projects. HF2850 (Winter) Tracy central business district revitalization.

HF2827 (Winter) Murray County; Lake Shetek centralized wastewater system.

HF3185 (Skoe) Red Lake Indian Reservation economic development facility construction funding.

HF3271 (Solberg) Nashwauk stabilization pond facility wastewater diversion project.

Other bills to be added.

Note: Meeting time may change depending on the length of session.

FRIDAY, Feb. 22

8:15 a.m.

**GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS &
VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY**

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Jim Rhodes

Agenda: To be announced.

**HEALTH & HUMAN
SERVICES FINANCE**

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Kevin Goodno

Agenda: Budget adjustments in HHS-related spending programs.

JUDICIARY FINANCE

500S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Rich Stanek

Agenda: To be announced.

9 a.m.

*****IF NEEDED*****

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Tom Workman

Agenda: To be announced.

10:15 a.m.

CRIME PREVENTION

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. John Tuma

Agenda: To be announced.

Note: This hearing is scheduled to last until 6 p.m. or as needed to complete the agenda.

**ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL
RESOURCES FINANCE**

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Mark Holsten

Agenda: To be announced.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE

300S State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Peggy Leppik

Agenda: University of Minnesota capital request. Witness: Mark Yudof, President, University of Minnesota.

K-12 EDUCATION FINANCE

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Alice Seagren

Agenda: To be announced.

Now nine months later, Bishop said the language in the contracts is vague and does not accomplish the goal of same-sex domestic partner benefits. He said domestic partners could be interpreted as those having financial dependence on someone they live with.

Others argued that the governor deliberately took the Legislature out of the discussion and should not be allowed to make public policy through such a private means as collective bargaining.

“I believe there’s an issue in this contract that’s state policy that needed to be resolved in the Legislature first and that was not taken care of appropriately,” said Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount) during the rules committee meeting. And later on the House floor, he said, “It’s being used by the Ventura administration to circumvent the Legislature.”

Reflections

Every 10 years the Legislature formulates a redistricting plan to equalize populations in state and congressional districts after the U.S. Census is taken.

One of the major challenges for political parties is how the redistricting issue will be handled. Lawmakers may have to seek a reading from the state or federal Supreme Court about proposed changes if the governor does not sign a mutually agreed upon plan into law.

New census results indicate that the state's population has grown by 12.4 percent since 1990 — up from 4,375,099 to 4,919,479 individuals. That translates into 36,712 constituents for each of the 134 House members and 73,425 individuals per Senate member.

When legislative districts are shifted due to population change, the restructuring of voting blocs can cause concern for some lawmakers. Population shifts can affect how party caucuses may view a race for majority control of the House and/or Senate.

The strategies are such that political caucuses want to hold onto the districts they already control, yet increase concentrated partisan voting. Thus they seek to gain more districts to maintain the majority or to retake the majority after it was lost in a previous election.

Once redistricting is in place, which it must be this year by March 19, a newly elected lawmaker may represent a district that is only part of a county, is a full county, or may contain two or more counties depending on population size.

Geographic size is not the most important factor in the process; population

density is. For example, Ramsey County is the state's smallest county with only 154 square miles of area, but it has a dense population that made large shifts in the last 10 years.

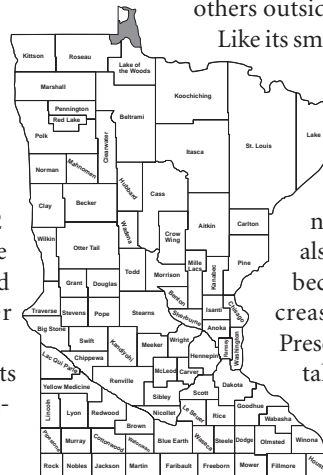
In 1990 its population was 485,765. Ten years later 511,035 people lived within county limits. It is possible that after re-districting, two or more of the county's eight House districts may be merged with others outside its borders.

Like its smaller geographic counterpart, Koochiching County (more than 20 times larger than Ramsey County at 3,108 square miles) in far north-central Minnesota may also be joined with a neighbor because its total population decreased from 16,299 to 14,355. Presently, one House district (3A) takes up the entire county, except for much of the Bois Forte Indian Reservation located to the east in District 6A.

District 6A and eight other House districts are found in St. Louis County, geographically the state's largest. This county — which extends from Lake Superior at the city of Duluth, 60 miles to the west, and 100 miles north to the Canadian Border — has a land area of 6,125 square miles. Its increase in population, from 198,213 to 200,528 individuals, will likely cause some minor changes in district boundaries within the county.

Change in the Legislature often comes about in many ways, but only once per decade is there a concerted effort to ensure that equal representation for the general public is maintained.

—LECLAIR GRIER LAMBERT



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MINNESOTA INDEX

Recycling and waste reduction

Statewide recycling rate in 2000, as percent	48
In 1991	36
State ranking in 1999 and 2000	6
Percentage of recycling that comes from businesses	74
Residential	24
Mechanical and hand-separated	2
2000 recycling rate of the seven Twin Cities metropolitan area counties, as percent	49
In 1991	43
2000 recycling rate of Greater Minnesota counties, as percent	47
In 1991	25
Percentage of residents in the Twin Cities metropolitan area with access to curbside recycling	91
In Greater Minnesota	58
Number of Minnesota counties with no communities that have curbside recycling	9
Tons of waste collected for recycling in 2000	2.3 million
Tons of garbage collected	3.2 million
After recycling, percentage of year 2000 garbage being deposited in landfills	60
In 1992	31
Garbage processed into refuse-derived fuel during 2000, as percent	25
Percent burned to produce energy	13
Percentage of municipal solid waste that was recycled in 2000	40
Percentage of state's 1999 garbage that was paper	35
In 1992	40
Percentage of state's 1999 garbage that was organic waste	26
Plastic	11
Glass	3
Hazardous waste and problem materials	2
State counties (of 87) that operate or cooperate in a hazardous waste collection facility	78
Average tons of garbage thrown away per Minnesotan in 1993	0.93
In 2000	1.14
Using current trends, estimation in 2020	2.5
Percent increase in municipal solid waste generation since 1993	33

Source: *Recycling and Waste Reduction*, Office of the Legislative Auditor, January 2002

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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