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In this issue:

NEW DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

STATE EMPLOYEE CONTRACTS, AND MORE

HF3692-HF3704

Session Weekly

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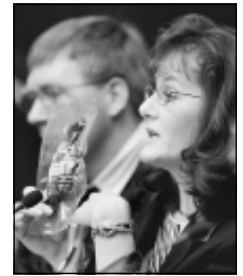
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On the cover: Rep. Joe Opatz, *left*, Rep. Paul Marquart, *center*, and Rep. Kevin Goodno, *right*, huddle around laptop computers and maps March 19 to look at the newly drawn boundaries of their legislative districts after the court's redistricting plan was released.

— Photo by Tom Olmscheid

Boundary redesign

Redistricting plan will give the House a new look in 2003 as 36 incumbents could face off, 18 new districts created

By DAVID MAEDA

It's likely that there have been few times in Minnesota history when as many people crouched simultaneously around a computer screen to look at a map of the state as there were March 19. That was the day a court-appointed panel released its redrawn map of the state's legislative and congressional districts.

And while technology may have made the current redistricting process—as far as physically drawing and viewing maps—easier than anytime in the past, the inherent political implications of how districts are drawn remained at the center of the attention.

The redistricting plan developed by the five-member panel, appointed by Supreme Court Chief Justice Kathleen Blatz, divides the state's congressional districts into five Twin Cities metropolitan area-based districts and three Greater Minnesota districts to reflect the continuing shift in the state's population.

The 2000 U.S. Census Data measures Minnesota's population at 4.9 million. Nearly 54 percent, or 2.6 million, of the state's population resides in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Upon its release, lawmakers and members of the public scrambled around the Capitol complex to view the plan and determine its effect politically and personally.

The panel identified the ideal-sized Senate district to have a population of 73,425. The districts in the plan range in population from 72,976 to 73,964. The ideal House district is 36,713, and the plan has districts that range in size from 36,424 to 36,998.

The state constitution dictates that the Legislature is responsible for redistricting the state's political boundaries every 10 years following census results. The courts

become involved if the Legislature is unable to agree to a plan.

Last session, the House Redistricting Committee, chaired by Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie), held hearings throughout the state to give an ear to the opinions of various groups about how the state should be redistricted. At the time Paulsen admitted that it would be a challenge for the Legislature to accomplish the task.

"It seems inevitable that the courts eventually get involved," he said.

The legislative and congressional bills that eventually passed the House (HF2519 and HF2516) did so on a party-line vote. The plans were considerably different from the Senate bill (SF2377), sponsored by Sen. Lawrence Pogemiller (DFL-Mpls), that also passed that body on a party-line vote.

Last fall Gov. Jesse Ventura also put forward a plan developed by a committee composed of the state's four major political parties, members of Common Cause Minnesota, the League of Women Voters, and four citizen panelists.

Meanwhile the court-appointed panel began holding hearings across Minnesota to gather information about developing its own plan.

The judicial panel consisted of Court of Appeals Chief Judge Edward Toussaint Jr.,

**View the district maps
on page 18**

Court of Appeals Judge Thomas Kalitowski, St. Louis County District Court Judge Gary Pagliaccetti, Waseca County District Court Judge Heidi Schellhas, and Hennepin County District Court Judge Renee Worke.

The judges developed a set of principles on which its plan would be developed. Among the criteria was that communities of interest—defined as groups with clearly recognizable similarities of social, geographic, political, cultural, ethnic, economic, or other interests—be preserved wherever possible.

The panel rejected the House proposal to incorporate Minneapolis and St. Paul into a single congressional district. House Republicans argued that the Twin Cities have more in common with each other than they do with surrounding suburbs.

Likewise, the panel did not accept the Senate proposal to maintain four Greater Minnesota congressional districts and four metropolitan districts.

The plan does place the White Earth and Red Earth American Indian reservations into the same Senate district in northern Minnesota.

Another stated criterion was that a district could not be drawn for the purpose of protecting or defeating an incumbent. The panel also tried to limit dividing a county, city, or township into different districts wherever possible.

As for the Legislature, the panel's redistricting plan pairs 36 incumbent House members

against each other and creates 18 open districts. One new district pairs two female incumbent House members. Overall, women in the House constitute 24 percent of the incumbents paired in the new districts.

In total, the Twin Cities metropolitan area gains two House seats, although the core cities and inner suburbs lose two seats while the surrounding second- and third-ring suburbs gain four seats. Greater Minnesota loses two districts, with the rural areas losing three seats and the St. Cloud regional center gaining a representative.

Ten DFL House members



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Rep. Lynda Boudreau, left, and Rep. Richard Mulder use maps and a laptop computer March 19 to look at the boundaries of their newly-drawn legislative districts.



Examination required

1939 overhaul of gas tax administration revealed prior fraud, inefficiencies

Logic might dictate that the state Department of Revenue should administer the gasoline tax, along with the various other taxes collected by the state, even if state law didn't.

Such was not the case in the early 1900s as the administration of the petroleum tax bounced from department to department until it eventually landed in Department of Taxation in 1939.

But the tax, initially enacted in 1925 to benefit of highways in the state, encountered a rough road for the first 13 years of its existence.

In 1955, the University of Minnesota's Public Administration Training Center published its third study in administration, focusing on the Minnesota Department of Taxation. Lloyd Short, Clara Penniman, and Floyd Flom tracked the history of the department, as well as the taxes it administered, using various sources.

As for the gas tax, the group concluded that important measures begun by Gov. Harold Stassen in 1939 and carried through by the Legislature in subsequent years significantly transformed the administration of the tax.

In 1925, the Legislature passed a 2 cents per gallon tax on vehicles operating in the state. Distributors paid the tax to the state and then passed the cost on to the consumer by raising prices by the amount of the tax.

At the time, taxation functions were integrated with inspections. The Industrial Commission was thereby in charge of collecting the petroleum tax.

In 1929, the functions were transferred to the Department of Agriculture with the philosophy that the department could verify the quality of the gasoline and collect the taxes.

Within the next several years, the administration of the gas tax would be praised by both the state Industrial Commission and the head tax analyst at the university.

"Collection of the tax is easier and more economical in Minnesota than in most states because the tax is assessed on the in-shipments and must be paid monthly by the importing distributor... Few states have costs so low, and the administrative situation appears to be good," said Roy Blakey in his report about taxation.

But the happy days would not last long. Stassen, in his inaugural speech in 1939, promised a reorganization of administration of the tax. Why? Evidence showed "malfeasance and fraud, in addition to generally poor administrative practices," said the university report.

According to documents, two former top officials were indicted for malfeasance, while four other employees were charged with grand larceny.

Under the pre-1939 structure, there was no separation between the employees determining the amount due, collecting the money, and keeping track of the accounts. And much of the money was collected in cash.

"The public examiner reported finding evidence of considerable petty thievery," the report noted.

In addition, no formal

audit procedures were in place prior to 1939, leaving the refund program free from accountability. The way the program worked, since all incoming gasoline was taxed, certain individuals could apply for refunds. This was the preferred practice to exemptions at the time.

As a result, many individuals applied for more than one refund, which were granted.

"Until 1938, no payments were posted to individual records, so that a farmer or other gasoline taxpayer claiming exemption might duplicate his refund applications without fear of detection," the history said.

Chief inspectors operated under a system of political patronage for appointing deputies, who often used their homes as offices and inspected facilities only at operators' request.

Under Stassen's new chief inspector, 70 of 113 inspectors were fired, and only 58 were hired to replace them. Field investigators and auditors were deployed, collections and billing functions were separated, and the official move to the Taxation Department was made.

In 1941 the Legislature changed laws governing the tax to place the burden for reporting and paying taxes to distributors, and also to focus on sales at the pump rather than incoming shipments.

The university group called that move the "single most significant" fix to the system.

(M. KIBIGER)

Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society



Gov. Harold Stassen in 1939

now find themselves in the same districts:

- Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey) and Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls),
- Rep. Dale Swapinski (DFL-Duluth) and Rep. Mike Jaros (DFL-Duluth),
- Rep. Mark Thompson (DFL-New Hope) and Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal),
- Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) and Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), and
- Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) and Rep. Alice Hausman (DFL-St. Paul).

Likewise 12 Republican House members are paired off:

- Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake) and Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria),
- Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) and Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph),
- Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Red Wing) and Rep. Mike Osskopp (R-Lake City),
- Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) and Rep. Michelle Rifenberg (R-La Crescent),
- Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Cologne) and Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), and
- Rep. Ken Wolf (R-Burnsville) and Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville).

Seven of the newly drawn districts contain House members from opposing parties:

- Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) and Rep. Bernie Lieder (DFL-Crookston),
- Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake) and Rep. Leslie Schumacher (DFL-Princeton),
- Rep. Rob Eastlund (R-Isanti) and Rep. Loren Jennings (DFL-Harris),
- Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) and Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison),
- Rep. Howard Swenson (R-Nicollet) and Rep. Ruth Johnson (DFL-St. Peter),
- Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) and Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park), and
- Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) and Rep. Luanne Koskinen (DFL-Coon Rapids).

In the Senate, 18 incumbents are paired and there are nine open seats.

On a federal level, U.S. Reps. Bill Luther and Mark Kennedy were placed in the same district. Other Minnesota members of Congress saw their districts altered somewhat.

In its order issued along with the redistricting plan, Justice Toussaint, who presided over the panel, wrote, "Based on all these considerations, we conclude that although no plan satisfies every interest, this plan is balanced and fair while placing a premium on achieving low population deviations and creating relatively few political subdivision splits."

The next redistricting related deadline is April 30 when municipal wards and precincts are to be redrawn. County commissioner and school district boundaries are to be redrawn by May 28. New polling place locations must be approved by June 11. 🐾

★ AGRICULTURE

Biodiesel becomes law**Filed
without
signature
★ ★ ★**

Minnesota is the first state to pass a law requiring that all diesel fuel sold contain a vegetable oil or animal fat additive known as biodiesel.

Gov. Jesse Ventura let the bill become law without his signature March 15.

The requirement calls for a 2 percent biodiesel blend by March 1, 2005 or earlier if the state or federal government passes a biodiesel tax credit. The state's soybean producers have pointed to biodiesel production as a way to boost the crop's lagging prices.

The House passed the bill, sponsored by Rep. Tim Finseth (R-Angus) and Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing), March 11 on a 78-53 vote after it sailed through the Senate earlier in the day 53-11.

Although Ventura said he supports the use of renewable fuels like biodiesel and economic development opportunities for rural Minnesota, he stopped short of completely endorsing the bill because he said it imposes a government mandate.

"I have reservations about legislation with elaborate conditions for future action," the governor wrote in a letter to Senate President Don Samuelson (DFL-Brainerd) that accompanied the bill. "I am also troubled by the fact that the Legislature can pass SF1495, increase future fuel costs and add to inflation while they ignore inflation in their proposed budget solutions."

Ventura was referring to a budget-balancing agreement that did not take inflation into account for future spending estimates.

Proponents of the biodiesel legislation argued the additive will tack at most a few extra cents to the cost of a gallon of diesel fuel. Opponents argued it will be more expensive and also hurt the state's truck stop operators because truckers will refuel in other states.

The requirement will not apply to motors used by nuclear power plants, trains, and taconite and copper mines. The law also contains a reimbursement clause: If the state repeals the mandate within two years, processors will be able to recoup up to 80 percent of their costs to switch to the biodiesel blend.

Further, the law also calls for at least 50 percent of the biodiesel to be produced in the state. Before the requirement can take effect, the state's annual production capacity must exceed 8 million gallons.

The governor said the "clear opportunity for

our farmers and our state" swayed his decision.

"After balancing the statewide benefits of SF1495 against my concerns about the process used to gain those benefits, I have decided that I cannot sign the bill but I also will not stand in the way of its implementation," the governor wrote.

Enactment of the biodiesel requirement comes as the U.S. Senate considers including biodiesel incentives in its energy bill.

HF1547/SF1495*/CH244

★ ARTS

State photograph

Bovey native Eric Enstrom's world-renowned photograph "Grace" would be added to the growing list of state symbols, under a measure that passed the House March 18 by a 115-11 vote.

The bill would require the secretary of state's office to display the photograph.

Shot by Enstrom in 1918, the photograph features an elderly man sitting pensively with bowed head and folded hands leaning over a table holding a pair of spectacles resting atop a thick book, a bowl of gruel, a loaf of bread, and a knife.

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey), the sponsor of the measure (HF1097/SF1072*), also sponsored a successful resolution in 2001 that urged the U.S. Postal Service to create a postage stamp of the photograph. That stamp has not yet been made.

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

Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul) spoke against the bill because of its religious implications. Solberg had provided members with a pamphlet that said the book on the table was the family Bible.

"I'm not sure this is what the state Legislature should be doing," Paymar said. "I have concerns when we mix religion with government."

Solberg said that while the written material said the book was a Bible, members of the Enstrom family told him that it was the family dictionary.

Rep. Doug Peterson (DFL-Madison), himself a painter, spoke against the bill saying that although the photograph was famous, there wasn't particularly anything that distinguished

it as being Minnesotan.

The Senate passed the bill March 11 by a 51-12 vote. Sen. Bob Lessard (Ind.-Int'l Falls) is the Senate sponsor.

If the legislation becomes law, the photograph would join the state seal, the loon, wild rice, the Norway pine, "Hail! Minnesota," the morel, the walleye, the showy lady's slipper, the blueberry muffin, milk, the agate, and the monarch butterfly as the 14th state symbol.

★ BONDING

Bonding bill passes

The House passed its bonding bill (HF3618) when it was brought back to life March 18 after being rejected days before. The \$839.1 million total plan was approved 95-37, achieving the necessary three-fifths majority.

General obligation bonding in the bill, or bonding backed by the state's taxing powers, is about \$741 million.

The sticking point was a \$9 million allocation for the Northstar Corridor, which would run between Minneapolis and St. Cloud. That provision, sponsored by Rep. Kathy Tingelstad (R-Andover), was added during initial debate on the bill March 14 by a 71-60 vote.

House members then proposed amendments to replace the commuter rail project with bond funds for affordable housing, the new Guthrie Theater, public schools, anti-terrorism measures, and a rail line in southern Minnesota. Some failed on a vote; others were withdrawn, sponsors having made their point.

"This is a sham, all these amendments," said Tingelstad. "I think we've given bad politics quite a name."

Members defended their actions.

"There's a number of us on both sides that feel just as strongly about this," said Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake), whose district includes a large portion of the corridor.

However, after hours of debate, the overall bill failed 68-59. The state constitution requires bonding bills to pass by a three-fifths majority, or 81 votes in the House, and the initial vote did not even get a simple majority.

When the House took the bill up again on March 18, several members stood on the House floor to indicate that although they support the commuter rail project, they were changing their votes so the rest of the projects in the bill would still go through.

The amendment to extract money for the commuter rail plan passed 76-57.

"There's all kinds of issues yet to be answered on this," said Rep. William Kuisle (R-Rochester), sponsor of the amendment.

Unforeseen costs and not enough reduction in traffic were reasons members claimed they opposed legislation to build the corridor.

"I'm worried about my grandchildren being saddled with a transit system we can't afford," said Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea).

Other members argued eliminating the funding was the wrong decision.

Rep. Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) said the state can only create so many roads. "We cannot build our way out of this congestion," she said.

Included in the Senate's \$1.2 billion bonding bill is \$8 million for the commuter rail line. Gov. Jesse Ventura sought \$120 million.

Several other projects are included in the bonding bill. Higher education would receive most of the funds from the bill (\$327 million), with additional money going toward roads and bridges (\$119 million), natural resources projects (\$89 million), trade and economic development (\$59 million), and \$50 million for new joint laboratory facility in St. Paul for the departments of health and agriculture.

House and Senate members will now meet in a conference committee to work out the differences between the bills.

★ CHILDREN

Daycare swimming regulations

Children would be allowed to continue to play in portable wading pools while at an in-home daycare centers, under a measure that passed on the House floor March 19.

The Legislature approved a law in 1999 that permitted the use of wading pools at licensed family daycare homes. But the law has been interpreted as an expired provision.

The bill (HF2600/SF2419*), sponsored by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) and Sen. Arlene Lesewski (R-Marshall), cleared the House on a 127-0 vote.

Under the bill, the child's parent or legal guardian would have to sign a statement indicating they had read materials prepared by the state informing them of the health risks associated with portable wading pools.

A portable wading pool would also be classified as a private resident pool rather than a public pool under Minnesota rules. The pool would have a maximum depth of 24 inches and be capable of being manually emptied and moved.

The House also adopted an amendment to the bill related to the family at-home infant care program. It would base the amount of state assistance on the family's income during

the period they participate in the infant care program.

The Senate concurred with the House amendment and repassed the bill 62-0 on March 20. The bill now goes to the governor.

The House also passed HF1517, another measure related to swimming regulations in family daycare settings, on a 108-20 vote March 19.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan), would exempt daycare swimming pools from the state's public pool regulations.

Under the bill, a daycare provider would still be required to meet a host of requirements before they could let children swim in their pools, including obtaining written consent from one of each child's parents.

The daycare provider would also be obligated to attend a swimming pool operator training course once every five years. An individual trained in first aid and CPR would be required to supervise the pool when children are swimming.

HF1517 awaits a vote by the full Senate.

★ CONSUMERS

Battling telemarketers

A plan to reduce, and possibly, eliminate telemarketing calls is on its way to the House floor.

The House Ways and Means Committee approved HF2710 March 20.

Sponsored by Rep. Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), the bill would create a do-not-call list that would be maintained by the Department of Commerce.

The bill calls for the list to be established by Jan. 1, 2003. It would cost residents nothing to add their telephone number. The notice would be effective for two years.

"Other states do this and it works," Entenza said. Do-not-call lists exist in 26 other states, and there has been discussion of creating a federal list. If a federal register is created, Minnesota's commerce commissioner would transmit the state's list to the federal one.

Telemarketers who wish to solicit goods or services would not be able to call those on the list. To obtain a copy of the list, solicitors would have to pay \$125 for each acquisition. The price would drop to \$90 in fiscal year 2004, and \$75 in fiscal year 2005 and thereafter. The bill would also require solicitors to get an updated copy of the list at least once every 90 days.

Those calling someone on the list would be subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 for each solicitation.

According to research conducted by the

American Association of Retired Persons, there are approximately 140,000 telemarketing firms in the United States. Up to 10 percent may be fraudulent.

Entenza said the fees paid by telemarketers for the lists would cover the administration costs. A fiscal note indicates an \$18,000 general fund profit in fiscal year 2003, \$11,000 in fiscal 2004, and \$1,000 in 2005.

Rep. Steve Dehler (R-St. Joseph) asked if the law would apply to politicians seeking contributions. Entenza said political purposes are exempt. "So the government is telling everyone else what to do and we don't do it ourselves," Dehler said.

A Senate version of the bill (SF3246), sponsored by Sen. Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul), awaits a floor vote.

No later bar hours

Various cities in the state would be given the authority to issue additional liquor licenses, under the omnibus liquor bill that passed the House March 19 by a 105-22 vote.

As amended the bill (HF3058/SF2739*), sponsored by Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) and Sen. James Metzen (DFL-South St. Paul), would give the cities of Albert Lea, Brainerd, Coon Rapids, Eden Prairie, Proctor, and West St. Paul the authority to issue additional liquor licenses.

Much of the debate centered around a few unsuccessful amendments, including one offered by Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) that would have given cities the authority to extend the bar closing time of establishments within their jurisdictions from 1 a.m. to 2 a.m.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) said the amendment would lead to more drinking and more deaths as a result of drunken driving.

Kahn said studies have shown that extending the closing time does not lead to more drinking. Because people would no longer drive to neighboring states with later closing hours, she said, public safety would actually increase. The amendment failed 109-24.

Kahn ultimately withdrew a second amendment that would have allowed the café in the Capitol to sell wine and beer. Last year a law was passed that allowed the establishment to sell those beverages at special events.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Cologne) said that stories from the past of lawmakers drinking during sessions resulted in skepticism from the public and the Legislature should try to maintain a dignified appearance.

Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls) offered an unsuccessful amendment that would have allowed Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and St. Cloud the option of allowing hotel bars to serve liquor until 2 a.m. during the week and 2:30 a.m. on weekends.

She said convention vendors are often not finished working until around midnight and many of them would like to have a drink with their clients. She said the amendment would help Minnesota cities compete for convention business with other cities in the region, like Chicago and Des Moines, that have 2 a.m. bar closing times.

Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) offered an unsuccessful amendment deleting St. Paul from the list of cities in Kelliher's amendment. He said members of the hospitality industry and hotel and restaurant workers told him they did not have the staff needed for the additional work hours. It failed 94-37.

The bill passed the Senate 53-9 on March 11.

Differences between the House and Senate versions may require a conference committee.

★ CRIME

Interstate compact plan

Minnesota would join 25 other states that have adopted an interstate agreement on how to handle those on parole or probation who move between states, under a bill the House passed March 19 by a 131-0 vote.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), the House sponsor of the measure (HF2662/SF2611*), said members of the state Department of Corrections and the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension have been looking at the issue and last year recommended joining the interstate compact.

Stanek said it is important for the state to ratify the compact this year so it is among the first 35 states, which get to set the rules for the compact. The compact will not take effect until 35 states sign on.

Once a state ratifies the compact, it will have one vote in a national commission that will oversee the compact and create rules for member states.

According to the Council of State Governments, there are 4 million adults on parole or probation nationwide, and about 250,000 of them cross state lines each year.

At a joint meeting of the House and Senate Crime Prevention committees Feb. 1, Mike McCabe, director of the Midwestern Office of the Council of State Governments, said the current interstate compact was set in place in the 1930s and is outdated. A new compact is needed because of problems with enforcement, he said.

A number of states are out of compliance with the terms of the compact, allowing parolees and probationers to slip through the cracks when moving between states, he said.

Other states were not aware of their obligations as members of the compact or were ignoring their responsibilities. And since the former compact did not include any penalty for states not following the rules, there was little other states could do about it.

Compact provisions would be legally binding and would supercede the state laws of member states.

Sponsored by Sen. Jane Ranum (DFL-Mpls) in the Senate, the bill passed 63-0 in that body March 12 and will now be presented to Gov. Jesse Ventura for consideration.

★ EDUCATION

State mandate opt-out

School districts that don't like certain state mandates, such as staff development requirements or graduation standards for their students, might soon be able to opt out of those provisions.

"It's about communication, flexibility, and accountability," said Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake), sponsor of HF3007 that would allow districts to choose not to adhere to some mandates under certain conditions. He pointed out that mandates, which that do not fit all districts, can be burdensome.

Mark Wolack, assistant superintendent at Minnetonka schools, said the bill is an opportunity to be creative. "We need to look at delivering services differently," he said.

But others, testifying at the March 18 meeting of the House Education Policy Committee, said the issues call for a statewide discussion.

"If a mandate is not needed, let's use the legislative process," said Jan Alswager, representing Education Minnesota. "Would laws really mean anything?"

Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) said there isn't a law that could not be challenged in the form of a bill and debated properly.

"This bill is begging for chaos," said Kathy Kosnoff, attorney for the Minnesota Disability Law Center.

Olson explained that under the bill districts couldn't opt out of anything without legislative oversight.

"We need communication from the local level," he maintained.

At least 10 percent of school districts would have to determine a particular state mandate should not apply to them, under the bill. After a minimum of one public hearing, during which a loss of state or federal funds would have to be communicated, a district would adopt a resolution describing reasons for wanting to opt out of the mandate.

The resolution must also illustrate "how the district will meet the objectives of the mandate or why the objectives do not apply to the school district," according to the bill.

The resolution would have to be filed with the state auditor, for a fee of \$75. The state auditor would be required to keep on its Web site a list of all state mandates named in resolutions.

The committee approved the bill, and it will now go to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Health insurance costs

Jessica Hanson, a second-year science teacher in Virginia, Minn., said the inadequacy of her health insurance was part of the reason she looked for a new teaching job after her first year out of school.

Now, after little improvement in the health care plan in her second job, she may go one step further.

"With the current situation of my class sizes reaching 40 students, a failed referendum in my district, and such horrendous health coverage, I am seriously considering leaving the profession," she wrote in a letter to Education Minnesota. The letter was included in a packet submitted to the committee.

The state's largest education organization strongly supports HF1868, approved March 18 by the House Education Policy Committee. The bill would create a three-year pilot project for a statewide health insurance



Darrell Baty, a field representative for Education Minnesota, testifies March 18 in front of the House Education Policy Committee for a bill that would, among other things, establish a pilot project for statewide health insurance for school district employees.

plan for school employees in an effort to recruit and retain teachers like Hanson.

But opponents claim a new state law is not a good solution.

"If you think bigger is better, you've got to be crazy," said Bill Wenmark, president of NOW Care Medical Centers, and a Minnetonka School Board member. "It's about mandates and markets."

Rep. Rob Eastlund (R-Isanti) asked why teacher unions couldn't just create a statewide pool. Darrell Baty, field representative for Education Minnesota, said legislation would be easiest.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), sponsor of the bill, said it "just doesn't seem right" for insurance premiums for families to be costing around \$1,000 a year. Committee members received letters from teachers who said premium rate hikes have canceled out salary raises.

Premium insurance rates are driven by claims. Proponents said a large pool of people creates more data, resulting in better plan design that would cost less.

The health insurance plan would be governed by a labor-management board that would decide specifications, structure, benefits, and premiums for employees of up to 50 school districts. The board would be required to submit annual reports to the Legislature. Money for the plan would come in the form of a loan from the tobacco endowment fund.

The bill now travels to the House K-12 Education Finance Committee.

★ EMPLOYMENT

Workers' compensation changes

A bill (HF3348/SF3136*) that clarifies workers' compensation provisions was passed 131-0 by the House March 19.

The changes were requested by the Workers' Compensation Advisory Council, according to House sponsor Rep. Bud Nornes (R-Fergus Falls).

Previously, employers or insurers were required to pay \$60,000 to the estate of an employee who has neither left dependents nor designated others to receive death benefits. The bill would require the payment to be made to the estate within 14 days of when the insurer receives notice that a personal representative for the estate has been appointed.

An injured minor or incapacitated person, in former law, was required to have a guardian or conservator if that person received benefits. Now that requirement would only pertain if the total amount of benefits exceeds \$3,000.

The Department of Labor and Industry would no longer have to keep a list of neutral physicians for use in workers' compensation cases. Officials said they want the provision removed because they have never been able to develop the list.

The bill is sponsored in the Senate by Sen. Arlene Lesewski (R-Marshall). It passed 62-0 in the Senate March 11, and now it awaits the governor's signature.

★ ENVIRONMENT

Monitoring water

The full House strongly endorsed a measure March 18 that would allow the state Pollution Control Agency to develop a citizen-based water quality monitoring project.

Only a fraction of the state's lakes and rivers are currently tested for pollutants. The plan is modeled after projects in Missouri and Iowa that have attracted 39,000 and 17,000 volunteers, respectively.

Sponsored by Rep. Chris Gerlach (R-Apple Valley) and Sen. Jane Krentz (DFL-May Township), the bill (HF3275/SF2932*) passed the House 125-7. The Senate approved the measure 59-0 March 19. It now goes to the governor.

The measure would enable the PCA to provide technical assistance and training to volunteers to ensure the data collected has uniform standards.

"This is a solution, not *the* solution," Gerlach said of the state's larger problem of protecting bodies of water from pollution.

He said it would cost about \$5 million to hire state employees for similar work.

Groups likely to be involved in the monitoring project include lake associations, watershed districts, soil and water conservation boards, and youth groups.

The citizen-based water quality monitoring project is part of the Protect Our Waters agenda promoted by the Minnesota Environmental Partnership, a coalition of state environmental advocacy groups.

The bill was amended on the House floor to give the PCA the option of encouraging citizen-based monitoring. Rep. Bob Ness (R-Dassel), who offered the amendment, said the bill would otherwise impose another mandate on the PCA at a time when the agency's budget is already stretched thin.

The bill was also amended to expire June 30, 2005.

Rep. Elaine Harder (R-Jackson) proposed an amendment that would have barred environmental data gathered by volunteers to be used

in lawsuits. The amendment failed 82-50.

Speaking in opposition to the amendment, Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls) said the measure would contradict current state law. She also criticized the amendment for implicitly questioning the motives of volunteers. "This is not gotcha water testing," she said.

Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls) called the bill a Band-Aid solution to a much larger problem. She pointed to studies showing that the state lags behind others in the region in assessing water quality.

Further, of the water bodies tested, a significant portion has been found to be too polluted for swimming or fishing, she said.

★ FAMILY

Judicial consistency

Signed
by
the
governor
★ ★ ★

A new law will allow all judicial matters of a family to be heard by the same judge or referee in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, effective July 1, 2002.

Gov. Jesse Ventura signed the law March 14.

Since most judicial districts in the state already have one judge assigned to family, probate, or juvenile affairs, the bill only addresses the second and fourth judicial districts, which include the two counties.

The measure does not include juvenile delinquency proceedings.

Rep. Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) sponsored the bill in the House, and Sen. Richard Cohen (DFL-St. Paul) was the Senate sponsor.

Notice

The House Public Information Office is working to develop a new district finder so our staff can help members of the public determine what their new districts will be for the November elections. However, we rely on information produced by the Secretary of State and local county auditors. Deadlines for drawing ward and precinct lines are still a few weeks away. As soon as we have that information, we will update our district finders. Until then, we may direct you to your county auditor for further assistance. Law requires that registered voters be informed of their new districts where applicable. In addition, our staff is happy to assist you with determining your current representative, who is elected to serve you through the end of 2002, regardless of whatever new district you may be in. Thank you for your patience.

During a Feb. 21 House Civil Law Committee hearing, Assistant Chief Judge Gregg Johnson from the Second Judicial District in Ramsey County spoke in favor of the bill.

He said the measure came from a pilot program that started in 1996. The program placed all cases such as divorce, domestic abuse or child protection with the same judge or referee.

That allows the family and the judge to become familiar with each other and helps the judge when making decisions about family matters, he said.

Janet Marshall with the Minnesota Supreme Court Administrator's Office said any other county could already handle cases in such a way, and only Ramsey and Hennepin counties are arranged differently.

HF3344*/SF2892/CH242

★ GAME & FISH

Overlimit law changes

A bill stiffening penalties for hunters and anglers who violate the state's game limit laws has passed both the House and Senate and is on its way to the governor for his consideration.

The House passed the measure (HF94/SF222*), sponsored by Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin) and Sen. Jane Krentz (DFL-May Township), on March 19 by a 131-1 vote. The Senate backed the bill 61-0 on March 12.

After failing on the House floor last session, Haas said the bill has been revised to accommodate concerns of commercial anglers and aquatic farmers.

Haas said the bill is still aimed at targeting people who flagrantly violate the limit laws — those taking more than 50 fish above the limit, for instance.

Under the bill, a Department of Natural Resources enforcement officer would be authorized to seize boats, motors, and trailers used to take or transport wild animals or fish with a restitution value of more than \$500. The officer would also be directed to seize the hunting licenses of those involved in the incident.

For limit law violators who take wild animals or fish valued at more than \$5,000, the officer would be authorized to seize all of the individual's gaming licenses.

People who illegally take wild animals worth more than \$1,000, as determined by law, would be guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

Those found in violation would be allowed to petition for a court hearing.

People convicted of illegally taking wild animals worth more than \$5,000 would be barred from obtaining a license for five years.

The same restriction would apply to those who unlawfully hunt animals valued at more than \$500 within 10 years of previous license revocations for similar offenses.

Dollar values assigned to game include \$100 for a canvasback, \$1,000 for a trumpeter swan, and \$10 for a yellow perch of at least 10 inches. Other fish are also assigned dollar values based on their size.

The bill, which would take effect March 1, 2003, would exempt minnow dealers and commercial anglers who inadvertently take too many fish and then release them.

★ GOVERNMENT

Restructuring government

The executive branch of government would be restructured, under a bill that passed the House 76-57 on March 21.

HF3270, sponsored by Rep. Philip Krinkie (R-Shoreview), makes \$38.9 million in cuts to

the budgets of the Legislature and various agencies, boards, and commissions to address the state's remaining budget deficit.

The bill would reorganize the governor's cabinet into eight secretary-level positions adopting recommendations from a 1994 report produced by the Minnesota Commission on Reform and Efficiency, ordered by the 1991 Legislature.

The governor's cabinet would consist of secretaries appointed by the governor and approved by the Senate in the areas of administration, commerce and trade, education, finance, health and human resources, natural resources, public safety, and transportation.

State agencies would then be reorganized under the eight secretaries. Krinkie said the change would save \$2 million this biennium and \$10 million in 2004-2005.

The bill would also reduce the Legislature's budget by \$4.6 million in 2002-2003, and \$9.2 million in 2004-2005. Krinkie said that between the first and second phases of budget cuts the total reduction to the Legislature would be around 10 percent.

Under the measure, the secretary of state's budget would be cut \$175,000 and the State Arts Board by \$389,000.

An amendment offered by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) that restored a proposed reduction of \$209,000 to the state's Humanities Commission was adopted. The amendment increased the original cut of \$470,000 to the attorney general's office by that amount.

An amendment offered by Rep. Jim Davnie (DFL-Mpls) deleted a section of the bill that would have privatized the inspection process of owner-occupied, single-family buildings.

Davnies said using private inspectors would add inconsistencies to the process because cities can hold their inspectors to a consistent standard. He said potential conflicts of interest of having building owners pay private inspectors would also be introduced into the process.

Krinkie pointed out that the bill would allow the commissioner of the Department of Administration to certify inspectors who are qualified to perform inspections, and it specifies that a municipality may require building owners to only select certified inspectors. He said it was a false assumption that private inspectors would be more corrupt than public inspectors.

CREDIT UNION PROTECTION



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Joe Witt, representing the Minnesota Bankers Association, testifies March 18 before the House Taxes Committee regarding a bill that would adopt a Minnesota credit union protection act.

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

Family member data

Signed
by
the
governor
★ ★ ★

A new law signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura March 14 will provide some privacy and protection to the family members of public employees.

For the most part, public employees' personnel data is public information. Data such as the employee's name, salary, job title, education, and training background is all public.

Effective Aug. 1, 2002, the new law specifies that data pertaining to an employee's dependents is private data.

State law already classifies some information as private, such as information relating to a person who is doing undercover law enforcement work or employee assistance data where the employee seeks counseling in a diagnostic or referral services program.

Rep. Mark Thompson (DFL-New Hope), the House sponsor, said that for safety reasons certain law enforcement personnel data is considered private, but prior law did not provide the same protection to family members.

The new law also transfers duties relating to the administration of the Social Security program for public employees from the Department of Employee Relations to the Public Employees Retirement Association.

Sen. John Marty (DFL-Roseville) was the Senate sponsor.

HF3296*/SF3206/CH243

Signature changes

Signed
by
the
governor
★ ★ ★

A new law signed by Gov. Jesse Ventura March 15 relaxes some of the signature requirements for certain building and construction related documents.

State law previously required any licensed architect, engineer, land surveyor, landscape architect, geoscientist, or certified interior designer to physically sign each plan, specification, plat, report, and other official documents they prepare.

The new law eliminates the signature requirement on documents prepared in those licensed professions that are drafts, or of a preliminary, schematic, or design development nature.

The law still requires a signature on the final version of the documents.

Officials from the state Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architects, Geoscience, and Interior Design testified that prior to the law the practice of most in the industry was to only sign the final version of documents.

The new law, effective March 16, 2002, also

adds drawings to the list of documents covered under state law, and specifies that a stamp, printed signature, or electronic signature has the same force and effect as a handwritten signature if it creates an accurate depiction of the original signature.

Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park) and Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park) were the sponsors.

HF2612*/SF2562/CH245

Filling township seats

Signed
by
the
governor
★ ★ ★

Town boards will be able to fill temporary vacancies, under a new law signed March 14 by Gov. Jesse Ventura.

It will 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.

Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), the House sponsor, said the issue was brought to him by officials from the Minnesota Association of Townships.

Prior law specified the circumstances under which an elected position could be defined as vacant. Those included the death of the incumbent, the resignation of the incumbent, the incumbent moving out of state, the conviction of an "infamous" crime or violation of official oath, or the official's refusal to take the oath of office.

Effective Aug. 1, 2002, the law allows town boards to declare and fill vacancies when an officer is unable or unwilling to serve in the office or attend board meetings for a 90-day period because of illness or absence.

Under the new law, town boards, by resolution, can declare a vacancy exists and are allowed to 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. If the original member is later able to resume his or her duties, the board is required by resolution to remove the appointed officeholder and restore the original member to office.

Sen. Jim Vickerman (DFL-Tracy) was the Senate sponsor.

HF2637*/SF2472/CH241

★ HEALTH

Bioterrorism plan

A bill that would increase the state's ability to respond to a bioterrorism event cleared another House committee.

The House Ways and Means Committee

gave its approval March 15, sending the bill (HF3031) to the House floor.

Sponsored by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe), the bill would clarify the governor's emergency powers and would outline the rights of citizens quarantined to prevent the spread of disease. The bill is also referred to as the Minnesota emergency health powers act.

Included in the gubernatorial powers would be an expansion of authority to declare emergencies, and the authority to safely dispose of dead bodies. The governor would be required to call the Legislature into session and consult with the commissioner of health before issuing the emergency declaration, unless time is of the essence, in which case the governor must convene the Legislature at the same time an emergency is declared.

The bill's emergency health powers trigger is bioterrorism, defined as "the intentional use or threatened use of a biological agent to harm or endanger members of the public."

It also calls for the commissioner of health to study what statutory changes need to be made to ensure citizen's rights while the state deals with an attack. Federal funds would cover the approximate \$114,000 cost of the study.

An amendment by Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls) was adopted. The bill states that people isolated or quarantined with communicable diseases must be "monitored regularly to determine if they require continued isolation or quarantine." The amendment would simply require that those persons have "a reliable means to communicate 24 hours a day with health officials and to summon emergency health services."

Its companion bill (SF2669) awaits a hearing by the full Senate. Sen. John Hottinger (DFL-Mankato) is the Senate sponsor.

Releasing contact lens prescriptions

A bill that requires eye doctors to provide patients with their prescriptions for contact lenses is on its way to the governor.

The House voted 127-0 March 19 to pass a bill (HF2603/SF2627*), sponsored by Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie) and Sen. Sheila Kiscaden (R-Rochester). The Senate passed the bill 63-0 on March 12.

The bill would require any professional performing an eye exam, such as an optometrist or physician, to provide patients a copy of their prescription after an exam and fitting. The eye doctor, however, would be allowed to refuse to provide the prescription until the patient pays for the services.

The prescription would be valid for two years unless a different expiration date is

warranted by a patient's eyesight.

The bill also calls for an eye doctor to promptly respond to requests to verify a patient's prescription from other physicians, optometrists, or contact lens retailers.

It would also bar eye doctors from substituting a different contact lens type than the one ordered on the prescription. Further, optometrists would not be allowed to dispense contact lenses beyond the prescription's expiration date.

Other prohibited conduct outlined in the bill includes the following:

- requiring a patient to purchase contact lenses before releasing the prescription;
- charging a fee for release of the prescription; and
- prescribing a specific brand of contact lenses that could only be dispensed by the optometrist who conducted the eye exam.

An optometrist's failure to comply with provisions of the bill would warrant disciplinary action by the state Board of Optometry.

HIGHER EDUCATION

MnSCU contracts

As part of the state's budget reduction law, groups in the state's executive branch are prohibited from entering into contracts for professional and technical services before July 1, 2003.

The law does not include positions that relate to the public health, welfare, or safety that threatens government workings, and positions entirely paid for with federal funds.

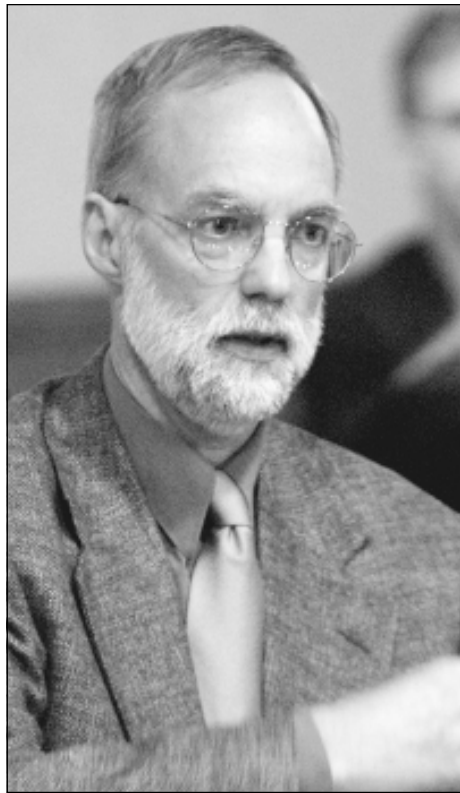
But the law also inadvertently affects certain activities at college campuses in the state.

A plan sponsored by Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) would excuse one group of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) contracts from the law.

HF3690 would exempt "a Minnesota State Colleges and Universities contract paid for from student fees or funds from private sources." In a three-day span it was approved by the House Higher Education Finance Committee, the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee, and the House Ways and Means Committee. It awaits a vote by the full House.

In particular, the bill addresses school functions paid for out of student fees.

Steve Frantz, MnSCU system director for disability and student life, spoke of things that would likely not happen unless this proposal is enacted. They include speakers and photographers at graduation, elders that lead drum



Steve Frantz, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system director for disability and student life, testifies March 18 before the House Higher Education Finance Committee in support of a bill that would exempt MnSCU contracts paid for from student fees or private funds from the statewide contract moratorium.

and pipe ceremonies, guest conductors for arts and music festivals, bands for school dances, officials for some sporting events, and the presence of some specialized medical personnel for health services, such as tuberculosis screening.

He said schools could pay for those services with general funds, but instead set up a fee structure.

"All graduation services on my campus (Mesabi Range Community and Technical College) are paid for by student fees," said Brad Krasaway, president of the Minnesota State College Student Association.

A March 5 letter to legislators signed by eight members of the St. Cloud State University Program Board states: "The University Program Board processes at least 150 contracts per year and these contracts are what allow the university to bring performers and speakers to our campus and community.

"Freezing our budget causes us to halt our programming, therefore preventing the co-curricular events that provide students with both educational and entertainment opportunities."

The bill would take effect the day following enactment.

Seifert testified to the rules committee that

MnSCU applied for three broad waivers allowed under the new law, but all were denied by the Department of Administration.

A companion bill in the Senate (SF3444), sponsored by Sen. Tony Kinkel (DFL-Park Rapids), has been referred to the Senate Education Committee.

Agent bill advances

A plan that would force agents wishing to represent collegiate student-athletes to register with the state is headed for the House floor.

HF2719, sponsored by Rep. Peggy Leppik (R-Golden Valley), was approved by the House Ways and Means Committee March 15.

The bill would enact the Uniform Athlete Agents Act that was drafted by the National Conference of Commissioners of Uniform State Laws. The plan was designed to standardize state regulations that will govern agents conduct with student-athletes.

Under the bill, which would take effect Jan. 1, 2003, an agent wanting to represent a student-athlete in negotiating a professional sports contract must first register with the state Department of Commerce. If a student-athlete initiates discussion, the agent must submit an application within seven days.

Agents violating this provision could be fined up to \$25,000 per incident.

The registration fee would be \$1,000 and must be renewed every two years. Parents wishing to represent their child would be exempted from the fee. Leppik said the fee would be more than adequate to cover administration costs.

"This bill earns money for the state," she said.

The bill also includes language warning student-athletes that by signing with an agent they may lose their eligibility. It also would allow student-athletes to cancel a contract within 14 days of signing it, but notes that a cancellation may not reinstate one's eligibility.

During Feb. 4 testimony before the House Higher Education Finance Committee, Frank Kara, compliance director at the University of Minnesota, said the topic is "not a huge problem" at the university, but is becoming more of an issue. He said the university supports the plan, as does the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

A companion bill (SF2827) awaits action by the full Senate. It is sponsored by Sen. Deanna Wiener (DFL-Eagan).

★ INSURANCE

Benefits for accident victims

A bill passed by the House would clarify that auto accident victims are entitled to receive no-fault medical benefits.

The bill (HF1413/SF1226*), sponsored by Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield) and Sen. Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples), received a 130-0 vote on the House floor March 19.

Current statute does not clearly state that these victims can receive full medical benefits for necessary care without the restrictions of managed care requirements.

The bill would prohibit health insurance companies from contracting to provide managed care services to no-fault claimants.

Victims of accidents "have no idea they are being pushed into managed care provisions," Tuma said.

In past years bills have been introduced to allow auto insurers to use managed care, but none have become law.

Tuma said the bill is supported by several medical organizations that want to provide quality care to patients.

The Senate passed the bill March 13 on a 61-0 vote.

The bill awaits the signature of Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Health premium change

The House backed a bill March 19 that would cap health insurance premiums for small businesses. The vote was 106-25.

Under HF2988, sponsored by Rep. Bill Haas (R-Champlin), insurance providers would be barred from raising insurance premiums more than 15 percent plus the trend in rate increases.

Haas, an employee benefits broker, said the measure would help control escalating health insurance costs. Employers around the state have seen rate hikes as high as 40 percent in the course of a year. Under the bill, the rates could be limited to around 27 percent for some small employers.

The House approved the rate cap as an amendment, which passed 97-35.

The bill would also lower the loss ratio standard for insurance providers to 60 percent, meaning the companies must pay out at least 60 cents in claims for each premium dollar received.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls) spoke in opposition to lowering the standard, arguing it would increase insurance company profits while squeezing more Minnesotans off of health plans.

Furthermore, the bill would allow insurance providers to change insurance rates on the same day it reports the change to the Depart-

ment of Commerce under a "file-and-use" model. The department, however, will still be authorized to reject the change within 60 days.

Under current law, the department is required to pre-approve any rate change.

Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin) spoke in opposition to the changes, saying it would allow insurance companies to dramatically increase rates without Department of Commerce oversight.

"This is a very bad idea," Leighton said. "It's going to take away consumer protections."

In response, Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan), who has worked as an insurance underwriter, said the "file-and-use" system encourages market competition.

Haas also said the overall intent of the bill is to draw more insurance carriers to the state.

A companion bill in the Senate (SF3023), sponsored by Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park), awaits action on the Senate floor.

Liability clarification

Signed
by
the
governor
★ ★ ★

Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a bill March 14 that in essence changes a single word in the state's insurance laws.

The legislation clarifies state law dealing with automobile liability coverage.

Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston), who sponsored the measure in the House, said the new law is a result of a situation where a 16-year-old driver borrowed a neighbor's car with permission and was involved in an accident. The driver did not have insurance, but Davids said that usually the driver would have been covered by her parent's liability coverage.

Prior law stated that in such an incident the insurance company would be required to pay damages arising out of the ownership, maintenance, or use of "a" motor vehicle.

Two lower district courts agreed that the insurance company was obligated to pay the damages under the previous law. But the state Supreme Court overturned the lower courts' rulings and said the statute was vague.

Davids said that in its majority opinion the court stated the Legislature could clarify its intent by using the word "any" instead of "a." "In my opinion 'a' vehicle would mean 'any' vehicle," he said.

The law changes the statute to read "any," and also further clarifies intent by adding a clause that states "including a motor vehicle permissively operated by an insured."

Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park) was the Senate sponsor.

The law is effective March 15.
HF2783*/SF2671/CH234

★ LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Appointed county positions

Carlton and Pine counties would be added to the list of counties changing elected positions to appointed ones, under a bill headed to the governor.

HF2753/SF2590*, sponsored by Rep. Bill Hilty (DFL-Finlayson) and Sen. Becky Lourey (DFL-Kerrick), passed the House 95-35 March 19, and the Senate 48-8 March 4.

It would allow the Carlton County board, by a resolution approved by 80 percent of its members, to change the recorder position from elected to appointed.

The bill would also permit Pine County to use the same process to combine the assessor and recorder positions into one and make the newly created position appointed rather than elected.

The bill was the third of the March 19 floor session granting authority to counties to change elected positions to appointed ones. Earlier in the day bills for Polk (HF2652/SF2434*) and Steele (HF3074/SF2834*) counties passed the House.

Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Cologne) questioned whether voters of the counties were given the chance to vote on whether the positions should change.

Similar to legislation passed in previous years, each of the bills granting counties the authority to change elected positions into appointed ones contains a reverse referendum provision that would allow voters to petition to request a referendum on the issue.

Hilty said the increasingly technical duties of the positions are reflected in the number of bills that have come forward on behalf of counties.

"If there was a number of people standing in line for county recorder (positions) than we wouldn't be seeing these bills year after year," he said.

Appointed position

The Steele County recorder would become the latest county official to join the list of appointed rather than elected positions, under a measure passed by the House March 18. The vote on the bill was 93-37.

The bill (HF3074/SF2834*), sponsored by Rep. Connie Ruth (R-Owatonna) and Senate Minority Leader Dick Day (R-Owatonna), would allow Steele County to change the position to an appointed one by a four-fifths vote of the county board. The bill would also require the county to provide voters an opportunity for a reverse referendum on the issue.

Last year the Legislature approved similar

measures for Cass, Goodhue, Hubbard, and Wright counties. Several other counties have received similar authority in previous years.

State law allows all the state's counties to change the positions of auditor, treasurer, sheriff, and recorder to appointed rather than elected by a referendum.

Ruth said county officials brought the issue to her. Officials testified in the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee hearing Feb. 20 that the recorder position increasingly has become more technical in nature. The position involves decisions about office operations but has no broad county policy-making authority.

The Senate passed the bill 48-7 March 4. It now awaits the signature of Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Polk positions

Candidates for the county recorder and auditor-treasurer positions in Polk County would be able to put away their election brochures under a measure that passed the House March 19 by a 95-35 vote.

The bill (HF2652/SF2434*) sponsored by Rep. Bernie Lieder (DFL-Crookston) and Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine), would allow the county board, by an 80 percent vote, to change those two positions from elected to appointed.

Lieder said the bill is similar to another bill (HF3074/SF2834*) that passed the House the previous day allowing Steele County to appoint its recorder pending approval by the county board.

Because the duties of the positions are becoming more technical, county officials requested the authority to appoint people to the jobs.

Like previous legislation allowing other counties to appoint certain positions, the bill contains a provision that would require the county to provide for a reverse referendum to allow voters to restore the elected nature of the position by a petition signed by at least 10 percent of the registered voters of the county.

The Senate passed the bill Feb. 11 by a 63-1 vote. It now awaits the governor's signature.

Commission expansion

Signed
by
the
governor
★ ★ ★

The second public utilities commission member expansion bill of the 2002 session was signed into law by Gov. Jesse Ventura March 14.

The new law increases the Delano Public Utilities Commission from three members to five. Ventura signed a similar law regarding the Shakopee Public Utili-

ties Commission one week earlier.

The city of Grand Rapids received the same authority from the Legislature in 1999.

Public utility commissions are responsible for the management of publicly owned water and electric utilities. The new law maintains staggered three-year terms for the Delano commission and prohibits more than one city council member from serving on the commission at any time.

Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound), the House sponsor, said that since the commission was formed in 1936, the city's population has quadrupled and the commission's budget has increased 800 percent. The current budget is around \$2.8 million, which is 50 percent higher than the city's general fund.

Sen. Gen Olson (R-Minnetrista) sponsored the measure in the Senate.

The new law is effective upon local approval.
HF3202*/SF2801/CH238

RECREATION



Stadium plan heads to the floor

The latest House proposal to help finance a stadium for the Minnesota Twins is a hit with the team's president.

Jerry Bell told the House Ways and Means Committee March 20 that the amended bill, approved by the committee 22-6, is the first proposal in six years that the team thinks will work.

As it came to the committee, the bill (HF2214), sponsored by Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake), would divide construction costs equally between the team and revenue bonds issued by a host city. The proposal called for a variety of taxes including a ticket tax, a hotel/motel tax in the community, and a statewide sales tax on newspapers and magazines to pay off the bonds.

The committee adopted an amendment offered by Rep. Dan McElroy (R-Burnsville) that incorporated a proposal put forth by Gov. Jesse Ventura's administration, developed by Peter Sausen, an assistant commissioner with the Department of Finance.

Under the amendment, the state would issue up to \$330 million in revenue bonds to make a loan to a host city. The Twins and other private sources would be responsible for contributing \$165 million up front that would go into a gift fund.

The interest from the gift fund, estimated to be around 8.5 percent, would go to paying off the bonds. The team would also work out an arrangement with the host city to make annual \$10 million payments to pay off the loan.

Under the proposal the host city would be

authorized to impose hospitality and hotel and motel taxes of up to 5 percent, and a parking surcharge to pay off the loan.

The committee turned down several other amendments to the bill, including one offered by Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal) that would have helped the cause to build a stadium in Minneapolis.

His amendment would have changed provisions that specify the team partner with a city to allow the team to partner also with a "local government unit."

McElroy spoke against the amendment saying that under state law the term local government unit includes bodies such as the Metropolitan Council and the Metropolitan Mosquito Control Board. He is also concerned about allowing a county to impose a tax on a single city within its borders.

Hennepin County Board Chair Mike Opat said there is precedent for taxing cities differently, and that the county already imposes a tax on its suburbs but not on the city of Minneapolis to pay for the new downtown library.

The committee also voted down an amendment offered by Rep. Richard Mulder (R-Ivanhoe) requiring the state to provide the same financial package to every new or expanded business in the state. Mulder said that the contributions made by small businesses in the state are more important than Major League Baseball.

McElroy said the state already has programs to assist small businesses and that no other business in the state has 1.6 million people listening on radio, 700,000 watching on TV, or has an anti-trust exemption granted by Congress limiting the number of entities allowed to participate.

The bill now goes to the House floor.

RETIREMENT



Titles may be retained

Signed
by
the
governor
★ ★ ★

Gov. Jesse Ventura signed a new law March 14 allowing retired engineers to use their profession's title.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), the House sponsor, said the issue was brought to him by a constituent but applies to people throughout the state.

To ensure public safety and to minimize confusion due in part to deceptive advertising, current licensing laws for people who practice architecture, landscape architecture, professional engineering, professional geoscience, land surveying, and interior design prohibit the use of the titles unless the person is properly licensed and certified.

Those professions are licensed by the state Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience and Interior Design. The 21-member board is appointed by the governor and consists of members of the various professions.

The law specifies that individuals who are retired from one of the professions will be restricted from using the title.

Stanek said that his constituent, who was an engineer for more than 40 years, does a large amount of volunteer work at schools and various other functions and would like to refer to himself as a retired engineer.

The Senate sponsor was Sen. Warren Limmer (R-Maple Grove).

The new law is effective Aug. 1, 2002.
HF2629*/SF2913/CH239

★ SAFETY

Anti-terrorism plan passes

After about five hours of floor debate, the House voted 94-39 March 20 to pass an anti-terrorism bill designed to help the state prevent and respond to terrorism.

Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove), a Minneapolis police captain and sponsor of HF2622, said the package would help protect Minnesota.

During the floor session, legislators offered numerous amendments to the bill, most of which were not adopted.

Among the few substantive changes that were adopted was an additional section requiring those who fly crop-spraying planes to undergo a criminal background check.

A section making it a crime to trespass on the roof of a school building was also removed from the bill.

HF2622 would establish stricter rules for biological agents, make it more difficult to get a Minnesota driver's license, and would require a color-coding of driver's licenses of non-citizens in the state temporarily. It would also make it illegal to trespass on non-public areas of critical public service utilities, such as power plants and rail yards.

Further, it would allow law enforcement to more easily receive a permit to use a roving wire tap, and would allow Internet service providers to hand over stored information if needed to protect life.

The bill was amended in the House Ways and Means Committee March 18 to use \$22 million of the state's anti-tobacco settlement fund to help local law enforcement agencies prepare and handle terrorism, a sore spot for some legislators who felt the money should instead be taken from the state's general fund.

An amendment to change the funding source failed on the House floor 71-62.

The Ways and Means Committee also removed a portion of the bill that would have allowed Minnesota drivers to purchase "United We Stand" license plates, with a portion of the proceeds going to the federal government to pay for efforts related to fighting terrorism.

Other rejected changes to the bill include a plan to remove the distinguishing color and marks on the driver's licenses of non-citizens, and a plan to require all critical public facilities covered by the bill to have a no trespassing sign posted.

Many members were especially worried that marking the driver's licenses of non-citizens would lead to discrimination.

Opponents favored an earlier version of the bill that required non-citizen's licenses to be marked in code on the back of the license.

Rep. Wes Skoglund (DFL-Mpls), whose proposal to remove the color-coding failed 70-62, said there is no reason to place that information on the front of the license.

"We live in a racist society," said Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul). "When you put an identifying mark on someone, you're

encouraging folks to bring out the worst in human behavior."

Rep. John Tuma (R-Northfield), chair of the House Crime Prevention Committee, said the bill was well debated in committees and tries to balance the rights of citizens with the need to protect citizens.

The Senate has developed its own version of an anti-terrorism package (SF2683). It awaits a hearing by the Senate Finance Committee.

Collecting fire funds

A House committee kept alive a bill that would help municipal or volunteer fire departments collect money.

HF211, sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), would require the state transportation commissioner to set up a vehicle fire revolving account in the general fund.

The bill was passed March 15 by the House Ways and Means Committee and now heads for the House floor.

Money received in reimbursements for extinguishing vehicle fires in trunk highway rights-of-way or interstate highways would be put into the account. A maximum of \$300 would then be appropriated to make reimbursements to departments for their costs, if the department is not reimbursed elsewhere.

"Basically, this creates a pass-thru account," Ozment said.

The fund would be a last resort after first going to the person for the money, and then the county auditor where the person lives through a levy placed on the driver's property.

"We'd prefer departments get their money from the people, their insurance company, or the county," Ozment said.

John Dooley, an attorney with the Minnesota Association of Townships, said it generally costs \$300 to \$500 to extinguish a car fire. Estimates show that about 10 percent of fires remain unpaid.

He previously told the House Transportation Finance Committee that officials hope 50 percent to 70 percent of unpaid fees can be collected through county auditors without using the new account.

MISS MINNESOTA



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Miss Minnesota Kari Knuttila of Detroit Lakes attends the March 19 session of the House where she was introduced by Rep. Roxann Daggett.

★ TAXES

Meeting federal guidelines

In signing the federal "Victims of Terrorism Relief Act of 2001" President George W. Bush said that although the government cannot take away the pain and sorrow of the families that lost loved ones Sept. 11, providing financial relief is an important example of national unity and resolve.

The federal law waives any income tax obligations on wages earned by terrorism victims in the year of their death, or in the preceding year. The law also applies to victims of the ensuing anthrax attacks and victims of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

The House Taxes Committee heard a bill (HF3594) March 18 that would conform the state's tax laws to the federal act. Rep. Ron Abrams (R-Minnetonka), committee chair and the bill's sponsor, said the measure would be considered for possible inclusion in a potential omnibus tax bill.

"Unfortunately we live in a world where these provisions may have to be used by Minnesotans," Abrams said.

The costs of the bill would be negligible according to the Department of Revenue. John Haugen, an attorney with the department, said the federal law also provides estate tax rate relief and makes nontaxable the settlement and charitable funds, provided by groups like the American Red Cross to the victim's families.

Neither the federal or state benefits would apply to perpetrators of the attacks.

Previous to the passing of the federal law, similar tax breaks were provided to military personnel killed in active duty and to civilian employees killed in a combat zone.

★ TRANSPORTATION

Gas tax for construction

A plan to increase the state's gas tax progressed March 19 when the House Capital Investment Committee approved HF3364 and referred it without recommendation to the House Taxes Committee.

Rep. William Kuisle (R-Rochester), the bill's sponsor, proposed an amendment clarifying that the gas tax would not take effect until 2003 because of administrative requirements of the Department of Revenue in order to implement the tax. The committee adopted the change.

The plan calls for the state revenue commissioner to issue \$1.25 billion in bonds over 10 years to pay for construction projects in the state. It also creates a major project account in the state's trunk highway fund where the bond proceeds would be placed.

The revenue commissioner would then raise the gas tax as needed each year to repay the money borrowed.

Kuisle said the plan would require about a 0.1-cent increase in 2003. The additional tax would increase to a peak of about 4.9 cents in 2012 before decreasing again.

Under the plan, money in the fund would be split three ways in 2003. One-third would go to improve at-risk interregional highways

for corridors outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area, one-third to alleviate bottlenecks in the metropolitan area, and one-third to improve general highway safety and capacity.

In fiscal year 2004 and subsequent years, 5 percent of the bond money would be spent on highway-related improvements to transit. The remaining 95 percent would be split between at-risk interregional corridors outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and bottleneck reduction within the area.

Some committee members said they would not support the bill because it doesn't do enough for transit.

Rep. Tom Osthoff (DFL-St. Paul) said it is hard to vote for a bill that does not include balanced funding for roads and transit.

Funds for transit were increased last year and the new money is needed for roads, said Rep. Carol Molnau (R-Cologne), chair of the House Transportation Finance Committee.

Planning ahead

The House agreed March 18 to regulate an emerging form of personal transportation known as the Segway.

Three consumer models of the transportation machines went on sale through an online auction Feb. 19, and are expected to be

available for sale in retail outlets later this year for about \$3,000.

Rep. Tom Workman (R-Chanhassen), the sponsor of HF2882, said the bill would limit the use of the Segway to sidewalks and bike paths in the state. Although the bill also states that the devices can only travel 15 mph, that is the machine's top speed anyway, Workman said.

Some members said it is not necessary to regulate the devices, since they will not be available at a reasonable price for most consumers for years.

Rep. Betty Folliard (DFL-Hopkins) opposed the bill, noting that it could be dangerous to have the machines on crowded bike paths around lakes in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

The Segway Human Transporter, a cross between a scooter and a vehicle, is described by the company's Web site as, "self-balancing, electric-powered personal transportation machines."

The electric devices carry one person and react to the rider's movements. They do not have brakes or a steering wheel, but respond to the rider's balance. Leaning forward slightly will make them go, leaning back slightly will make them stop.

HF2882, which passed 105-22 in the House, passed the Senate on March 21 by a 53-4 vote.

It is sponsored by Sen. Satveer Chaudhary (DFL-Fridley) and now goes to the governor.

PREPARED TESTIMONY



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

During her March 18 testimony before the House Taxes Committee, Sandy King holds up a package of beef jerky prepared by her employer, Jerry's Enterprises Inc., as an example of a prepared food item that should be exempt from sales tax. Greg Endres of Greg's Meat Processing, also supports the bill. The committee tabled the bill.

Minnesota State Agencies

(Area code 651)

Administration	296-6013
Agriculture	297-2200
Children, Families and Learning	582-8200
Commerce	296-4026
Corrections	642-0200
Economic Security	296-3644
Employee Relations	297-1184
Job Information	296-2616
Finance	296-5900
Health	215-5803
Human Rights	296-5663
Toll Free	1-800-657-3704
Human Services	296-6117
Labor and Industry	296-6107
Military Affairs	282-4662
Natural Resources	296-6157
Pollution Control Agency	296-6300
Public Safety	296-6642
Driver and Vehicle Services ...	296-6911
Fire Marshal	215-0500
Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division	296-6979
State Patrol	297-3935
Public Service	296-5120
Revenue	
Taxpayer Assistance	296-3781
Toll Free	1-800-652-9094
Trade and	
Economic Development	297-1291
Office of Tourism	296-5029
Transportation	296-3000
Veterans Affairs	296-2562
State Information	296-6013



How to get here

Location

The Capitol complex is north of I-94, just minutes from downtown St. Paul. It is accessible from the east and west on I-94, and from the north and south on I-35E.

I-94 eastbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn left. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

I-94 westbound: Exit at Marion Street. Turn right. Go to Aurora Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Rice Street, and enter Parking Lot D.

I-35E northbound: Exit at Kellogg Boulevard. Turn left. Go to John Ireland Boulevard and turn right. Metered parking spaces line both sides of the boulevard.

I-35E southbound: Exit at University Avenue. Turn right. Go to Rice Street and turn left. Go one block and turn left to enter Parking Lot D.

Visiting the Minnesota State Capitol complex can be a rewarding and educational experience for everyone. There are buildings to explore and tours to take almost any time you choose to visit. And when the Legislature is in session during the first part of every year, there are floor sessions to observe, committee meetings to attend, and legislators to meet. Remember that this is your state Capitol, and you are always welcome.

Parking

Public metered parking is available in Lot Q, north of the Capitol at Cedar Street and Sherburne Avenue; Lot D, next to the State Office Building off Rice Street on Aurora Avenue; Lot F, directly behind the Transportation Building; Lot K, across from the Armory on Cedar Street (enter from 12th Street); and on the orange level of the Centennial Office Building Ramp at Cedar Street and Constitution Avenue. All-day metered parking is available in Lot Q. Capitol Security personnel will issue tickets for expired meters.

All-day parking permits may be purchased for \$3.50 from Plant Management on the third floor of the Ford Building. Cash or checks are accepted and correct change is appreciated. For more information, call (651) 297-3993.

Outdoor handicapped parking is available in Lot N, which is on the northwest side of the Capitol, and in Lot F.

Indoor handicapped parking is available on the lower level of the State Office Building Ramp (use the call box at the ramp entrance to gain entry); on the blue level of the Centennial

Office Building Ramp; and on the entry level of the Administration Building Ramp (two stalls).

The main handicapped entrance to the Capitol is on the northwest side of the building, just off Lot N; there also are drop-off entrances on the south side under the front steps and on the northeast side of the building.

Since parking is limited during legislative sessions, busing may be easier. Freeway express bus service is available. Bus number 94B takes you to the Capitol and the State Office Building. Call the Transit Information Center at (651) 349-7000 for schedule and route information.

What to do

Tours

Tours of the Capitol are offered through the Capitol Historic Site Program of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Tour guides lead the 45-minute tours on the hour Mondays through Fridays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (last tour leaves at 4 p.m.); Saturdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.); and Sundays between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. (last tour leaves at 3 p.m.). The tours are free of charge and begin at the Capitol's information desk at the end of the corridor to the right of the main entrance. Brochures in about 20 foreign languages also are available there.

Tour participants may request customized tours that emphasize either the building or state government.

Historical society officials ask that groups of 10 or more call at least two weeks in advance to reserve a tour time.

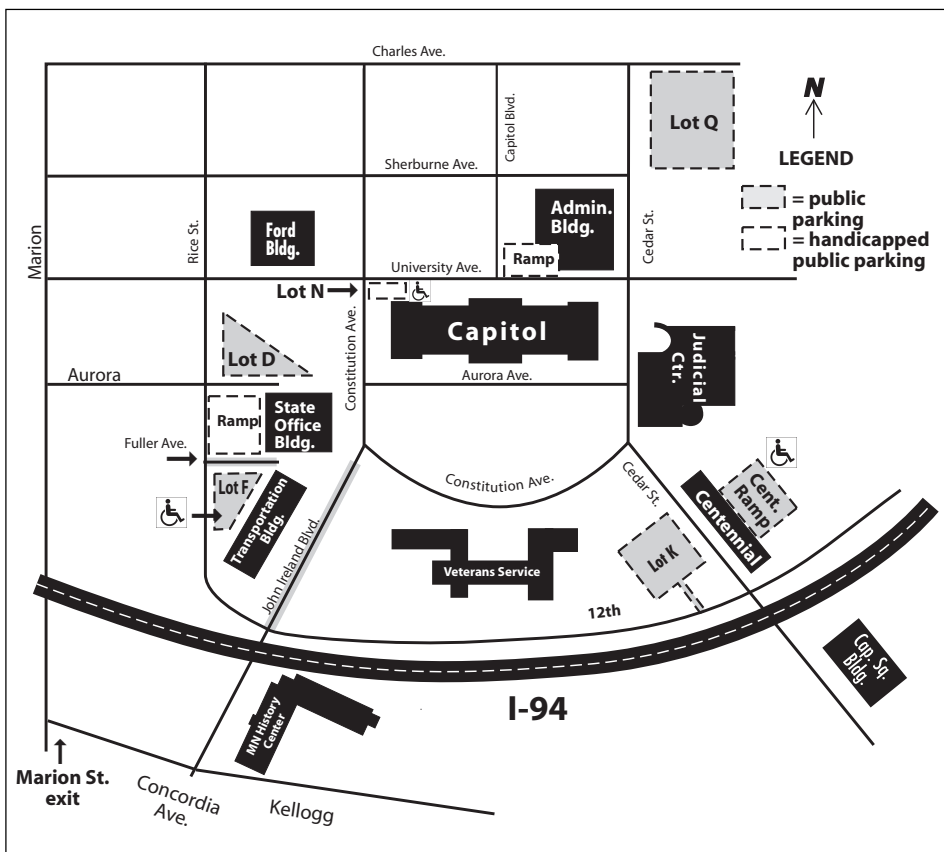
The society offers "Voice of the People: Your Role in Minnesota Government," a half-day session for students in grades 9-12.

Also, special tour events are scheduled monthly throughout the year. Some of these events entail admission fees; others are free. A special events guide is available upon request.

For more information about the tours or to reserve a time, call the Capitol Historic Site Program, (651) 296-2881.

Legislative sessions

Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate debate bills when the Legislature is in session.



At the beginning of a legislative session, the pace of floor sessions is generally slow as new bills are assigned to committees and non-controversial items are discussed. At about the session's midpoint, however, the legislative pace quickens.

The House usually meets at 3 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays, and the Senate meets at 11:30 a.m. Mondays and at 9 a.m. Thursdays during the first few weeks. House floor sessions are scheduled for the afternoon because committees meet in the morning and early afternoon. As the session nears the end, however, both bodies may meet several times a day, often into the night.

All House and Senate floor sessions are open to the public. Visitors interested in observing these sessions may call the House Chief Clerk's Office, (651) 296-2314, or Senate Information, (651) 296-0504, with questions. Spectators may sit in the galleries of either chamber.

Committee meetings

Visitors wanting to attend a committee meeting may call the committee hotlines for prerecorded messages with the meeting times and agendas for each day: House, (651) 296-9283; Senate, (651) 296-8088. Printed agendas for the week also appear in each issue of the *Session Weekly* and the *Senate Briefly*.

Committee meetings are open to the public. When a public hearing is scheduled, the committee may listen to comments from the audience (when time permits) in addition to the scheduled speakers. Committees have different policies on hearing testimony depending upon their size and workload. Informational handouts that committee members receive during meetings or hearings are considered public information and are available to the audience on a first-come, first-served basis.

Major proposals often have several public hearings so committee members may listen to all arguments for and against a bill.

Each committee has a chair, vice chair, administrator, and legislative assistant. A list of committees and members is available in the House Public Information Office in Room 175, State Office Building, or the Senate Information Office in Room 231, State Capitol.

Groups and individuals wishing to testify before a committee should call the appropriate committee's legislative assistant well in advance of the meeting and ask to be placed on the agenda. Committees prefer requests one week in advance but will accept later notification when unexpected issues appear on the committee schedule. A brochure containing tips on testifying at legislative committee hearings is available from the House Public Information Office.

Dining

Cafeterias are located in most state buildings. The small State Office Building cafeteria is usually open only when the Legislature is in session. Large, year-round cafeterias are available in the State Capitol and the Transportation Building.

Also, there are many restaurants within walking distance. On Rice Street are the Lagoon Vietnamese Restaurant, White Castle, and El Bravo Mexican Restaurant. On University Avenue, you will find McDonald's, Burger King, Mai Village, and other restaurants. There also are dozens of restaurants only minutes away in downtown St. Paul. Bus rides downtown cost 50 cents. You can catch the bus on Constitution Avenue.

Group visits

Sometimes groups plan a "legislative day" at the Capitol in order to express a particular viewpoint to legislators.

Rooms for special conferences or speakers can be reserved by calling the State Office Building room scheduler at (651) 296-5408 or the Capitol room scheduler at (651) 296-0866.

If group members want to meet with their individual legislators or testify before a committee (see "Committee meetings"), arrangements should be made at least a week in advance.

Often such groups have members wear a distinctive name tag or badge to indicate their concern about a particular issue.

Groups planning a trip to the Capitol should remember that seating is fairly limited in some committee rooms — particularly when the topic is controversial.

About security

Visitors to the Capitol need not be concerned or postpone a visit following Sept. 11.

While security has been tightened, measures may not be obvious to the casual visitor. Remember only that you may need to identify yourself to a security officer stationed at a public entrance.

E-mail schedules

Anyone with e-mail can receive both House and Senate committee schedules. To sign up to receive the House committee schedule, direct your Web browser to <http://ww3.house.leg.state.mn.us/scripts/lyris.pl?join=houseschedule> and fill out the subscription form on the Legislature's Web site.

You can also sign up for the Senate schedule on the Internet. Point your Web browser to <http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/schedule/listserv.htm> and fill out the subscription form.

Where to find information

House Public Information Office

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

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

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

House Television Services

216C State Capitol (651) 297-1338

House Television Services is responsible for live coverage of House floor sessions and some committee hearings. Such coverage is aired in the Twin Cities area on KTCI-TV, Channel 17. The House also broadcasts via satellite statewide, available on local cable systems. Internet users can also view committee hearings and floor sessions via the House TV Web site. Refer to the site at <http://www.house.mn/htv/liveweb.htm> for more information.

All televised floor sessions and committee hearings are close-captioned for people with hearing impairments.

Chief Clerk's Office

211 State Capitol (651) 296-2314

The Chief Clerk's Office provides copies of bills at no charge, all agendas for House sessions, and the *Journal of the House*.

House Index Department

211 State Capitol (651) 296-6646

The House Index Department, a part of the Chief Clerk's Office, has a computerized index available for public use. House Index lists bills by committee, topic, author, file number, and other categories. The office can also give you the current status of legislation.

Senate Information Office

231 State Capitol (651) 296-0504

The Senate Information Office is responsible for all information about the Senate, including the committee schedule, bill status, legislator information, and the distribution of bill copies.

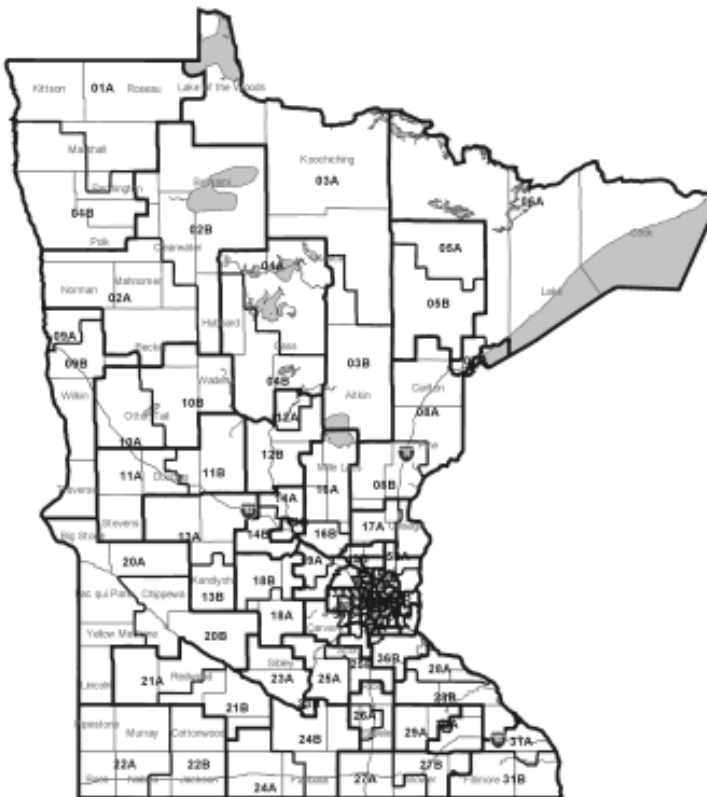
Senate Media Services

B-44 State Capitol (651) 296-0264

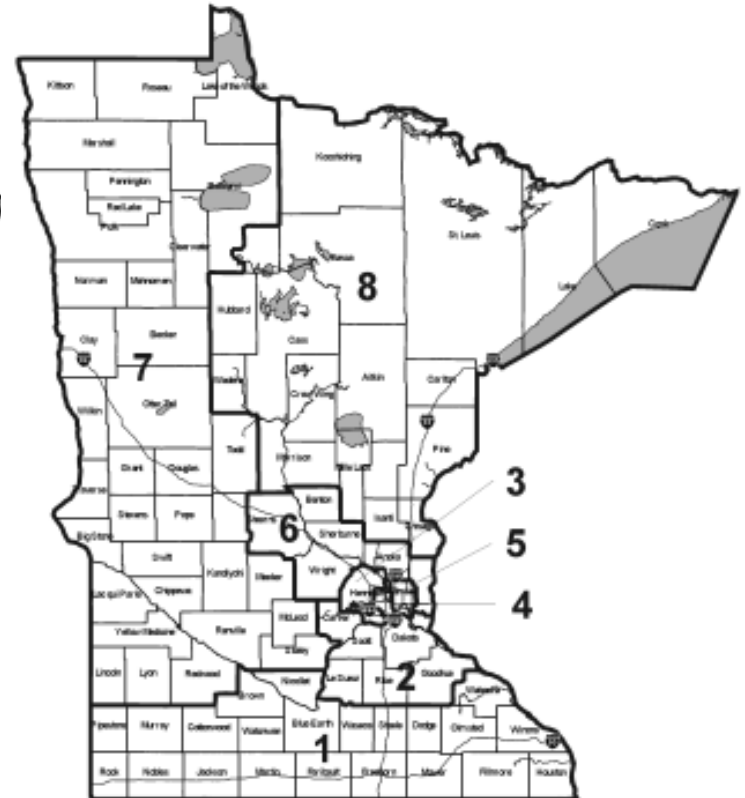
Senate Media Services, a bipartisan office, produces television programs, multi-media productions, scriptwriting, photography and graphics. It offers live coverage of the Senate floor sessions and some committee hearings.

2002 Legislative and Congressional Boundaries

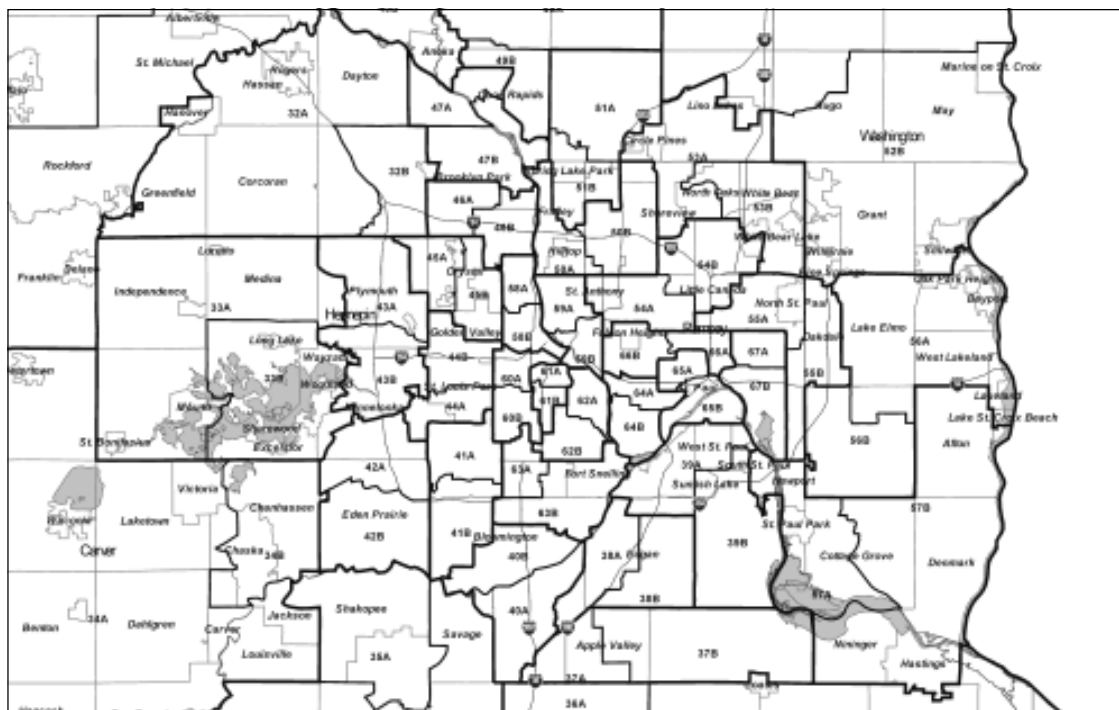
State Legislative Districts



Congressional Districts



Metro State Legislative Districts



State contract dilemma

House committee approves agreements with state workers minus same-sex domestic partner benefits

By DAVID MAEDA

The contracts negotiated between the state and the two largest public employee unions would be rejected, under a bill approved by the House Ways and Means Committee March 20.

However all provisions of the contract, except the extension of benefits to same-sex domestic partners, would be covered by law under the measure.

The bill (HF3575/SF3208*), sponsored by Rep. Dave Bishop (R-Rochester) and Sen. Roger Moe (DFL-Erskine), has been substantially changed as it has made its way through the committee process.

Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) offered a successful amendment during the March 20 hearing that would reject contracts that provide the same-sex benefit partner provision. Contracts that did not contain the clause and provisions of negotiated compensation plans without the benefit would be approved under the measure.

Though the contracts would officially be rejected, the amendment specifies that until subsequent agreements are reached between the bargaining units and the state, the remainder of the current negotiated contracts remain in effect, except the same-sex domestic partner benefit.

The amendment also would expand a state employee's sick leave to allow the employee to take time off for an illness, disability, or death of a "regular member of the employee's immediate household for a reasonable period."

The two largest state employee unions — the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees and Council 6 of the American Federal of State, County, and Municipal Employees — represent nearly 30,000 state employees.

Stang said he has received calls from many state employees and constituents that said offering the domestic partner benefit was not appropriate.

The House's two openly gay members begged to differ.

Rep. Karen Clark (DFL-Mpls) questioned why Stang thought it was important to deny a

"very important benefit that costs a very miniscule amount of money."

Clark said the calls Stang received might be based on misinformation. She said employees pay for state paid health insurance coverage of spouses and dependents, and that because of federal tax laws coverage for same-sex domestic partners actually costs more because certain tax breaks are not available.

Rep. D. Scott Dibble (DFL-Mpls) questioned whether Stang had considered the cost of a potential lawsuit that might be filed if the Legislature rejects the contracts. Dibble said

the contracts and incorporate legal definitions of the criteria needed for a same-sex domestic partner of a state employee to be eligible for the benefit.

The criteria include that partners be of the same gender, are not related by blood or adoption in a manner that would prohibit marriage, have a committed interdependent relationship they intend to continue indefinitely, and they agree to assume all legal spousal obligations to each other that would apply if they were legally married.

During the March 19 hearing, Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie) offered an unsuccessful amendment that would have specified that bargaining agreements might only provide state-paid benefits to employees, their spouses, dependent children, and dependent grandchildren.

Bishop called the amendment "chronologically challenged" because it did not reflect the reality of today's society. He said that by of-

"The two groups sat down at the collective bargaining table and we're saying we know better."

— Rep. Loren Solberg

labor unions might file a suit because the state would not honor agreements negotiated in good faith.

Conversely, House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) said a lawsuit could also be filed if the Legislature approves the contracts. He said opposite-sex domestic partners might file suit because of being denied the same benefit that same-sex partners receive.

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Bovey) said that by adopting the amendment the Legislature was bypassing the negotiation process and dictating terms of employment for state employees.

"The two groups sat down at the collective bargaining table and we're saying we know better," Solberg said.

One night earlier the House State Government Finance Committee approved the bill without recommendation after substantially amending it to reflect the approach Bishop thought was most appropriate.

As it was introduced, and as it passed the Senate, the bill specifies that if the Legislature does not vote against a negotiated contract between the state and its workers, the contract is approved.


The committee amended the bill to accept

fering the benefits negotiated between the state and its workers the state would be able to recruit and retain a better workforce.

Kielkucki countered that the amendment was not denying existing benefits but rather not extending further benefits.

Rep. Philip Krinkie (R-Shoreview) questioned the administration's decision of negotiating state contracts with an average of 9 percent increase for all employees, at the expense of laying off employees.

Julien Carter, commissioner of the Department of Employee Relations, said the contracts were negotiated during a time when there was an anticipated downturn in the economy, but it was expected that state agencies would be able to absorb the increased costs. He said the department is anticipating "hundreds" of employees will be laid off as a result of the budget modifications that have since been made.

Carter said that 85 employees have applied for the same-sex partner benefits and the cost to the state is around \$189,000. He said if that amount had not gone toward the benefit and instead been split evenly between employees it would mean an increase of around .002 cents per hour per employee. 

Highway help

Legislators debate raising more money for roads, methods of distributing highway dollars

By LISA HILTON

Most people know that taxes pay for public roads, but the details regarding where the money comes from and where it goes may boggle a few minds.

Although federal and local funds are used to assist with transportation costs, much of the money comes from the state. And with numerous pressing transportation needs across the state, changes to the amount and designation of transportation funding are almost always in the works at the Capitol.

Several funds have been established to help manage the money and ultimate goal of funding highway and transit improvements.

Where the money comes from

Over the course of the state's history, lawmakers arranged for most of the money for roads to come from those who most often use them. The Highway User Tax Distribution Fund accounts for most of the state money spent on roads and highways.

The state also borrows money for construction projects through bonding authority specifically backed by the trunk highway fund. And occasionally money for transportation projects is taken directly from the state's general fund.

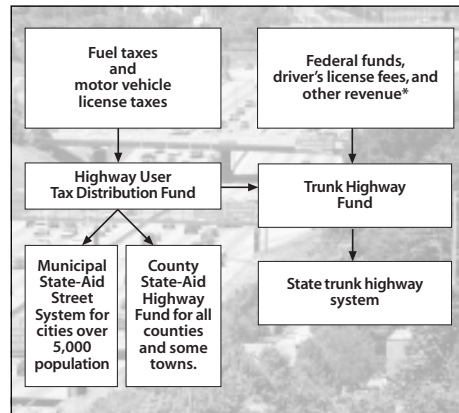
Until 2000, about half of the highway user tax fund money came from the 20-cent per gallon gas tax, and the other half from license tab fees. Because of Gov. Jesse Ventura's initiative, the 2000 Legislature slashed license tab fees and filled the hole in the fund with general fund money.

About \$160 million was shifted into the highway user fund for fiscal years 2001 and 2002 to make up the difference. Beginning in fiscal year 2003, the money will be replaced with 32 percent of motor vehicle sales tax revenue.

Under a House proposal (HF3364), sponsored by Rep. William Kuisle (R-Rochester), the gas tax would be increased yearly as needed to pay for \$1.25 billion in bonds issued by the state between 2003 and 2012 for projects statewide.

The bill, which has been referred to the House Taxes Committee, would make the state revenue commissioner responsible for determining how

Sources of highway funding



*Other funding includes miscellaneous fees and registration charges.

Source: Nonpartisan House Research Department

much to increase the tax each year. Increases would range from an additional one-tenth of a penny to 4.9 cents at the peak in 2012.

The Senate has approved a plan that would generate \$7.5 billion for transportation over 10 years by increasing the gas tax by 7 cents and again raising license tab fees.

Where the money goes

According to the state constitution, 95 percent of money in the highway user tax fund is dedicated to certain areas. The Legislature can change what it does with the remaining 5 percent every six years, but the bulk of the money is spent on upkeep of state highways.

• **State trunk highway fund:** Money in the state trunk highway fund pays for road construction, maintenance, the state patrol, and other operations related to the state system. Although the state highway system accounts for only about 9 percent of roads in the state, the state trunk highway system consumes about 62 percent of the constitutionally set-aside fund since those roads carry almost two-thirds of the state's traffic.

• **County and local state-aid funds:** Counties and local governments can nominate regionally important highways for the state-aid program, and the state Department of Transportation approves the nominees.

County highways that are designated as state-aid highways receive about 29 percent of the set aside money, and municipal state-aid streets receive the remaining 9 percent.

Under the current county state-aid formula, half of the money is sent to counties based on need, 30 percent based on the number of miles and lanes of road in the counties, and 10 percent based on the number of vehicles in each county. The remaining 10 percent is split equally among all counties.

Money for the municipal state-aid street system is available for cities with a population greater than 5,000.

Proposed changes

County state-aid money is currently split using a formula devised in the 1950s and has been routinely questioned by legislators, especially those from urban areas.

Because many large counties in the state are sparsely populated but still have to maintain many miles of roads, the amount of state aid going to rural counties is much more per person than the aid going to densely populated areas.

The difference in funding has not gone unnoticed by urban lawmakers.

Rep. Dan Larson (DFL-Bloomington), a member of the House Transportation Finance Committee, proposed changing the formula so half of the money would be distributed to counties based on need and the other half on population.

Larson said there has to be some disparity among counties but the current formula is beyond what is acceptable.

Too much of the state's funds are being eaten up by maintenance of Greater Minnesota roads, he argued.

According to the Metropolitan Inter-County Association, Twin Cities metropolitan area counties ranked very low in per capita county state-aid for highways. Hennepin and Ramsey counties ranked last, at about \$22 per person.

By comparison, Lake of the Woods County received about \$590 per person.

But that is to be expected, rural members said. "Of course we don't have the population," Rep. Henry Kalis (DFL-Wells) said during a March 8 committee debate on Larson's proposal. "The bottom line is we need some roads out there."

The committee did not approve any changes to the formula. 🐾

Not a recent fad

From songs to sows, Minnesota students have long focused on being patriotic

By SARAH MCKENZIE

While a looming budget deficit has commanded much of the attention at the Capitol this year, the session has also taken on a patriotic tone in light of the fight against terrorism.

Representatives, displaying American flags at their desks on the House floor, overwhelmingly approved a measure that would require public and charter school students to recite the pledge of allegiance at least once a week. It would permit students and teachers to opt out.

The measure would also direct school districts to teach students proper flag etiquette.

Sponsored by Rep. George Cassell (R-Alexandria), HF2598 cleared the House on a 114-11 vote Feb. 27. The full Senate has yet to act on the plan.

The state has a long history of promoting patriotism in schools. In 1959 Minnesota enacted a law requiring teachers to set aside one day a week for “subjects and exercises tending and calculated to encourage and inculcate a spirit of patriotism in the students.” The mandate was repealed in 1993.

During World War I the state took an aggressive approach in its campaign to inspire patriotism among Minnesota youth.

A 1918 handbook on school patriotism prepared by the state Department of Education (now the Department of Children, Families and Learning) asserted the state’s goals: “The mission of this book will not be accomplished if it does not measurably increase the patriotic fervor and activity of both pupils and teachers, and lead each school to utilize every means for the development of vigorous, well trained, patriotic manhood, and womanhood.”

The state published the handbook in a time when officials conducted “loyalty” investigations around the nation to ferret out those suspected of subversive activity.

With assistance from the University of Minnesota extension division and Twin Cities school superintendents, Annie Shelland, an official with the Department of Education,

prepared the 179-page guidebook complete with patriotic songs, prose, and speeches.

The state encouraged teachers and students to form patriotism clubs by including lengthy and formal instructions in the guidebook on how to proceed.

Shelland said the patriotic campaign was necessary in light of the state’s many immigrants, who she claimed could not be trusted to be loyal. She wrote: “These aliens are not necessarily enemies, but as citizens of another country, they cannot be called upon for support in the hour of need.”

So Shelland then implied that schools had a responsibility to “Americanize” and shape the youth, imparting on them the importance of civic duty.

Shelland called on instructors to participate in teachers’ patriotic leagues in their counties. To be eligible, she suggested teachers pledge their “loyal support” to the United States, sign the league’s constitution, and pay membership dues.

In the state’s vision, the leagues had the following mandates: disseminate patriotic literature, “Americanize” foreigners, and stamp out illiteracy.

Shelland frequently stressed the urgency of the cause.

“The responsibility is great, but the present and future welfare of the nation hinges upon the teacher’s action,” she wrote. “It must be remembered that great and terrible reckonings are coming very swiftly in these days, and none can afford to feel that a stone is left unturned for our present and future safety.”

Besides saluting the flag, teachers and stu-

dents were urged to conserve food that could be sent to Allied soldiers in Europe, including wheat, beef, pork, and dairy products. Shelland also preached the importance of saving money and personal hygiene.

She personally addressed students in a letter included in the handbook.

“Now, if you are going to train for grown-up work, you must learn to do as grown-up people do. We suggest that you form a ‘Little Citizen’s League,’” Shelland wrote.

The letter continued, “In this league, you can learn how to work, play and be strong, and help Uncle Sam. ... In order to do this, a little citizen must learn self-control.”

The discipline Shelland alluded to included staying observant, physically fit, and clean.

She suggested that the leagues include boys and girls, ages 6 to 18. Shelland directed the

students to recite a loyalty pledge and sign the league’s constitution.

The handbook concluded with personal testimonials from Minnesota children who had done their “bit” for the country.

Charlotte Staley, 12, of Medford raised a 207-pound pig

that won a Steele County contest. She named the pig “Liberty” and said she planned to sell him to buy a Liberty Bond.

Staley wrote: “Being only a girl, 12 years old, I could not do as much as the older people toward producing food for our country. Our school did not organize any clubs, so I joined the Boys’ and Girls’ Pig Club at Owatonna.”

Carl Potthoff of Jordan raised and canned 1,750 quarts of tomatoes, 160 quarts of sweet corn, and 38 bushels of corn.

“This work has prevented me from indulging in my favorite sport of baseball and fishing,” Potthoff wrote. “But the country’s call was urgent, and, as a patriot, I tried to do my ‘bit.’”



A children's patriotic parade in 1915.

Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society

Where his heart is

After years away from hometown and labor roots,
Rep. Rob Leighton plans to spend more time with Austin family

By LISA HILTON

When Rep. Rob Leighton (DFL-Austin) leaves office this year after four terms, he will still keep a keen eye on political issues in the state.

Since 1994, Leighton, 36, has represented the city of Austin, the place where he was born and raised, and where the Leighton family has lived since the 1800s.

Growing up there, Democratic politics was a way of life for Leighton, whose father ran for the State Senate in 1958 at the age of 29. Although he lost, Robert Leighton, Sr., remained politically active and was friend to many Minnesota politicians, such as Hubert H. Humphrey, Eugene McCarthy, and former Gov. Karl Rolvaag.

It was his father's involvement that

issues such as workers' compensation, migrant worker protection, and increasing the state's minimum wage.

As a freshman legislator in 1994, Leighton was vice-chair of the House Labor-Management Relations Committee, and he now serves on the House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Policy Committee. In addition, he has been a member of the Worker's Compensation Advisory Council for five years.

He also served as House assistant majority leader from 1997 to 1998, and then as assistant minority leader from 1999 to 2000 after Republicans won the majority in the 1998 election.

While Leighton also serves on the House Taxes Committee, and has served on K-12 Education Finance Committee and others in the past, his focus remains on labor.

His interest in labor issues was sparked during the Hormel plant strike in 1984-85, when he saw many people in Austin out of work and charged with crimes related to the strike.

That strike had a life-long impact on him, Leighton said.

It was also at a rally during the strike that Leighton met a Carlton College professor named Paul Wellstone, who would later become a U.S. Senator.

Leighton remains a strong Wellstone supporter and plans to work on Wellstone's re-election campaign, as well as campaign for other Democratic candidates.

Leighton especially credits legislators from the Iron Range for guiding him during his first years and helping him fight for labor issues.

In fact, some House members used to refer

to him as the "Baby Ranger," since Leighton's district is known for having many, "pro-labor Democrats in a sea of Republican districts," he said.

Leighton predicts the newly released redistricting maps will benefit DFL members, adding that new districts may mean his political party will have a shot at reclaiming the majority in the House.

Although he will miss the friends he has made and the people he has worked with in the House, Leighton said it will be nice to have more time with his wife, Shawn, and his 5-year-old twin sons Tanner and Taylor. The family also has a dog that the boys named Britney, after singer Britney Spears. It could be worse, Leighton says with a laugh.

It is especially difficult being a legislator from a rural district, since the job requires so much time away from his family, Leighton said. "The time commitment goes beyond what most people expect."

When he took office in 1994, he was single, but now that he is married and has children, it is more difficult to be away, he said.

Although he said he will try to keep in touch with his friends at the Capitol, Leighton knows it will be difficult since he lives so far from St. Paul.

"It's kind of like your family away from family," he said of the Legislature.

His plans for the future include focusing on his law practice, spending time with his children, traveling with his wife, and of course, keeping a close eye on politics.



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Rep. Rob Leighton will not seek another term in the Minnesota House. He was first elected to District 27B in 1994.

encouraged Leighton to run for office, he said.

And like his father, Leighton pursued a career in law, earning a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Minnesota and a law degree from the University of California-Berkeley in 1991.

During his time at the Capitol, Leighton has been a strong advocate for labor, working on

STEPPING DOWN

Rep. Rob Leighton
DFL
District 27B – Austin
Terms: 4

Career notes: Leighton sponsored several employer-employee relations bills that became law during his tenure, particularly those governing workers' compensation and minimum wage. He also promoted legislation clarifying civil actions. During 1998, Leighton was on a list of potential lieutenant governor running mates for DFL candidate Hubert H. "Skip" Humphrey III.

Voice for education

After following the advice he gave to others, Mares decides to call it a legislative career

BY THERESA STAHL

It's only fitting that Rep. Harry Mares (R-White Bear Lake) has chosen to end his legislative tenure after eight years.

"That's as long as a president can serve and that's enough for me in the House of Representatives," he said.

Quizzing members with presidential trivia is a common way Mares begins meetings of the House Education Policy Committee, which he serves as chair.

"The presidency is very sacred to me," he said. "A civilian is in charge of a democracy with a very strong military. ... It is an art to maintain the power of the people."

Mares can be as funny as he can be serious, and is well known for telling Minnesota Vikings jokes. Humor has always been a part of this Wisconsin native's life: Mares' two older brothers are named Tom and Dick.

"My father was a jokester," he said. "We've had a lot of laughs over that."

The husband, father of seven, and social studies teacher of 36 years has a love of humor, history, and government.

Mares' steady climb in public office to state representative started as a volunteer for the White Bear Lake Planning Commission.

From there he served on the northern suburb's city council and then was elected mayor. One month into his second mayoral term the state representative of his district encouraged Mares to run for the seat. And so, in January 1995, he began his first term in the House of Representatives.

Mares said his strong belief in democracy drew him to the Legislature.

"We're citizen legislators, we're not professionals," he said. "I love the compromising it takes to make a democracy work, because that's all our government is — a bundle of compromises. I like the idea of negotiating, compromising, working together."

In education, where Mares holds one of the most powerful positions in the state, he said he tries not to let partisan politics enter the discussion.

"I want to keep issues nonpartisan as much

as possible because I think that's important to education," he said.

He also tries to limit tension in the room during meetings of his committee, according to Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Crystal), DFL lead for the committee.

"When you're running a large committee,



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Rep. Harry Mares, who is stepping down after eight years in the House, chairs the House Education Policy Committee. He was appointed chair prior to the 1999 legislative session.

you're bound to have some difficulties that arise. When people feel strongly on an issue, sometimes using humor is a good way to resolve what could potentially be a conflict," Carlson said. "Harry was good at that."

Rep. Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington) agreed. Seagren, chair of the House K-12 Education Finance Committee, said Mares is a strong voice for education.

"He exemplifies the best there is in teaching and the teacher," she said. "They can be proud of his service for them."

Seagren has worked alongside Mares for the eight years he's served. She said they share similar philosophical beliefs and personal experiences. Both have children with serious illnesses — Mares' youngest child has Cystic Fibrosis.

"We share the ups and downs of children with physical limitations," she said. "He's just been a best buddy to me."

Mares' wife and children are a big reason for his retirement.

"Campaigning is very difficult, very time consuming, and has a profound effect on family," he said. Particularly, he wants to spend more time with his wife, he said.

The laws he has introduced aren't what Mares said he wants to be remembered for.

"I've never thought about what's most important and what isn't, because almost every bill I've brought forth affected someone's life," he said. "I just tried to make good policy."

"I would hope people would remember me as trustworthy. My word is good when I give it."

Mares said serving as a state representative has made him a more mature person.

"I probably discovered who I was in greater depth than ever before. I discovered abilities I never recognized — now some won't call them abilities," he said, grinning. "But I became aware of them more so by doing this than I ever dreamt I would."

"I always told my students that unless you take risks in life I don't think you really grow. One's whole life is a process of growth. In my eight years here I think I've grown where at first I felt very uneasy, but now I feel an integral part of the legislative process. In every office (I served), every classroom I walked into, I didn't know what the results would be."

Seagren, becoming teary-eyed at the thought of Mares' absence, said she will most remember his integrity and wisdom.

"It's been an honor to work with him and I'm going to miss him a lot." 🐼

STEPPING DOWN

Rep. Harry Mares
Republican
District 55A – White Bear Lake
Terms: 4

Career notes: In 1999, Mares was named chair of the House Education Policy Committee when Republicans gained the majority. He also sponsored a number of pension and retirement benefit bills, having served on the joint House-Senate pensions commission. In 2000, Mares sponsored the law making the monarch butterfly the 13th state symbol, after elementary school students from his district brought him the idea.

Tracking new laws, vetoes

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

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

In the second year of the biennium (even-numbered years), a bill passed by the Legislature and presented to the governor before the final three days of the session will become law unless the governor vetoes it by returning it to the Legislature within three days. The governor normally signs the bills and files them with the secretary of state, but his signature is not required.

But if a bill is passed during the last three days of session, the governor has a longer time to act on it. He or she must sign and deposit it with the secretary of state within 14 days after the Legislature adjourns "sine die" (Latin for adjournment "without a date certain"). If the governor does not sign a bill within this time frame, it will not become law, an action known as a "pocket veto." The governor is not required to provide a reason for the veto.

Only on appropriations bills can the governor exercise the line-item veto authority. This option allows the governor to eliminate the appropriation items to which he or she objects. As with all vetoes (save pocket vetoes) the governor must include a statement listing the reasons for the veto with the returned bill. Here, too, the timetable is either 14 days after adjournment for bills passed during the final three days of the

session, or within three days after the governor receives the bill at any other time.

Policy items contained in appropriations bills may not be line-item vetoed. In order to veto such an item, the governor is required to veto the entire bill.

A two-thirds vote of the members in each house is needed to override a veto. But because only the governor can call a special session of the Legislature, anything vetoed after the Legislature adjourns is history — at least until the next year.

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

This information is also available on the governor's Web site (www.governor.state.mn.us). Select the "Policy" link, then click on 2002 Bill Tracking.

Key:

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

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
Res. 6	2681*	2469	Resolution supporting personnel responding to Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.	1/31	
Res. 7	3411	3207*	Resolution urging delayed termination of LTV pension plan.	2/27	
219	2698	2655*	Extending physical therapy board authority to adopt licensee ethics rules.	2/27	
220	351*	264	Omnibus budget balancing and appropriations bill.		2/25♦
221	97	58*	Changing terminology in statute of references to mentally ill.	2/27	
222	3049	3019*	Predatory offenders registration requirement expansion.	2/28	
223	1297	1471*	Municipal Board authority transferred to Office of Strategic and Long-Range Planning.	3/5	
224	2642*	2760	Mine inspector annual audit requirement modified.	3/7	
225	3116*	2822	Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund provisions modified.	3/7	
226	2624*	2441	Shakopee Public Utilities Commission increased from three to five members.	3/7	
227	3148*	3025	Speech-language pathologist and audiologist registration requirements modified.	3/7	
228	2992*	2865	Occupational therapist temporary licensure terms modified.	3/7	
229	3062*	2839	Hennepin and Ramsey counties juvenile court judge term limits repealed.	3/7	
230	2748	2573*	Browns Valley school year start before Labor Day.	3/13	
231	2695*	2531	Minneapolis Firefighters Relief Association retirement provisions corrections provided.	3/13	
232	58*	389	Beer kegs identification and sales requirements.	3/13	
233	3190*	3111	Juvenile court data in statewide supervision system.	3/13	
234	2783*	2671	No-fault auto insurance residual liability coverage regulated.	3/14	
235	1189*	1376	Election of municipal council members provided after annexation.	3/14	
236	1620*	2210	Orderly annexation agreements strengthened.	3/14	
237	2987*		Cook County Mineral Center cemetery conveyance to Grand Portage reservation authorized.	3/14	
238	3202*	2801	Delano Public Utilities Commission increased to five members.	3/14	
239	2629*	2913	Retired professional designation for Board of Architecture, et al. licensed retirees.	3/14	

♦ - veto overridden by the Legislature

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

CH	HF	SF	Description	Signed	Vetoed
240	3309*	3082	Nursing home licensed bed lay away authorized during moratorium projects.	3/14	
241	2637*	2472	Temporary town officeholders authorized in event of inability or refusal to serve.	3/14	
242	3344*	2892	Second Judicial District combined jurisdiction program authorized.	3/14	
243	3296*	3206	State employee Social Security administrative duties transfer.	3/14	
244	1547	1495*	Omnibus agriculture policy provisions modifications.	3/15†	
245	2612*	2562	Licensed architect, et al. requirement circumstances revised.	3/15	
246	2899*	2711	Livable community demonstration account provisions modified.	3/21	
247	3584*	3302	Judgment calculation interest rate formulas modified.	3/21	
248	2813*	2803	Child care providers required to develop policies for reporting suspected child maltreatment.	3/21	
249	2766*	2475	Motor vehicle fuel franchise sale federal code compliance expiration date removed.	3/21	
250	3189*	3135	Street-sweeping vehicles defined as special mobile equipment for registration purposes.	3/21	
251	2742*	2757	State agency contested case procedures regulation provided.	3/21	

† - Filed without signature

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Unofficial list as of 9/25/01

Monday, March 18

HF3692—Mulder (R)

Higher Education Finance

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities telecommunications delivery systems planning and construction funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF3693—Paulsen (R)

Transportation Policy

Metropolitan Airports Commission membership increased.

HF3694—Davids (R)

Environment & Natural Resources Policy

Feedlots water appropriation permits limited.

HF3695—Kahn (DFL)

Governmental Operations &

Veterans Affairs Policy

National missile defense system opposition urged by resolution to Congress, suggesting funds be redirected towards other security needs.

HF3696—Mulder (R)

Education Policy

Licensed elementary school teachers authorized to provided instruction at home.

Tuesday, March 19

HF3697—Lipman (R)

Governmental Operations &

Veterans Affairs Policy

Campaign finance spending and contribution limits modified.

Wednesday, March 20

HF3698—Hackbarth (R)

Education Policy

School districts and schools prohibited from using weighted grading structures for specified rigorous courses and programs.

HF3699—Dorman (R)

Taxes

Motor home production facility construction materials sales tax exemption provided.

HF3700—Wilkin (R)

Transportation Policy

Metropolitan Airports Commission required to submit proposed budgets to legislative committees.

HF3701—Boudreau (R)

Health & Human Services Policy

Hospital payment rate annual adjustment provision modified, and money appropriated.

Thursday, March 21

HF3702—Westrom (R)

K-12 Education Finance

Debt service equalization aid program modified to encourage sound historic preservation and cost-efficient remodeling projects.

HF3703—Sertich (DFL)

Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs

Meadowlands charter school loan forgiven.

HF3704—Kelliher (DFL)

Health & Human Services Policy

Food and drug administration urged by resolution to approve emergency contraceptive pills for over-the-counter purchase.

COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

MARCH 25 - 29, 2002

Schedule is subject to change.

For information updates, call House Calls at (651) 296-9283.

All meetings are open to the public.

Sign language interpreter services: (651) 224-6548 v/tty.

To have the House committee schedule delivered to your e-mail address direct your Web browser to

<http://www3.house.mn/scripts/>

[lyris.pl?join=houseschedule](http://www3.house.mn/scripts/lyris.pl?join=houseschedule) and fill

out the subscription form on the

Legislature's Web site.

House committee schedules are also available on the Web site at

<http://www.house.mn/hinfo/schedule/index.htm>.

30 minutes after session or
at the call of the chair

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

TUESDAY, March 26

8 a.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

30 minutes after session or
at the call of the chair

TAXES

Basement Hearing Room

State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

WEDNESDAY, March 27

8 a.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

30 minutes after session or
at the call of the chair

TAXES

5 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

THURSDAY, March 28

30 minutes after session or
at the call of the chair

TAXES

200 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

FRIDAY, March 29

30 minutes after session or
at the call of the chair

TAXES

10 State Office Building

Chr. Rep. Ron Abrams

Agenda: To be announced.

MONDAY, March 25

10 a.m.

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

Minnesota Memorials



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Women's memorial garden

Much like women earning the right to vote, the Minnesota Woman Suffrage Memorial Garden is taking plenty of time to complete.

Located on the southwest corner of Cedar Street and Constitution Boulevard, the garden was dedicated in August 2000 but casting and foundry work have pushed the completion date back to more likely spring or summer of this year.

Barbara Stuhler, a published historian and former University of Minnesota associate dean, began the effort in 1995, the 75th anniversary of the 19th Amendment which gave women the right to vote. The idea was appropriate, as many early advocates were gardeners. The project received \$250,000 from the 1996 Legislature, with \$50,000 to be raised privately.

Entitled *Garden of Time: Landscape of Change*, the site features a woven trellis with the names of 25 prominent Minnesota women including Harriet Bishop, the state's first full-time school teacher; Nellie Griswold, author of the state's first anti-lynching law; Martha Rogers Ripley, who started a hospital in north Minneapolis for unwed mothers; and Mabeth Hurd Paige, a legislator for two decades. Text plates will tell the story of the movement.

Waves and berms around the site are representative of the glacier-like movement of women earning the right to vote. And prairie grasses are meant to represent the toughness of the suffragists because the grasses are deep-seeded and once established they last forever, said Paul Mandell, principal planner with the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board.

The first vote in which women took part was a water referendum in South St. Paul, less than one week after the 19th Amendment was ratified by Congress in 1920.

(M. Cook)

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Reflections

The official first day of spring arrives at the vernal equinox, each year around this time in March. By tradition, many Minnesotans say spring is not recognized as official until after the annual high school sports tournaments have ended in the Capital City.

Also this March — two years after the U.S. Census was taken — political caucuses and lawmakers in the House and Senate waited to hear a final decision about restructuring legislative districts to satisfy population shifts in the state, because they couldn't agree on a plan amongst themselves.

Redistricting goes back to the beginning of statehood. As territorial lawmakers prepared to become a state, they followed the reapportionment laws set by Congress and called for a census of the population. The process set the number of seats in a legislative body to established districts.

The territorial legislature operated in a house-senate structure patterned after Congress. The senate members were called councilors and the house members were called representatives.

In 1855, councilors occupied 15 seats and representatives were awarded 38 seats to accommodate the state's 53,600 people.

The population for the territory was 150,092 by the time the Legislature met in 1857 to write a constitution. But Congress did not approve statehood until 1858. By then, the council, now the Senate, had grown to 21, with 42 members in the House.

As the state continued to grow, so did the legislative districts and total numbers of members to represent the people and meet the standard of "one person, one vote."

Based on the 1910 population of nearly 2.08 million, reapportionment by 1913 had jumped to 67 senators and 130 House members in 64 districts. As was the custom since the beginning of statehood, some House dis-

tricts were represented by more than one member, while others had at-large members involved in the legislative process.

While no redistricting occurred between 1913 and 1957, new members were simply added at will. Though several plans were introduced in the Legislature, members reached no agreement and passed no apportionment plans.

The courts did not get involved until 1958 because no specific cases challenging the constitutionality were brought until that time.

In 1958, the disproportionate representation between urban and rural areas was finally challenged by a lawsuit. The court restrained itself from ruling on the case, but stated a confidence in the Legislature to reapportion itself in 1959.

As membership jumped to 135 in the House and 67 in the Senate, the courts were given the authority to judge the fairness of redistricting. Two cases, in 1964 and 1965, resulted in the courts ruling that existing plans were invalid.

By 1966, a reapportionment plan was passed by the Legislature in special session and then vetoed by Gov. Karl Rolvaag. Later the parties reached compromise and enacted a plan, but that plan was not adjusted until 1973 based on the 1970 census of nearly 3.8 million state residents. That plan called for 67 districts equating to 134 members in the House and 67 in the Senate. Those numbers remain the same more than 30 years later.

Now that redistricting is in place, some members will have to compete against a colleague to retain their seat, much like a school may need to beat its rival for a state title.

And, as sure as spring will return to St. Paul, lawmakers will return home to campaign for re-election.

— LECLAIR GRIER LAMBERT

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MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota Taxes

Billions of dollars in Minnesota state and local tax revenue in	
fiscal year 2001	\$18.33
Amount in individual income taxes, in billions	\$5.93
As percentage of total taxes paid	32
Billions of dollars from property taxes	\$4.81
As percentage of total taxes paid	26
State sales tax revenues in fiscal year 2001, in billions	\$4.5
As percentage of total taxes paid	25
State tax collections in 2000, in billions	\$13.34
As a percentage of personal income	9.1
National rank	5
Amount per capita	\$2,712
National rank	4
U.S. average in per capita tax collections in 2000	\$1,921
In Wisconsin	\$2,357
Wisconsin national rank	8
In Iowa	\$1,772
Iowa national rank	31
In South Dakota	\$1,228
South Dakota national rank	50
Of 2000 state tax collection, percentage from sales tax	27.9
National average, as percent	32.3
State sales tax rate, as of Jan. 1, 2002, as percent	6.5
National rank	3
Rate in Mississippi and Rhode Island, as percent	7
U.S. median rate, as percent	5
State sales tax rate on liquor, wine, and beer in fiscal year 2001, as percent	9
Percent on motor vehicle rentals	12.7
Percent of 2000 state tax collection that came from individual income tax	41.6
National average	36
Percent from corporate income tax (same as national average)	6
Amount of corporate tax received in fiscal year 2001, in millions	\$862
Minnesota personal income upper tax rate in 2001, as percent	7.85
State rank	9
Rate in Wisconsin, as percent	6.75
In Iowa, as percent	5.42
State gas tax in 2001, in cents per gallon	20
State rank	24
Minnesota cigarette tax in 2001, as cents per pack	48
Average cents per pack in United States	34

Sources: *Minnesota Data Book for Legislators*, Research Department, Minnesota House of Representatives, January 2001; Federation of Tax Administrators; *CQ's State Fact Finder 2002*.

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