

A NONPARTISAN PUBLICATION

SESSION Weekly

MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES • PUBLIC INFORMATION

Governor's Proposed Budget \$4.5 Billion Shortfall

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	Forecast <u>FY04-05</u>	Governor <u>FY04-05</u>
Beginning Balance	\$(332)	186
Revenues	26,857	28,438
Spending	30,975	28,120
Reserves	<u>110</u>	<u>500</u>
Forecast Deficit	\$(4,560)	\$4

Governor Pawlenty's FY 2004-05 Budget



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2004 - 2005 BUDGET PROPOSED

PROFILE OF LEARNING REPEAL, AND MORE

HF426-HF560

SESSION Weekly

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On the cover: Gov. Tim Pawlenty, accompanied by some of his commissioners, listens Feb. 18 as Finance Commissioner Dan McElroy outlines the governor's budget balancing plan for fiscal years 2004-05.

—Photo by Tom Olmscheid

Repealing the profile

House members overwhelmingly vote to get rid of one set of standards and replace them with another

BY TOM LONERGAN

The expected vote to repeal the Profile of Learning didn't deter House members from a lively debate Feb. 17 before they passed a bill to scrap the state's divisive graduation standards for public school students.

A 90-minute give-and-take between House members about what standards should replace the profile, included references to Aristotle, Albert Einstein, former Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, and comedian Lily Tomlin.

Sponsored by Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie), HF2 calls for replacing the profile with newly written academic standards in five subject areas, to be developed during the next two years. "What we have does not work," he said. "Our standards need revision."



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Carol and Truman Ingersoll of Roseville wear "Stop the Profile of Learning" T-shirts Feb. 17 as they listen from the gallery while House members pass a bill that would repeal the Profile of Learning.

Approved 118-10, the bill would direct the commissioner of the Department of Children, Families and Learning to develop "core academic standards" in English, mathematics, science, history, and geography on a staggered schedule. The new English and math standards would be due for legislative review by April 15, under the bill. Standards in science would not be developed until March 2004 and those in

history and geography one year later.

A Senate companion bill (SF60), sponsored by Sen. Gen Olson (R-Minnetrista), awaits a hearing in the Senate Education Committee. The Senate, which has blocked past attempts to repeal the profile, may not consider its bill until a plan for new standards is developed.

The profile standards have been widely criticized by educators since they were first adopted by the Legislature in 1998. The latest vote was the fifth time the House has tried to repeal the profile since 1999.

The profile, also known as "high standards," is half of the two-part graduation standards established for public school students in the state. The basic skills tests and profile-related Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments are given in grade school and high school. The tests measure

a student's academic progress in a number of subjects and adequate completion is required for high school graduation.

During the debate, House members rejected an amendment, on a 66-62 vote, to require the state to reimburse school districts for the cost of implementing new standards.

Rep. Ron Latz (DFL-St. Louis Park), who offered the amendment,

said the Hopkins School District estimated it could spend up to \$1 million to implement one new set of K-12 standards for math. "If you ask, you would find exactly the same situation in your local school districts," he said. Thirteen Republicans joined 49 DFL members in supporting the amendment.

Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), chair of the House Ways and Means Committee said,

"the money's already there" for implementing new standards. He cited a fiscal note released Feb. 17 that estimated new standards would cost the state about \$1.5 million. The bill would bring "no new cost," Knoblach said, because it would be covered by the education department budget.

An amendment proposed by Kielkucki to give the education department until the 2005-06 school year to establish new state tests based on the new standards passed on a voice vote.

During debate Kielkucki urged House members to "keep the political stuff out of this." Yet, much of the debate focused on the bill's parameters that academic standards reflect principles in the U.S. Constitution, Declaration of Independence, "and other such principles as national sovereignty, natural law, and free market enterprise."

Regarding natural law, Rep. Joe Mullery (DFL-Mpls) asked, "How can it be interpreted? The commissioner could take it and go in a certain direction."

Commissioner Cheri Pierson Yecke will lead the development of new academic standards. Kielkucki said the standards would be reviewed as part of the Legislature's rule-making process. "When we review these and the public reviews these, they can object," Kielkucki said.

The 10 DFL members who voted against repeal didn't join the debate.

"I would like to see all the cards on the table before we move," Rep. Cy Thao (DFL-St. Paul) said in a later interview. "I can't vote for something that will cost while we're cutting other programs."

Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) later called the natural law reference "an offbeat philosophical" part of the bill. He also objected to language in the bill that prohibits including "work-based learning" in new academic standards.

During debate, Rep. Gene Pelowski, Jr. (DFL-Winona) compared the profile standards to an old-fashioned telephone switchboard with scores of confusing cables. "Who was running this thing," he asked. "The DCFL (Department of Children, Families and Learning) was our Lily Tomlin," he said, referring to the telephone operator the comedy actress has played. "They annoyed us with their answers," he said, regarding the profile's grading system and other requirements. "We couldn't figure it out, but it was called rigor."

The profile standards include 11 learning



Good as new

Desks in House, Senate chambers still in use nearly 100 years later

areas with content requirements detailed in 24 learning packages. The standards attempted to move away from a traditional academic and testing approach and toward student experiments, research projects, and community service. They became known as “show what you know” standards.

Parents could not understand the profile grading system, said Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior). The profile also led the state to “spend dollars on telling teachers how to teach,” she said. “Our math standards have not been good. They’re bad in reading, but good in science.”

Sykora, chair of the House Education Policy Committee, said she expects Yecke to present new reading and math standards to the committee by the end of March. “We will review the new standards,” she said.

In the week prior to the debate, Yecke announced the appointment of 77 volunteers — including teachers, school board members, parents, and business representatives — who will assist the department in creating new K-12 standards in reading and math. The group, known as the Minnesota Academic Standards Committee, held its first meeting Feb. 19. In addition to the volunteers, each academic committee will include teacher representatives from Education Minnesota, which is the state’s teacher’s union, and school representatives from statewide superintendents and principals organizations.

Reading and math standards are prioritized because the state needs to submit them to the federal Department of Education to remain in compliance with federal law and not risk losing Title I funding for school districts.

The bill passed by the House states, “the commissioner must adopt rules ... for implementing the statewide core academic standards in English and mathematics.” Several DFL members who supported the bill said it would give Yecke the power to implement new standards without legislative review.

“Once it’s in the hands of the commissioner, we can’t accomplish change,” said Rep. Lyndon Carlson (DFL-Robbinsdale).

The bill offered “no clear road path to what comes next,” said Rep. Joe Opatz (DFL-St. Cloud). He said the standards would be “dominated by the (governor’s) administration,” much like the original profile standards were in 1998, under Gov. Arne Carlson.

Despite the doubts, Sykora maintained legislators would review new standards before the commissioner could go to the rulemaking process. 🐼

In a building designed for grandeur and majesty, there are few things in the Minnesota State Capitol that are purely utilitarian and pedestrian. Even the desks from which legislators work in their respective chambers have a certain air of dignity.

Designed by Cass Gilbert, the renowned architect of the Capitol building, the desks were built by the Doten-Dunton Desk Company, formerly located in Boston. There are 135 versions of the same desk in the House chamber and 70 in the Senate chamber, all made of mahogany.

The original design of the AA slant-top desk was topped by a sloped writing surface with a low, shaped splashboard at the front. The plain skirt had a central interior drawer directly above the kneehole. Below the central drawer were an open half-shelf and a small rectangular cabinet with paneled door. Two stiles, resembling pilasters, which are column-like structures, flanked the double-paneled front. The single-paneled sides adjoined standards, which were scrolled and ornamented with acanthus, or leaflike, carvings at the top. The standards curved in to meet a solid base.

In keeping with the elements of design for a stately building such as the Capitol, the scale and proportion of the furnishings were adjusted. The desks are larger than their counterparts in a residential home, said Carolyn Kompelien, manager of the State Capitol historic site for the Minnesota Historical Society.

As technology evolved, the desk design was slightly altered. Inkwells were removed and microphones installed. Drawers and storage cabinets were rebuilt and new holes were drilled to accommodate wiring for the electronic voting mechanisms that came into play in the late 1930s. In the 1960s, the desks in the House chambers alone were covered in a laminate surface. And in the 1990s, the House ordered a few reproductions that could

accommodate wheelchairs.

Today the desks are more likely to be adorned with laptop computers and soft drink cans than the spittoons of old, but they remain largely true to their original design.

“They’ve undergone refinishing, and I’m sure there’s been some repair on them but I think they’ve stood up really extremely well,” Kompelien said.

Speaking of design, is it odd that an architect would pay attention to such a minor piece as a desk?

“In that time period it wasn’t as unusual, but it was something that Gilbert fully intended to have control over in that the furniture was considered as much a work of art as any of the paintings, the murals in the building, the sculpture,” Kompelien said.

“The idea behind the whole Capitol was to bring the idea of the beau-art design together so that you saw a single design, a single whole, if you will, that together made this space.”

Gilbert designed many of the 1,600 pieces of original furniture placed in the Capitol in 1905. Today, slightly more than half of those pieces are known to be in use throughout the Capitol complex. Those remaining — including benches, chairs, signs, and the oval table in the governor’s reception room — are purposely kept in public spaces and offices. Some benches have been refurbished.

Gilbert’s design of the Minnesota State Capitol building brought him national recognition. He is also responsible for the design of the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington, D.C., which was completed in 1935, one year after his death, and the Woolworth Building in New York City, the latter having been the tallest building in the world at the time of its completion in 1913.

(M. BRYANT)



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK
Members’ desks in the House Chamber have been refinished, but are by and large unchanged since Cass Gilbert designed them 100 years ago.

Session deadlines announced

House and Senate leadership have set the following deadlines for committees to complete their business this session:

- **Friday, April 4** — Bills must be out of policy committees in the house of origin.
- **Friday, April 11** — All House and Senate files must be out of all policy committees in the other body.
- **Tuesday, April 29** — Omnibus finance bills must be out of House and Senate finance committees.

There are exceptions to these deadlines. For example, bill sponsors may appeal to the rules committee to have rules suspended so a bill may be considered after the deadline. In addition, the taxes committee is not bound by the deadlines.

EDUCATION

Privacy of student information

A bill (HF168) that would close an inadvertent loophole regarding information disclosure about home school students was approved Feb. 13 by the House Education Policy Committee and referred to the House Civil Law Committee.

The sponsor of the bill, Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), said it would amend state law to “formally make home school student data private.” According to the Minnesota Non-Public Education Council, state and federal privacy protection laws do not cover students not enrolled in a particular school.

State law requires private school student information such as names, addresses, birthdates, and immunization status be reported to the local public school district. Home school parent-teachers, in addition, must report quarterly on a student’s progress in the lesson areas that have been taught.

Pamela von Gohren, representing the non-public education group, said businesses and organizations have requested home school student information from districts. Last year, a school district in southeast Minnesota provided a high school class with the names, addresses, and phone numbers of home school students so they could be included in a survey for a school project. “This didn’t sit well in this district,” von Gohren said.

The bill would prohibit a school district from designating home school student information as “directory information” unless the student’s parent or guardian gives written

consent. According to the Department of Children, Families and Learning, there are 15,200 home school students in the state.

John Tuma, representing the Minnesota Association of Christian Home Educators, also testified in support of the bill. “Most districts want to keep this (information) private,” he said. “If there’s a request now” for home school student information, Tuma said, the school district must provide it.

Virtual learning

The House Education Finance Committee Feb. 19 heard a live in-person report about the state’s first online school, the Minnesota Virtual Academy.

Former federal Education Secretary William Bennett, now the owner of K12 Inc., said the virtual school is “another option in public education.” Bennett’s company supplies the school’s curriculum, computers, and instructional materials in a partnership with the Houston School District in southeastern Minnesota.

The online charter school opened last November and has 137 home-based students in kindergarten through fifth grade.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

William J. Bennett, owner of K12 Inc., testifies before the House Education Finance Committee Feb. 19 about the Minnesota Virtual Academy, an online charter school for students in grades K-5 that began operation last November. Bennett was the education secretary in the first Bush Administration.

Kim Ross, superintendent of Houston Public Schools and director of the virtual academy, said any elementary-age student in Minnesota can enroll in the school through the state’s public schools open enrollment option.

That option allows a parent to enroll a student in another school district in the state. State aid of \$6,100 per student follows the enrollee to the new district. That’s how the virtual academy, approved last year by the state Department of Children, Families and Learning, is funded. Students currently hail from St. Cloud, Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Winona, Ross said. There is no additional cost to parents.

While Education Secretary in the first Bush Administration, Bennett said he was prodded by his wife, Elaine, a former elementary special education teacher, “to do his homework.” Bennett said he visited 120 schools across the country and taught some lessons as a guest teacher.

“There was an incredible unevenness of quality,” said Bennett. “I have been a critic of public education. I’m not an enemy of public education. I want to improve it.”

Bennett’s company provides the student with a computer system and printer, textbooks, workbooks, and instructional supplies. Parents work with the students and state certified teachers regularly monitor their progress. The teachers are geographically based and employed by the school to meet the state’s requirements that students receive five hours a week of face-to-face instruction. The school’s curriculum includes math, English, history, science, art, and music.

The virtual school’s students will take the state’s required basic skills and comprehensive assessment tests to measure their progress. “If there’s public money, then there needs to be public accountability,” Bennett said.

The Minnesota Virtual Academy eventually plans to offer the sixth through 12th grades. Bennett’s company is also the curriculum provider for virtual schools in Alaska, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

Changing three days

The House Education Policy Committee Feb. 18 approved a bill that would allow school districts flexibility to use three days of the school calendar year currently state-mandated for teacher training or instruction linked to the Profile of Learning.

Sponsored by Rep. Rob Eastlund (R-Isanti), HF347 would remove the state mandate passed in 2000 for implementing the profile, and would give local school boards flexibility

in using the three days. School boards could use the days for instruction, staff development, or parent-teacher conferences, for example. The bill would be effective for the 2003-04 school year.

According to the Department of Children, Families and Learning, local boards of education establish the length of the school year and have flexibility to determine the number of student instruction days, as long as instruction days match what school boards adopted for the 1996-97 school year. The number of school days will vary by school district, depending on weather considerations, number of negotiated days for teacher training and staff development, and other factors.

The committee approved the bill the day after the House passed a bill repealing the Profile of Learning. HF347 now moves to the House floor.

The bill currently has no Senate companion.

ELECTIONS

Campaign sign ordinances

During last fall's campaign, Rep. Peter Adolphson (R-Minnetonka) was informed that several Eden Prairie residents had complained that he had more than one sign on a residents' property.

Current law states that municipalities can enact an ordinance regulating the size of non-commercial signs, but statutes say nothing about the number of signs. At the time Adolphson said the cities of Eden Prairie and Minnetonka interpreted the law to also mean one sign per candidate.

To rectify any further confusion, Adolphson is sponsoring HF307 that amends current law so that noncommercial signs of any size and in any number can be posted from Aug. 1 of a general election year until 10 days after Election Day.

The bill was approved Feb. 18 by the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee and referred to the full House.

Rep. Keith Ellison (DFL-Mpls) asked Adolphson if there was any motivation behind the city removing his signs. Adolphson responded no, saying he thought the city's interpretation of the law had to do with aesthetics rather than political motivations.

The state Legislature typically allows municipalities to solve problems such as this locally, said Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Grand Rapids). Adolphson said he had spoken with city officials, and the municipalities had no problems with the bill.

The bill has no Senate companion.

EMPLOYMENT

Domestic partner benefits

A House committee approved a bill Feb. 17 that would eliminate the same-sex domestic partner health insurance benefits extended in union contracts negotiated in 2001.

Sponsored by House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon), HF330 was approved by the House Governmental and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee and referred to the House Higher Education Finance Committee. A companion bill (SF293), sponsored by Senate Majority Leader John Hottinger (DFL-St. Peter), was approved by the Senate State and Local Government Operations Committee and referred to the Senate Finance Committee.

Because the Legislature did not reach agreement to ratify contracts governing the state's two largest employee unions — Minnesota Association of Professional Employees and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Council 6 — the state and the unions agreed to use employee benefits defined under the previously agreed-upon plan, which included same-sex partner benefits for health insurance



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Russ Stanton, director of government relations for the Inter-Faculty Organization that serves and promotes faculty of Minnesota state universities, testifies Feb. 17 before the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee in support of a bill that would ratify state employee labor agreements and compensation plans without provisions for same-sex domestic partner benefits.

and certain leave provisions. Now for those to remain in effect, the Legislature must ratify the contracts this session.

Sviggum said the benefits for same-sex partners could be viewed as discriminatory, noting that a man and woman who are unmarried and living together, so-called domestic partners, cannot take advantage of a benefit plan like same-sex couples do under the current contracts.

Rep. Keith Ellison (DFL-Mpls) questioned Sviggum as to why he didn't want to include the benefits in the bill. Sviggum said although he respects those with different views, "sometimes there is a right and wrong in life." Sviggum also said Ellison could offer an amendment to the bill if he chose.

Mark Iezek, who works for the Department of Administration, and his partner, Strom Burger, testified against the plan. Iezek said that by not offering the benefit the state is showing that it values some employees more than others.

Equating the policy to "on-the-job discrimination," Burger explained how his partner took time off for the death of his father, but by making him use vacation time instead of accumulated bereavement leave, the state was cheapening the partner's relationship with his father.

Several groups testified in favor of the bill.

Speaking on behalf of the Minnesota Nurses Association, Susan Stout said the organization had been waiting 18 months for a contract and favors the Legislature's ratification of the contracts. She was concerned nurses would leave state service in a time of shortages if pay increases did not occur, per the contract.

Russ Stanton, director of government relations for the Inter-Faculty Organization that serves and promotes faculty of Minnesota state universities, said the organization doesn't disagree with same-sex benefits, but that many employees will not receive their pay raises and individual retirement plans could be affected if a contract is not ratified.

Agency merger moving ahead

In a move to save money and synchronize workforce development, economic development, and higher education, Gov. Tim Pawlenty is moving forward with a merger of two state agencies.

A 2001 law mandates the merger of the Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) and the Department of Economic Security (DES). The departments are to combine by July 1, 2003.

The Feb. 18 release of the governor's budget recommendations confirmed the merger was indeed moving forward. It was the first solid indication that the governor supports the

merger, proposed by former Gov. Jesse Ventura.

The new agency would have a budget of \$737.7 million for 2004-05, according to a letter from Trade and Economic Development Commissioner Matt Kramer and Economic Security Deputy Commissioner Harry Mares. However, this includes federal funds, some of which support the state's unemployment insurance system. The state appropriation alone is slated at \$109.5 million, according to the Department of Finance, reflecting both the proposed merger and a \$24 million cut.

The House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee heard the budget related to the merger at its Feb. 19 hearing. The committee also recently reviewed a 2002 report discussing the merger. It proposes that the combined agency be called the Workforce and Economic Development Department, or WEDD.

The 2001 law mandating the merger said that no classified service employee should suffer job loss from the reorganization. Non-classified employee numbers may be reduced, however, through layoffs and attrition, said Morris Anderson, manager of the team that prepared the report.

However, cost savings were not the first aim, Anderson said. The priority was to coordinate policy and planning between workforce development, education and training, and economic development – the engines fueling the state's economy.

Strong strategic vision and policy structure are lacking in the workforce and economic development areas, Anderson said. No one had been looking at the connection comprehensively, he added.

"No one really owns the current structure outside the government itself."

The Trade and Economic Development Department is the state's principal economic development agency, with programs promoting business expansion and retention, workforce development, international trade, community development, and tourism. The Department of Economic Security provides programs and services that foster economic independence, including the Minnesota Job Bank and Minnesota WorkForce Centers.

Job losses outlined

Only five years ago Minnesota had the lowest unemployment rate in the nation.

Today, matters are vastly different.

"If you're looking at numbers (only), this is the worst job market in 20 years," said Jay Mousa, director of research and statistics for the Minnesota Department of Economic Se-

curity, which oversees unemployment insurance and certain workforce services. His remarks came Feb. 18 before the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.

From the state's peak employment level in February 2001 through December 2002, the state lost 61,000 jobs, Mousa said. They were part of the 2 million jobs lost throughout the nation during the same period.

The total annual level of new unemployment benefits claims was higher in 2001 than at any time since the 1982 recession, with a 50 percent increase over 2000, Mousa said.

Particularly hard hit in Minnesota was the manufacturing sector, which lost 38,000 jobs between its peak employment in August 2000 and August 2002. This is for the simple reason that Minnesota has a large manufacturing base, Mousa said. Manufacturing represents 15 percent of the state's non-farm jobs.

Job losses came largely in industrial machinery and equipment, electronic equipment, and printing and publishing. Impacts on air transportation from the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks were also significant in Minnesota, due in part to the fact that Northwest Airlines headquarters are located in the state.

Minnesota isn't suffering alone in the upper Midwest. Iowa, South Dakota, and Wisconsin also experienced manufacturing job losses between 2000 and 2002. North Dakota was the only neighboring state to have gained in this sector, and that gain was slight, according to department statistics.

"Manufacturing jobs continue to hemorrhage and there is no sign of healing," Mousa said.

The health services sector is one of the very few bright spots, he added. Despite the recession, about 3,500 jobs were added in Minnesota in 2002.

Mousa said officials expect the state will again see a job market so strong that a labor shortage will occur. However, that won't be until the second half of this decade. Much of the growth will occur in jobs requiring post-secondary education, he added.

★ ENERGY

Fighting against storage

If the Legislature approves more nuclear waste storage for the Prairie Island nuclear plant, the American Indian community on the island near Red Wing "will take every available action" to enforce its rights.

Xcel Energy officials have said they will shut down the plant in 2007 if additional storage casks for spent fuel rods are not approved by the Legislature.

The position on the Prairie Island Indian

Community Tribal Council's legal standing was explained to the House Regulated Industries Committee Feb. 19 by Council President Audrey Bennett and Marc Slonim, a Seattle-based attorney retained by the island's American Indian community.

A 21-page legal opinion the tribal council provided then Gov.-Elect Tim Pawlenty in December 2002 said legislative authorization for more storage casks "would be a direct and substantial violation of the rights of the Prairie Island Indian Community" under a 1994 contract between the state and Northern States Power Company (which later became Xcel Energy). That contract, part of a compromise bill the Legislature adopted to allow 17 storage casks for high-level nuclear waste "expressly names the Community as an intended third-party beneficiary with standing to enforce the agreement," according to the opinion.

"Should the state and Xcel renege upon their contractual commitment to us, we will take every available action to enforce our rights,"



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Audrey Bennett, *right*, tribal council president of the Prairie Island Native American Community, told the House Regulated Industries Committee Feb. 19 that her tribe would have veto power for additional nuclear dry casks storage at the Prairie Island nuclear power plant. Joining her at the hearing was Marc Slonim, an attorney retained by the community.

according to the council's letter to Pawlenty. A copy of the letter and the legal opinion by the council's attorney was provided to each committee member.

Slonim urged the committee to "take no action" on Xcel's request. "It's not right," he said. "It's not constitutional." That comment drew an angry reaction from Rep. Gregory Davids (R-Preston).

"Says who?" he asked Slonim, who replied, "That's our opinion." That led Davids to respond, "Who cares about your opinion?"

The contract that names the council as a third party beneficiary with legal standing has been questioned as to whether it bars a future Legislature from amending the 1994 state law restricting nuclear storage to 17 casks.

"You can argue if it's enforceable," said Bennett. "You cannot dispute the morality of failing to honor its intentions." She said no community in the country lives as close to a nuclear plant as the 300 tribal members of the Prairie Island reservation, yet they do not receive electric power from the plant. The plant's nuclear waste storage area is 600 yards away.

Bennett said the tribal council has been meeting with Xcel officials and will continue to do so. "We are open to working with Xcel and the state on a government-to-government basis to find common ground," Bennett said.

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

Energy efficiency

As part of the Minnesota Energy and Security and Reliability Act passed in 2001, \$500,000 was allocated annually to the Administration and Commerce departments to increase the energy efficiency in specified state buildings.

Building design guidelines were due Jan. 15, and reviewed Feb. 19 by the House Capital Investment Committee.

The sustainable energy guidelines dictate the following:

- state buildings larger than 5,000 square feet must exceed existing energy code by at least 30 percent,
- state buildings must achieve the lowest possible lifetime costs for new buildings,
- the departments must encourage continual energy conservation improvements in new buildings, and
- structures must ensure good indoor air quality.

Using the guidelines, a comprehensive plan for maximizing electrical and thermal energy efficiency in the buildings is due by Jan. 15, 2004.

With the help of a consulting group, the

departments are compiling a list of buildings to examine. The list currently totals more than 7,500. Committee Chair Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) said he was surprised the number of buildings was so low. Janet Streff, a senior state program administration manager in the state Commerce Department, said the number is expected to rise once all buildings are identified.

Wes Chapman, state planning director in the Department of Administration, said the program attempts to save the state money in the long run, although it may take 10-15 years to do so because of the upfront energy improvement costs.

Krinkie expressed concern about the time frame saying private sector paybacks are usually more in the five-year range. Furthermore, he said that in general "the state does not save money, the state only spends money." Kath Ouska, an assistant commissioner with the Department of Administration, said the state plans to have a longer life expectancy in the buildings compared to many in the private sector.

★ GOVERNMENT

Television dollars

Public television stations cover about 98 percent of the state. While that number is not expected to drop in the upcoming biennium, the portion of their budgets they receive from the state likely will.

As part of his budget reduction plan, Gov. Tim Pawlenty has proposed reducing dollars for public television grants and equipment by \$984,000, a 25 percent decrease.

Representatives from public television told the House State Government Finance Committee Feb. 19 of its value to the state.

Public television in the Twin Cities receives about 1 percent of its budget from the state. Greater Minnesota stations receive between 10 percent and 20 percent of their budgets from the state.

Bill Strusinski, representing Friends of Public Television, said the state investment in public television has remained stagnant since fiscal year 2000 at \$2.05 million annually after being at \$2.4 million the two years before that. He said this is an issue, especially in Greater Minnesota, where state dollars are added to local contributions to create a total that can be matched by federal dollars.

Public television makes Minnesota a better place for all, said Jim Pagliarini, president of Twin Cities Public Television.

For example, he said the six Minnesota public television stations improve and support education. "One of every three hours of broadcast includes programs for children —

programs that have been proven to make a difference in a child's education by preparing kids to learn."

Pagliarini also noted that public television provides diverse programs for free, such as arts and culture, science, and documentaries. Also in that category is legislative-related programming ranging from town debates to *Almanac*, all designed to better inform state residents about issues affecting their lives.

"In many ways public television and public officials share a common mission," he said. "We each work in our own ways with communities and citizens to accomplish common goals and objectives in making Minnesota a better place for all."

They also sometimes work together since public television carries legislative coverage on two of those stations. However, the governor is recommending a \$126,000 reduction (15 percent) in money used to purchase airtime for legislative programming.

Barry LaGrave, director of House Public Information Services, said that he and Senate Media Services are "pretty confident" that the cut will not seriously impact "our ability to provide full gavel-to-gavel, legislative coverage to the citizens of Minnesota."

He said that the departments are trying to negotiate contracts for airtime at a lower price, and a reduction of broadcast hours and days may also be an option.

LaGrave also said that the governor's unallotment for the current fiscal year took away money that was to be used for airtime yet this session. As it now stands, legislative coverage will be off more than 30 cable systems in Greater Minnesota March 9, and six days later off Channel 17 in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Rep. Jim Rhodes (R-St. Louis Park) asked about other ways to raise funds, such as having a broadcast sponsor.

LaGrave said that option has been informally discussed, but he expressed concern that a sponsorship could influence coverage decisions.

Still, Rep. Bill Hass (R-Champlin), the committee chair, said the idea might be worth exploring. "These are tough times, but it is important that people be kept informed of what we are doing because what we do has an affect on their lives."

Impact information

A bill dealing with disclosure of costs associated with administrative rules has been changed again and will now be considered by the full House.

Sponsored by Rep. Marty Seifert

SOMBER NOTE



PHOTO BY KRISTINE LARSEN

Cassie Rulli, center, writes a message on the panel for her father, Michael, Feb. 19 at a tobacco memorial in the Capitol Rotunda. She was accompanied by her aunt Gina Rulli, left, and her grandmother Karen Rulli, right. Michael Rulli died last October of lung cancer at age 39. Gov. Tim Pawlenty proposed using about \$1 billion of tobacco endowment monies to help balance the 2004-05 biennial budget.

(R-Marshall), HF64 was approved by the House State Government Finance Committee Feb. 18, minus two amendments added in its initial committee hearing.

Current law requires that when a state agency proposes a rule change it must also prepare a Statement of Need and Reasonableness that includes the probable costs and who will bear such costs. HF64 would require the statement to include "the portion of total costs that will be borne by identifiable categories of affected parties, such as separate classes of governmental units, businesses, or individuals."

At the Jan. 21 House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee meeting, two amendments were added. One would require legislative approval if the aggregate costs to implement the rule are to exceed \$100 million in the first 10 years, and another would allow a local elected governing body to request the finance commissioner to prepare a local impact note on the rule.

Part of Seifert's concern for wanting the amendments removed was that the numbers offered in the amendment were arbitrarily picked during the meeting and he later felt uncomfortable with that. Motions to remove those portions were successful.

Additionally, a companion bill (SF61), sponsored by Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley), passed a committee without the amended House language and now awaits action by the full Senate.

★ HEALTH

Ensuring long-term care

When a woman at a local nursing home told Rep. Greg Davids (R-Preston) who her long-term care insurance provider was, he got worried. As the owner of an insurance company, Davids knew the woman's insurer was in danger of bankruptcy.

Under Minnesota law, when a health or life insurance company goes bankrupt, the state protects its clients by ensuring up to \$300,000 in claims under the Minnesota Life and Health Insurance Guarantee Association, but Davids said he was surprised to learn that long-term care is not explicitly covered under that protection. If the woman's company went bankrupt, he said, he worried she would lose her access to nursing care.

To remedy the situation, Davids is sponsoring a bill (HF51) that would clarify the definition of health insurance to include long-term care insurance for the purposes of protection under the guarantee association.

Even though only a small percentage of Minnesotans currently have long-term care insurance, Davids said they should be protected.

By law, all health and insurance companies doing business in the state must be members of the guarantee association. The association assesses its members to cover costs.

The House Health and Human Services Policy Committee unanimously approved the

bill Feb. 17, sending it to the House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Policy Committee.

The bill has no Senate companion.

Adoption insurance

Families adopting children who receive state or federal adoption assistance would be given the choice to remain on the state medical assistance program or to participate in the state's prepaid medical assistance program, under a bill that received House committee approval Feb. 17.

Currently the human services commissioner can force people onto the prepaid medical assistance plan.

Sponsored by Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall), HF151 would only affect children eligible for adoption assistance and medical assistance because of certain medical or rehabilitative needs.

Therese Langevin, an adoptive parent, told the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee that not having to switch medical assistance programs would make it easier for her son to continue seeing the same doctors he is used to.

Though Seifert said the Department of Human Services does not foresee increased costs to the state if the bill becomes law, the bill will next go before the Health and Human Services Finance Committee.

A Senate companion (SF396), sponsored by Sen. Dennis Frederickson (R-New Ulm), awaits a committee hearing.

★ HIGHER EDUCATION

Student aid plan

Two members of Minnesota's business community are recommending that the state's grant program be funded differently.

Speaking before the House Higher Education Finance Committee Feb. 17, Bill Blazer, senior vice president for the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, said more money should be directed to students instead of the institutions.

Blazer said one plan the Coalition of Minnesota Businesses, which includes the chamber and other trade organizations, has looked at would take roughly \$160 million allocated for the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (MnSCU) each biennium and redistribute about \$120 million of that to students through financial aid with a net savings of about \$40 million to the state's general fund.

"We need to invest more heavily in financial aid as we try to balance the budget," Blazer

said. "There is some savings here and in our judgment begins to point us more towards a financial aid system that funds higher education based on the needs of students better than we do today."

The committee took no action on the proposal.

"Going to college is one of the driving forces of our economy," said Duane Benson, executive director of the Minnesota Business Partnership Association. "The days of heavy lifting in large part are over. It is now a knowledge economy."

"The university could still receive its money, but it would be through tuition as opposed to money from the state," he added.

Rep. Denny McNamara (R-Hastings) asked how this proposal affects private schools because the money would not be cut from them, yet they could benefit with more students.

"Under current law there is a maximum amount a student can get and we would retain that structure," Blazer said. "Some of the early analysis we've seen shows that our proposal actually sends more dollars to the public sector institutions because their tuition is going to go up because those students will in effect qualify for more assistance."

Blazer said guiding principles for the group suggest that subsidies should be directed at the individuals as opposed to institutions and be based on a student's ability to pay. "We simply cannot continue to offer assistance to everybody."

Benson said that on average more than one-half of the students at the University of Minnesota and one-fifth of those at a MnSCU institution come from families making in excess of \$90,000 annually. "I think it is inappropriate to fund after a certain level."

Rep. John Dorn (DFL-Mankato) noted that families making larger amounts of money are also putting more into the general fund in taxes from which the institution's money comes, "so perhaps we may be being unfair in a different way given where the dollars come from."

★ HOUSING

Condemned property

Timelines regulating hearings for landlords whose rental property face condemnation would be relaxed slightly, under a bill approved Feb. 18.

Unanimously approved by the House Civil Law Committee, HF264 now moves to the House floor. Rep. Len Biernat (DFL-Mpls) is the sponsor.

The bill came at the behest of the City of Minneapolis, which recently finished a pilot project to improve compliance with the tenant remedy act by utilizing civil action prior to entering into criminal action against a landlord. The idea is to encourage landlords to

mitigate problems that could lead to condemnation so their tenants don't lose housing.

Only six properties were condemned due to lack of maintenance during the one-year project, said city attorney Erik Nilsson, down from 144 properties the year prior.

Nilsson indicated the city strives to rectify potential condemnation situations because tenants are forced to move from condemned rental units.

Current law requires that a hearing for the landlord be scheduled within five to 10 days of a housing violation notice. HF264 would allow between five and 30 days. Nilsson said the city requires additional timeline flexibility to better accommodate the procedures.

The city, the court system, and the county support the change, he added.

If passed into law, the extended hearing timeline would apply to all relevant situations throughout the state.

A Senate companion (SF230) is sponsored by Sen. Wesley Skoglund (DFL-Mpls). It awaits committee action.

JUVENILE SENTENCING



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Heidi Green, project co-director with the Minnesota Supreme Court and State Court Administrator's office, presents a Supreme Court report evaluating extended jurisdiction juvenile sentencing options to the House Judiciary Policy and Finance Committee Feb. 18.

★ LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Aid reductions

With the state auditor calling for a 43 percent reduction in state aid to cities, the funding cuts to cities and counties in Gov. Tim Pawlenty's 2004-05 budget proposal were no surprise.

Pawlenty's proposal doesn't go as far as the state auditor's suggestion - it cuts city aid by 29 percent from previous funding forecasts and county aid by 20 percent. The House Taxes Committee reviewed the numbers Feb. 19 and 20.

According to the governor's proposal, cuts in city aid, as a percent of total city 2000 revenues, would average 3.8 percent in calendar year 2003 and 7.3 percent in 2004. The maximum cut to any one city would be 5 percent in 2003, and 9.5 percent in 2004. The total reduction amount is \$435 million.

The plan recommends that cities avoid raising local property taxes to account for the state funding loss, and instead suggests that city spending be reduced. However, cities could raise their property taxes through voter approval.

Cuts in county aid would average 1.6 percent in calendar year 2003 and 2.8 percent in 2004. The maximum cut to any one county could be 2 percent in 2003 and 3 percent in 2004, under Pawlenty's plan. The total reduction amount would be \$189.4 million.

Additionally, the governor would have city aid distributed in 2005 through a yet-to-be-developed formula that accounts for new needs and other factors. Likewise, the county aid programs would be replaced by a new formula, also based partly on need.

Total aid to cities under the governor's plan would total \$1.07 billion in 2004-05; aid to counties, \$722.8 million.

The city aid program was created as part of a 1971 property tax reform measure known as the "Minnesota Miracle" that attempted to provide aid based on differences in local governments' need. The system originally included aid for counties. Now county aid is distributed strictly through programs, such as Homestead Agricultural Credit Aid (HACA), Family Preservation Aid and the County Criminal Justice Aid.

Family preservation aid aims to reduce increased costs associated with removing children from their homes and placing them in special care. Criminal justice aid aims to reduce county reliance on local property taxes for county criminal justice and corrections programs.

The committee took no action on the plan at the meetings.

★ INSURANCE

Terrorism coverage

Insurance coverage against terrorism, which now is automatic on commercial property fire insurance policies, would be offered only for an additional fee under a bill that received committee support Feb. 13.

Sponsored by Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Eagan), HF267 was approved by the House Commerce, Jobs, and Economic Development Policy Committee and will be forwarded to the House floor.

As it stands now, federal law requires commercial property fire insurance policies to include acts of foreign terrorism, even if the policy expressly states that terrorism is not covered. The special terrorism measure, which was temporary, was invoked through the federal Terrorism Risk Insurance Act following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in 2001.

Under HF267, insurance companies would no longer be required to automatically provide terrorism coverage on fire insurance policies. Clients instead would be given the choice to purchase the additional coverage.

The bill applies only to commercial property; residential insurance is excluded.

Beverly Turner, a government affairs representative for the St. Paul Companies, said her firm supports the bill, as does the American Insurance Association and the Insurance Federation of Minnesota. Wilkin added that he has received bi-partisan support for the measure.

Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park) is sponsoring a companion bill (SF176) in the Senate. It awaits a committee hearing.

★ RECREATION

Shooting range rights

Property rights and other protective measures for both new and existing shooting ranges would be laid out, under a bill approved Feb. 18 by a House committee.

Several members of the House Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs Committee, who voted to send HF327 to the House Civil Law Committee, said they did so reluctantly, citing concerns with the lack of definitions within the bill.

Sponsored by Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), the bill would prohibit towns, cities, and counties from limiting operations of shooting ranges that are functioning within generally accepted practices. It also governs when and how the state or local government may require a range to relocate or close; provides for the state or local government to create noise

buffers when development encroaches upon a range; sets prerequisites for taking action against a range for noise; and prohibits a range from being declared a nuisance.

There are about 375 shooting ranges in Minnesota.

Speaking in favor of the bill was Les Bensch, owner of Viking Valley Hunt Club in Ottertail County and a representative of the Minnesota Game Breeders Association, and attorney David Gross, representing the Minnesota Gun Owners Civil Rights Alliance and the Faribault Rifle and Pistol Club, Inc.

Minnesota is one of only five states that doesn't regulate shooting ranges, Bensch said. "It will force all of us to do a better job in management of the ranges."

Gross said the bill would protect ranges that are "under attack" from complaints and lawsuits resulting when cities and counties sometimes erroneously allow housing developments adjacent to ranges.

But several representatives and other lobbyists said the bill banishes property rights for all involved, save for the ranges themselves.

Rep. Keith Ellison (DFL-Mpls) questioned why the bill states that range operators and their consultants would be approached during the creation of a definition of generally accepted operation practices. Missing, he said, is mention of neighbors and townships.

Speaking against the bill were representatives from the Department of Natural Resources, the Association of Minnesota Counties, the League of Minnesota Cities, and the Minnesota Association of Townships.

Similar legislation was passed the House in 1999 and 2001, but stalled both times in the Senate.

The bill has no Senate companion.

★ SAFETY

Public safety cuts detailed

Base budgets for transportation-related activities in the Department of Public Safety will be reduced from initial estimates by \$2.6 million in the next biennium, according to budget documents presented to the House Transportation Finance Committee Feb. 19.

The department receives its funding from a number of sources, including the general fund, the trunk highway fund, and the highway user tax distribution fund, which collects license tab fee revenue. Reductions proposed in Gov. Tim Pawlenty's budget recommendations will largely be absorbed in three areas: administration and related services, driver and vehicle services, and the State Patrol.

Though the budget recommendations reflect

some reductions in anticipated spending, the overall department budget reflects a net increase from 2002-03 of nearly \$19 million. However, general fund spending for the department would be reduced by about \$1.6 million.

Commissioner Rich Stanek testified that the reductions would involve the elimination of eight full-time positions in divisions that support administration, such as responding to media requests, elimination of state fair costs, slowing of Web applications and information technology development, and shuffling of management duties in several public safety facilities.

In addition, the Driver and Vehicle Services division would lose between 14 and 18 full-time positions, which director Mary McCormack said are currently vacant. However, she said that certain performance goals, such as filling vehicle registration requests within seven to 10 days, will be difficult to meet at the new staffing levels.

In addition, the division is requesting an increase in title fees, which pay for the actual vehicle license plate. Officials testified that purchasing the technology to make the plates and other items has become more expensive. Currently, Minnesotans pay \$2 for a plate. The proposal is to raise that fee to \$3.

The Capitol Security force would be significantly reduced under the proposed budget, Stanek testified. The plan would eliminate coverage at the Capitol Complex in all but the State Capitol, the State Office Building, and the Judicial Center. Other agencies could contract services with the security force or with a private security company.

Col. Anne Beers, chief of the State Patrol, said the force already has one contract to provide security at all the complex parking ramps, and contracts with four agencies to provide security during business hours Monday through Friday at their primary office facilities.

Several members questioned whether the budget request affected the governor's security detail, much criticized during the Ventura administration.

Beers testified that the budget recommendations do not include a reduction to the governor's security, provided by the State Patrol. She said that while some security has been installed at the governor's personal residence, she doesn't expect it to cost as much as Gov. Ventura's security at his personal home did.

Pawlenty has chosen to live at his personal residence because his wife, a Dakota County judge, must live in the judicial district.

Stanek also noted that Pawlenty has been working longer hours, including events throughout the state that require additional security, than Gov. Ventura did.

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

★ TECHNOLOGY

Minnesota Technology phase out

State funding for a Greater Minnesota economic development group that fosters manufacturing and technology growth would be eliminated under the governor's proposed 2004-05 biennial budget, forcing Minnesota Technology Inc. to close shop and lay off 60 people.

Such was the message Minnesota Technology President Jacques Koppel delivered Feb. 18 to the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee.

Minnesota Technology was given \$11.3 million in state funds in the 2002-03 biennium, but Gov. Tim Pawlenty's plan for the next biennium shows a zero appropriation.

"The governor's proposal is a total rejection of the work that about 60 individuals living and working in Greater Minnesota have made over the last several years in helping to build your communities and your companies," Koppel said. "We are really at a loss to understand where this is coming from."

A representative from the governor's office was invited to the meeting, but did not attend.

Koppel said eliminating state funding for Minnesota Technology doesn't make sense considering Pawlenty has emphasized the importance of the manufacturing industry, particularly in Greater Minnesota. "That's what we do," he added.

Minnesota Technology does not rely solely

on state dollars. But a \$2 million U.S. Department of Commerce appropriation requires a two-to-one match, or \$4 million in state funds, Koppel said. Losing state money means losing federal money.

"As efficient as we are, I can't squeeze water out of stones," he added.

The organization has just enough money to pay approximately \$1.5 million in severance pay in laying off its employees, said Koppel.

Minnesota Technology served 1,474 companies in 340 communities in the past two years, helping create high-wage jobs. Koppel said the state has received \$26.4 million in new sales and income tax revenues from its biennial appropriation to the non-profit that formed in 1991.

The organization provides expertise and tools to understand and enhance technology; delivers economic development services to communities, private entities and public officials; collects and disseminates data, and offers knowledge of and insight into Minnesota's technology sector.

Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) said Minnesota Technology has a good relationship with the businesses in his community, and called on them to testify about the funding cut.

★ TOURISM

Historic closures

Seven historic sites throughout the state would close and people could lose their jobs

under 2004-05 budget cuts proposed for the Minnesota Historical Society by Gov. Tim Pawlenty.

Sites that would close indefinitely as of July 1, 2003 are the James J. Hill House in St. Paul, Comstock House in Moorhead, Oliver H. Kelley Farm in Elk River, Historic Forestville near Preston, Fort Ridgely near Fairfax, and the Lower Sioux Agency near Redwood Falls. Additionally, Grand Mound near International Falls would not open in the spring of 2004 and would remain closed indefinitely.

Because the Forest History Center in Grand Rapids received a legislative appropriation for improvements only last year, it would close only for renovation. The renewed site would re-open in 2004 or 2005.

Unaffected are Split Rock Lighthouse at Two Harbors, the under-construction Mill City Museum in Minneapolis, and the Minnesota Historical Society's crown jewel – the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul. However, hours would be reduced three days a week at the history center and by 30 percent overall at the center library.

Director Nina Archabal told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee Feb. 19 that the society heard last year's public outcry to the proposed Fort Snelling closure. For this reason it will remain open.

The society considered four factors in choosing which sites would close: number of visitors per year, operating costs, geographic location, and recent improvements and investments made possible from state and private money.

Pawlenty's plan, if ultimately enacted, would reduce the historical society budget by 15 percent, or \$8.05 million, for the two-year period. The society recently also absorbed a \$1.06 million cut to its fiscal year 2003 budget.

Nearly 200 full- and part-time employees may be laid off, according to Archabal.

"I'm very concerned that when we come out the other end of this, whatever it is, that we have a historical organization that can do the work on behalf of the state's people that really needs to get done to make a foundation for the future," Archabal said.

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

★ TRANSPORTATION

Activity bus drivers

A bill that would extend a short-term provision regarding drivers of school activity buses received approval from the House Transportation Policy Committee Feb. 19.

HF259, sponsored by Rep. Bill Kuisle

VALUING STATE LANDS



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

James Skurla, *left*, and Dr. Curt Anderson, *right*, representing the University of Minnesota-Duluth School of Business and Economics, present a report on the physical inventory and valuation of state-owned lands within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness to the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee Feb. 13.

(R-Rochester), would remove the July 1, 2003 sunset date for a 2001 provision regarding who may drive school activity buses. Under the 2001 law, people with class D driver's licenses may drive the special vehicles without a commercial driver's license endorsement under certain criteria.

Those criteria include that they must only drive the vehicles to and from an activity, not operate a bus route, they must pass a background check, they must not have committed certain driving offenses including drunken driving, and must have certified they met the requirements.

The law was initially brought as a way to accommodate coaches, daycare center teachers, and others who had occasion to transport students to and from activities, such as games or field trips, but were not certified as commercial drivers. Generally, a person must have a commercial driver's license to operate the special vehicles, including small buses, 15-passenger vans, and other 10+ passenger vehicles.

The bill was amended in the committee to accommodate two driver-related concerns. The first amendment addressed items inadvertently omitted during discussions in 2001.

State Patrol Capt. Brian Erickson testified that the law included child-care providers in the group allowed to operate the vehicles without commercial licenses, but did not include those daycare drivers under the safety provisions that drivers were required to meet.

An additional amendment, offered by Rep. Dan Larson (DFL-Bloomington), would require drivers of special activity vehicles to meet the requirements that all other school bus drivers are required to meet with regard to criminal backgrounds, particularly certain sex offenses and drug offenses that might not appear on a criminal background check.

Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls) spoke in favor of the amendment, saying her son's bus driver at school was recently charged with molesting a child on the bus route and without the specific prohibitions, that bus driver could potentially obtain a position driving a daycare center's activity bus.

The bill now moves to the full House. Its Senate companion (SF314), sponsored by Sen. David Gaither (R-Plymouth), awaits a committee hearing.

Extending special vehicle life

A bill that would extend the legal life of certain special transportation vehicles was approved Feb. 19 by the House Transportation Finance Committee.

The bill (HF348), sponsored by Rep. Tony Kielkucki (R-Lester Prairie), would extend the

usable life for special transportation vehicles from 10 years to 12 years. It now moves to the full House.

The vehicles in question include passenger cars, station wagons, vans, and small buses, generally intended to carry 10 or fewer people including the driver. These vehicles may be used for student transport, but are often maintained by districts to send groups of teachers or small groups to seminars or special events.

Under current law, the life of the vehicle is limited to 10 years, regardless of condition. Kielkucki said the extension would allow districts some flexibility to continue using vehicles that are in good condition and have low miles, though they may be older.

"You can have a vehicle that's 12 years old that's much more road-worthy than a vehicle that's 2 years old," Kielkucki said.

He suggested that a different standard might be a more useful gauge of the life of a car, such as mileage or other condition evaluation.

Several members were interested in discussing changes to the standard, including using mileage instead of years to determine age.

The bill has no Senate companion.

DOUBLE DUTY



PHOTO BY ANDREW VON BANK

Rep. Marty Seifert's fatherly duties extend into the House Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy Committee Feb. 18. Seifert thought that the committee would put his 6-month-old daughter Brittany to sleep, but it only made her hungry.

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

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The first step

Governor's budget recommendations increase overall spending, while erasing projected deficit and boosting budget reserve

By JEFF JONES

The major work of the 2003 legislative session got unofficially underway Feb. 18 when Gov. Tim Pawlenty handed lawmakers a sweeping budget proposal that on one hand represents the state's largest budget and on the other eliminates the state's largest-ever projected deficit.

Keeping good on a promise not to raise taxes, Pawlenty and Finance Commissioner Dan McElroy presented a budget plan for fiscal years 2004-05 that would raise K-12 education spending, use the state's tobacco endowment, freeze wages for public employees, cut funding for most state agencies and programs, and dramatically change the way the state gives aid to local governments.

The cuts represent an overall reduction in anticipated base budgets for the various functions paid for by the state's general fund.

Standing under a sign that read "Tough Choices Today for a Better Future Tomorrow," Pawlenty called the difficult decisions his administration has had to make "no different" than the sacrifices that families, businesses, organizations, and institutions across the state are having to make in the midst of a poor economy, massive layoffs, and fears of terrorism at home and war abroad. "Now it's just the government's turn," he said.

Weighing in at \$28.1 billion, the proposed general fund budget represents a 3.8 percent, or \$1 billion, spending increase over the current biennium that ends June 30.

During the past 10 years, Pawlenty said, state spending has risen by about a 13 percent biennial average, with enough tax income to sustain that growth. Pawlenty called such increases, achieved in the economic boom years of the 1990s, part of an "economic mirage."

"The economy of the mid- and late-1990s caused state policymakers, including me, to

make decisions based on the economic projections of those times and of those years. And that has deflated. It has popped. It has burst," said Pawlenty, who spent 10 years in the Minnesota House of Representatives.

Projections released last November predicted a 14.3 percent state spending increase for the next biennium but only a 6.6 percent increase in revenues, contributing to projections of an unprecedented \$4.2 billion deficit. Under the Minnesota Constitution, the state's general fund cannot be in deficit at the end of a fiscal year.

A campaign promise not to raise taxes meant that Pawlenty has had to reconcile the bulk of that deficit through significant cuts in spending, though some accounting shifts and fee hikes are also part of his proposal.

Budget nuts and bolts

The governor pledged to spare public school classrooms from the cuts. Because K-12 Education was projected to account for nearly 40 percent of general fund expenditures, that promise rendered untouchable the largest piece of the spending pie. Because of cuts to other areas of government, K-12 education makes up about 43.5 percent of the proposed 2004-05 budget.

The largest savings, nearly one-third of the

governor's plan, would come from cuts to health and human services programs. They include consolidating the General Assistance Medical Care program with the state's MinnesotaCare program, adding or increasing fees and co-payments for some health services, and lowering reimbursement rates to doctors and hospitals. Tighter proposed eligibility requirements would affect thousands of low-income Minnesotans who receive state subsidized health care, forcing them to pay higher premiums or leave the program entirely. New welfare rules would be aimed at discouraging pregnancy by eliminating increased cash benefits for additional children.

The plan would change the way aid is distributed to city and county governments, cutting the overall amount of such spending by 28.8 percent for cities and 20.1 percent for counties from the current biennium. It would also limit those governments' ability to raise property taxes to compensate for losses in state funding. Governments that have been able to keep spending in check over the past three years would be rewarded with smaller cuts.

Funding for higher education would make up 9 percent of general fund spending under the plan, after 15 percent and 10 percent cuts to the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, respectively. However, the state schools would be limited in how they can compensate for the cuts because of a proposed 15 percent limit on tuition hikes.

The plan would also favor distributing state grant funds for higher education to individuals rather than institutions by giving a \$60 million increase to the Higher Education Services Office for state grants that provide student financial aid.

The budget proposal also includes a two-year wage freeze for public employees, from state workers to local government employees and public school teachers. Pawlenty said the freeze would help ensure public wages are not "out of sync" with the private sector and also help prevent layoffs. "We have a situation where if the wage freeze is not enacted by the Legislature, we'll see the net effect being fewer government employees paid higher, trying to do more with less," he said.

Other cost-saving measures in the proposed budget include:

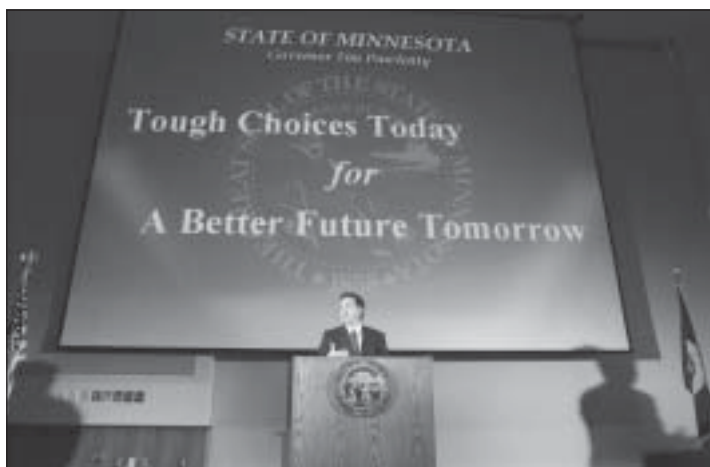


PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Gov. Tim Pawlenty delivered his budget proposals for 2004-05 on Feb. 18 at the Harold Stassen Revenue Building.

- a 15 percent reduction for the governor's and other constitutional offices and the Legislature;
- a 20 percent budget reduction for minority services offices — including the Council on Black Minnesotans, the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, the Indian Affairs Council and the Council for Chicano/Latino Affairs — that provide services and act as governmental liaisons for minority communities;
- reducing subsidies to ethanol producers;
- increasing prison capacity by double-bunking prisoners at some state prisons;
- reducing funding for courts and public defenders; and
- a 25 percent cut in state funding to public television and 35 percent cut for Minnesota Public Radio.

Fund transfers, aid reductions

While spending cuts account for \$2.9 billion of the budget-balancing plan, another \$1.6 billion would be reaped by emptying other funds into the general fund.

The largest of these transfers involves more than \$1 billion from the state's tobacco endowment funds, which would all be transferred for general fund purposes under the proposal. Pawlenty said some public health programs the endowment finances would instead receive funding from portions of the state cigarette tax.

Money from the Health Care Access Fund, which funds the MinnesotaCare program, would also be transferred to the general fund.

When all the proposed transfers and spending reductions are taken together, they would erase the projected deficit and produce a \$500 million budget reserve. Pawlenty said that surplus is an important part of his plan.

"We need to have proper reserves so that we can manage unexpected crises in the coming months and years," he said. "We need to have reserves so that bond houses will understand and see that we are serious and are undertaking prudent measures to have some cushions in place."

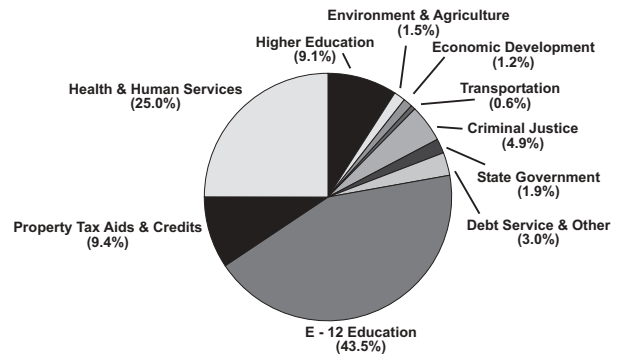
Legislators react

House Republican leaders said the governor has laid out a good roadmap for the Legislature to follow. House Speaker Steve Sviggum (R-Kenyon) challenged critics of the plan to offer one of their own, or explain what taxes they would raise.

DFL leaders said they needed time to study the plan, but their immediate concerns

Proposed General Fund Spending


\$28.1 Billion



Source: Gov. Pawlenty's 2004-05 Budget proposal

stemmed from the proposed cuts to local government aid and to special education.

Referring to Pawlenty's no-tax pledge, House Minority Leader Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul), said, "The rhetoric is not matching reality." Cuts to local government aid, he said, would simply pass the burden on to property owners in the form of higher property taxes.

Some House and Senate committees began hearing detailed overviews of the governor's plan Feb. 19. The 2003 Legislature must establish the budget prior to the start of the fiscal year July 1. The regular session must end by May 19, as prescribed in the state constitution. 

Not alone

Statistical analyses show that many states are dealing with significant budget shortfalls

House members recently weighed comparisons of Minnesota's budget woes to other states and found that it's near the top in state spending per capita. And despite the projected deficit, it still collects large amounts of revenue. The budget deficit also ranks in the top 15 according to several sources.

Earlier this month the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) released a state budget survey and determined that state budgets "are under siege." The survey attributes the faltering economy to the decline in the stock market, contractions in manufacturing and high-tech sectors, and soaring health care costs.

NCSL officials presented the statistics to the House Ways and Means Committee Feb. 12 and 13. Committee Chair Rep. Jim Knobloch (R-St. Cloud) said the purpose of the meetings was to give members a national perspective as they prepare for budget deliberations.

Another source of state statistics examined was the Governing 2002 State and Local Sourcebook. That analysis shows that the state collects nearly as much revenue as it spends because Minnesotans have higher incomes and therefore pay more income tax than workers in other states. Minnesota ranks sixth in total spending measured per capita. When compared to the percentage of personal income, Minnesota comes in at 24. Wisconsin ranked 20th.

The committee also examined Minnesota's budget gap compared with other states. In 2003 the deficit totaled \$356 million, which is 2.5 percent of the state's general fund budget. The 2004 numbers stand at a little more than \$2 billion, which is a jump to 15 percent of the general fund budget.

To remedy the deficit, 29 states have imposed across-the-board budget cuts, Medicaid spending has been cut in 13 states, higher education in 12, and nine states have cut elementary and secondary education and corrections spending, according to the NCSL survey. The number of states that have eliminated state employee travel and have enacted state employee layoffs is both at nine.

NCSL says there's no definite way to measure taxing in states. Some of the key figures to keep in mind are wealth in the state, demographics, and state-local taxes combined, compared to state taxes alone.

The Governing Sourcebook measures the total revenue states bring in by combining state and local taxes. Minnesota comes in fourth when comparing those figures with percentage of personal income. Wisconsin ranks third.

The sourcebook's welfare figures include many health and human services areas such as Medicaid and nursing homes, in addition to the insurance programs for low-income residents

and other social service programs that provide assistance to low-income individuals. The analysis shows that Minnesota ranks second per capita in welfare spending, and seventh in spending as a percentage of personal income.

Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), who chairs the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee, pointed out a drop in state welfare recipients by nearly 40 percent since 1993. He said there's still going to be great pressure in health and human services spending when solving the budget deficit.

Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Grand Rapids) said Minnesota has higher standards for nursing homes compared to other states, and the legislators need to remember that when budget cutting.

The NCSL survey shows the state's public safety rankings as a percentage of local and state spending is low at 44th overall. Nevada is ranked number one.

When examining the state's prison population, Knobloch said Minnesota ranks low because of more community involvement rather than jail time. Rep. Neva Walker (DFL-Mpls) said although the prison population is small, the state ranks in the top five in number of African-Americans behind bars.

(P. JANOVEC)

Development booster

Minerals fund created in 1998 to stimulate stagnant mining economy in northern Minnesota

By MIRANDA BRYANT

Mining and minerals have been an integral part of Minnesota's history since iron ore was discovered in its northeastern reaches in 1865. Today the state is the top producer of iron ore in the country.

The state has provided financial incentives over the years to encourage mineral development. And now the governor is mining that same financial deposit to balance its 2003 budget.

Gov. Tim Pawlenty recently took \$49 million from the Minnesota Minerals 21st Century Fund to help balance a \$356 million statewide shortfall. Iron Range legislators have indicated the remaining \$10 million is not enough to support proposed ventures that will help create jobs in a hurting economy. A few have been angry enough to threaten legal action.

But just what is the fund and how is its money spent?

In simple terms, it is a special venture capital reserve that provides loans and investments to start-up iron ore production facilities, as well as firms expanding into the mining of copper, nickel, zinc, platinum, gold, and palladium. Initially, the Legislature appropriated \$10 million from bonding proceeds in 1998 to create the fund. All told, the fund has been directly appropriated \$60 million since its creation, plus \$20 million contributed by the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Agency (IRRRRA). The state's portion of the fund is administered by the state Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED).

To date, only one enterprise has been given money from the fund. Mesabi Nugget LLC received \$16 million one year ago to build a demonstration plant for processing of high-purity iron nuggets from iron ore.

Expected to employ 28 people, the pilot plant is being built at the Northshore Mining taconite plant in Silver Bay. If proven effective, Mesabi Nugget will construct a commercial plant that aims to produce 800,000 tons a year by 2006. By 2009 the plant could directly employ 600 people and indirectly employ 1,200 people.

Brian Hiti, commissioner of the IRRRA, said Feb. 13 that the construction timeline and budget are being met.

"We are hoping to see iron nuggets coming off the line in June," Hiti said.

Two other companies are also looking to the reserves of the mineral fund, though it's clear that granting one firm's financial request would empty the fund.

Teck Cominco American Inc. is seeking \$20 million to develop a mine that could eventually employ thousands. Still in the feasibility stage, what is being called the Mesaba project also includes a prototype plant that if proven successful would be followed by a larger full-scale operation.

The mine would be built at a copper-nickel reserve near Babbitt. Copper ore would be transported by rail for processing into a concentrate at the former LTV Steel Mining Company plant in Hoyt Lakes, which closed in 2001.

"Out of the ashes of a closed mining company we might see emerge a totally new mineral that could provide quality jobs for the next 30 to 40 years, and a significant number of them," Hiti said.

Construction would employ 1,500 people for about two years. Once completed, the plant would directly employ 1,000 to 1,200 people for at least 30 years, said IRRRA officials, with a payroll exceeding \$73 million annually. An additional 1,000 people would be indirectly employed.

The prototype plant, expected to handle 10,000 tons of copper a year, would take 3.5 years to bring on-line. A full-scale operation would be built in 2007 to handle 120,000 tons a year. According to IRRRA, the Mesaba project would make Minnesota the third largest state producer of copper metal, and the primary producer of nickel and cobalt metal in the United States.

John Key, the project's general manager, told the House Jobs and Economic Development Finance Committee Feb. 4 that a serious re-examination of the project would ensue if the state did not provide support through the mineral fund.

"I'm not saying it's impossible, but it's going to be tough," he said.

The second enterprise hoping to gain mineral funds is Minnesota Iron and Steel, which proposes to purchase an existing plant in the Hibbing area to produce automotive-quality steel coils. The plant would directly employ 1,000 and indirectly employ 3,000.

Hiti indicated the project has stalled while the company restructures and waits for the market to recover.

Pawlenty's budget recommendations did not address the minerals account at all – it contained no other plans to use remaining money in the fund or any plans to add funds to it in the coming biennium.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

The Minnesota Minerals 21st Century Fund was initially formed in 1998 as a way to stimulate development on the Iron Range in northeastern Minnesota. Though funds were recently used to help balance the 2003 budget, remaining funds are being considered for several projects, including one to redevelop the former LTV steel plant in Hoyt Lakes, pictured here.

Gubernatorial tradition

Budget addresses became regular part of governor's duties less than 100 years ago, but continue to be a policy forum

By MICHELLE KIBIGER

When Gov. Tim Pawlenty delivered his budget recommendations Feb. 18 in the states Harold Stassen Revenue Building, he was following in the footsteps of many governors before him. However, the mode and tenor of budget addresses have changed dramatically over the years.

Early in the days of Minnesota government, governors delivered only one address to the Legislature every two years – typically to inform lawmakers of the state of the state, though not formally called that initially.

As time passed, however, this changed. In fact, Gov. J.A.O. Preus specifically noted that the speech he delivered in January 1923 was merely satisfying a legal requirement. He cited a specific state law, and he said he would stick to it.

“You will observe that I have not made definite recommendations as to what should be done in many cases,” Preus said in delivering the state’s biennial budget. “This is not required under (state law).”

The address Preus gave was Spartan, sticking only to the specific details of the budget and being careful not to add too much opinion. He addressed that later in the speech.

“I have not construed this language to mean the governor, who must necessarily approve or disapprove all appropriations made by the Legislature should, before the Legislature gives consideration to appropriations, go on record in all cases as to what his future actions may be.”

Gov. Edward Thye followed a similar style for his speeches – sticking to the specifics of the budget and giving very few specific

opinions. He delivered one speech during the last days of World War II in January 1945 that suggested the state would have to stay on course through the end of the war, and then would hopefully have more means to improve state services.

He did advocate strongly for one thing, though – increasing salaries for civil service employees. “The budget provides funds for salary increases for those of our employees who have earned or will earn merit increases under our civil services rules during the next two years. This I feel to be the most essential, as most departments are working extremely short-handed.”

Thye had seen firsthand the public service tradition established by Gov. Harold Stassen, who resigned in 1942 to serve in World War II – Thye took over as governor when Stassen stepped aside.

Through the second half of the 20th century, governor’s budget addresses and accompanying documents became progressively longer with many more policy priorities.

But war was again on the minds of Minnesotans when Gov. Luther Youngdahl delivered his budget in January 1951. He spoke often of the emerging need to spend state funds on air raid shelters and the uncertainties of state and national defense as the country’s armed forces headed into the Korean conflict abroad. He also bemoaned the economic troubles that accompanied the impending war.

“In all the history of our state government, never has it been so difficult to prepare a budget for two years of governmental operation,” Youngdahl said. “We have been faced with growing needs in many of the services of the

state. Hovering over our heads, too, have been the prospects of the impending burdens, which the people will be asked to assume for civil defense and national security. Prices have been increasing from week to week, making it more and more difficult, both to finance our present services and to meet new needs.”

That year, the general fund budget was nearly \$160 million for 1952-53, up nearly \$30 million from the previous biennium. Youngdahl recommended increasing funds for old age assistance and mental health programs, among other things, and he also recommended raising ore taxes and beer taxes to cover the difference.

Four years later, Gov. Orville Freeman would recommend similar measures to keep up with the growing budget. But Freeman also expressed concern about a potential deficit facing the state at the end of the biennium that would affect the budget as a whole.

However, the economic outlook in those days was solid. Officials were not fearful that another recession would affect state revenues.

Freeman also utilized a new medium for delivering the message. It went out live over the radio and was rebroadcast on television.

In 1963, Gov. Elmer L. Andersen offered a budget with significant increases in education funding. Back then, education was funded through an “income tax school fund” and anticipated revenues were up. However, he was quick to point out that no new taxes were raised to accomplish that biennial budget.

Ten years later, Gov. Wendell Anderson presented a far more extensive budget than any governor had previously delivered. In more than 80 pages, Anderson detailed an aggressive public policy plan, highlighted by a plan to change how property taxes are calculated for individuals over 65. Concerned about the number of senior citizens on fixed incomes, he proposed freezing property values of a

Continued on page 27



Gov. J. O. A. Preus



Gov. Luther Youngdahl



Gov. Edward J. Thye



Gov. Orville L. Freeman



Gov. Wendell R. Anderson

Civic duty

After more than two decades in the Navy, Adolphson sees being a legislator as another chance to fulfill his patriotic duty

By JEFF JONES

Rep. Peter Adolphson's (R-Minnetonka) short-lived movie career was just a case of being in the right place at the right time. "I challenge you to see me in any one of them," Adolphson says, laughing.



Rep. Peter Adolphson

While serving on active duty in the U.S. Navy, two Hollywood films, *Top Gun* and *Flight of the Intruder*, were filmed aboard his aircraft carrier. "You're just in the background when the camera goes by," he says.

Adolphson's political career started in much the same way. "An open seat popped up right where I live," he said of last year's redistricting plan. "The night the court released the new lines, I thought 'Wow, this is great. It's something I've always wanted to do.'" In the election he defeated two candidates named David Larson, one a DFLer, and another who ran with the Independence Party endorsement.

After 22 years in the Navy, including the last nine in the Naval Reserves, Adolphson sees becoming a legislator as just another way of doing his duty. "I think everyone should serve their country in some capacity, whether it's in the Peace Corps, Coast Guard, or going into the armed services. I think it's something we owe the country," he says.

Military service runs in the family for Adolphson. His father served 40 years in the Navy and Adolphson's brother and two sisters also joined. One wall of his new State Office Building office is covered with plaques and photographs commemorating his time in the service. Adolphson calls it his "I Love Me" wall.

After leaving active duty in 1993, Adolphson moved to Minnetonka, where he lives with his

wife, Kristin. Opposite the "I Love Me" wall is a bulletin board adorned with pictures of their four cats. Another reason Adolphson says he decided to run for office is because none of his four children are still at home.

Adolphson, who left active duty as a commander, says his experience as a military officer will help him fit in as a legislator. "(In the military) you learn a lot of good time management, a lot of budgeting skills, management skills, people skills," he said. "It gives me the ability to learn my job quickly. I don't know anywhere else in the world where you have a job and two-and-a-half to three years later you get transferred to a new job and you have to

"I think everyone should serve their country in some capacity, whether it's in the Peace Corps, Coast Guard, or going into the armed services. I think it's something we owe the country."

— Rep. Peter Adolphson

learn it right away."

As the only freshman representative on the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, he has had to learn the intricacies of the legislative process very quickly. Rep. Jim Knobloch (R-St. Cloud), the committee chair, said Adolphson expressed a strong desire to be on the committee and is well qualified for his position there. "Peter has a strong financial background and he's a strong contributor to the committee," Knobloch said. "It's always nice to have a first-term point of view."

Adolphson said being on the Ways and Means committee gives him a chance to see the big picture. "You get to see all the bills and you get to see the whole process, whereas you're just stuck on one or two committees you're only seeing a slice of the pie."

Besides balancing the budget, his top

priority as a legislator is to improve Minnesota's transportation system, especially in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. He says he was inspired by the freeway system in southern California while stationed there. "(There) they don't even start a highway unless it's four lanes each way," he said.

"You can have the best metro system in the world," he added, "but if you can't get the product from outstate into the metro, you're just spinning your wheels...so to speak."

Adolphson said he walked in each of the 16 precincts of his district during his campaign. "I really enjoyed knocking on doors. It's fun. The first time you do it, you're fumbling at what to say, but then you develop a routine," he said. In addition to meeting his constituents, he said he lost about 15 pounds while campaigning.

Adolphson says he has voted in every election since he has been eligible to vote, but he was interested in politics long before that. "I was one of the few people in my class in fourth

grade, in our class poll, to vote for Richard Nixon. And he won!" he said.

DISTRICT 42A

2002 population: 36,923

Largest city: Minnetonka

County: Hennepin

Location: western Twin Cities suburbs

Top concern: "We're the only metropolitan area of this size in the country that has a two-lane each way highway system on major roads. Basically, time is money and the way our roads are right now, a lot of time is spent on the roads because they can't handle the capacity."

— Rep. Peter Adolphson

Trading places

Cornish, former lobbyist and conservation officer, hopes he can help link agriculture and environment concerns

BY TOM LONERGAN

Rep. Tony Cornish (R-Good Thunder) is no stranger to the State Capitol's halls and committee rooms.



Rep. Tony Cornish

His 10 years as a lobbyist for the Minnesota Conservation Officers Association served as a legislative apprenticeship for the 51-year-old Vernon Center native. "It got into my blood," Cornish said.

Family occasions have also provided Cornish with opportunities to talk politics. He's an uncle of former first lady Terry Ventura, and brother-in-law of William Negaard, of Vernon Center, who unsuccessfully ran for the state Senate in the mid-1990s.

His election last November was close, with Cornish winning by 571 votes. He didn't get any advice from his niece's husband, former Gov. Jesse Ventura. In fact, according to Cornish, Ventura good-naturedly needled him last year during a chance meeting in Rochester. "He said, 'Tony, what in the heck are you doing running as a Republican?'"

Cornish's Jan. 6 retirement from the state ended 27 years in law enforcement — 22 as a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conservation officer and five in local government.

"In that time I was hit in the mouth, bit in the leg, my clothes were torn off me, I was shot at twice, and a couple of guys in a bar put a contract out on me," Cornish said. "Looking back at that, I think I'm ready for the Legislature."

Although the budget deficit "outweighs all of the problems right now," Cornish said, he sees "changes I think I can make for the better." He was appointed to the committees he requested — Environment and Natural Resources Policy, Environment and Natural Resources Finance, Agriculture Policy, and State Government Finance. He's also an assistant majority whip.

His priority, Cornish said, will be to "weld together agriculture and environment" issues.

"I don't like it when people think farmers aren't environmentalists," he said. "We can mention both in the same sentence." Cornish tried farming for several years and now rents farmland.

Regarding agriculture, he said the state should support "sound management priorities and common sense environmental policies."

His rural district south of Mankato doesn't have a town bigger than 2,500 people, Cornish said. The gains enjoyed by the state's larger metropolitan areas in business and construction, he said, have led to a "vacating of small towns." Cornish said he'd like to even out those

"He's willing to jump right into issues and tackle problems," Ozment said. Cornish's "real life experience," Ozment added, is valuable in discussions about the impact of state laws. "He'll talk about what it's like in the field. He has a first-hand knowledge of what's happening out there."

An issue Cornish said he's been "dogging for nearly 30 years" is relaxing state restrictions on handgun possession. "I lobbied against the existing law," he said, which gives city police chiefs and county sheriffs broad discretion in handgun permit decisions. Cornish said the existing law puts too much control in the hands of local law enforcement officials. "They can tell you to buzz off," he said, without providing a reason for denying a permit. The House passed a so-called "concealed carry" bill during the 2001-02 legislative session, but the bill did not pass the Senate.

Off the job, Cornish said, he's a "resource user," pursuing hunting and fishing. He spent 30 nights last year camping in the woods. One

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— Rep. Tony Cornish

imbalances with more "aid for rural economic development."

Possibly the first state conservation officer elected to the Legislature, Cornish is now serving on committees with jurisdiction over his former employer, the DNR. "I'd like to ask for more conservation officers because they are spread so thin," Cornish said, "but the huge deficit prohibits that."

"I want to be known as a friend of the DNR, but not as a sole protector," he said. The state agency must improve communicating with the public, Cornish said, and explain its regulatory decisions. "It's not just a regulatory agency about what people can and can't do," he said.

Lobbyists who become legislators are "few and far between," said Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance committee. As former chair of the environment policy committee, he's worked with Cornish for several years.

winter recreation activity he'll lend support to in the House is promoting snowmobiling, which Cornish said helps the retail trade in his district's small towns.

DISTRICT 24B

2002 population: 36,658

Largest cities: Janesville, Lake Crystal, Wells

Counties: Blue Earth, Faribault, Waseca

Location: south-central Minnesota

Top concern: "State decisions in environment and agriculture policy directly affect my district. I want to mold agricultural and environmental issues into a working relationship."

— Rep. Tony Cornish

Looking for a repeat

After 9 years of helping his hometown on the city council, Latz looks for similar success in St. Paul

By JEFF JONES

Rep. Ron Latz (DFL-St. Louis Park) is going to miss his old job. After 9 years on the St. Louis Park City Council, he now has a seat in the Minnesota House of Representatives, but in many ways it just won't be the same.



Rep. Ron Latz

"We were a pretty close-knit group, probably even unique among city councils, but we all got along on a personal level quite well and our council meetings were rarely acrimonious," Latz said. "Here you can't get to know the entire Legislature quite so well."

Fellow council members proudly list the improvements Latz helped to make in St. Louis Park, from a new downtown to refurbished, affordable housing apartments to a new ice sheet and aquatic facility at the local recreation center. "He always took that long-term view of things," said councilmember Jim Brimeyer.

St. Louis Park Mayor Jeff Jacobs says Latz was instrumental in developing a series of neighborhood councils in the city that connected residents with their government, local businesses, and each other. "We do democracy the way they intended for it to be done when it was invented," Jacobs said.

The improvements in his home city are a source of pride for Latz, too. "In place after place after place, I can see the results of my work directly," he said, "and it's very gratifying to see the people of St. Louis Park enjoying the benefits of that."

It was talking with those people that made Latz want to run for a House seat. "I came across a lot of people who had questions about policy and about issues in the district that were affected not only by the city but by the state government policy," he said. "I felt that in order to address those interests, I could do that better in the state Legislature than I could on the city council."

Redistricting also helped him make the decision to run. District 44B now encompasses part of St. Louis Park, where Latz lives, and most of Golden Valley, where he grew up. Without an incumbent, he thought the new district was ideal for him.

Latz grew up in a family that placed a high value on public service and civil discourse. His father was a state representative from 1959 to 1967 and though he was quite young at the time, Latz says he can remember the old Ewald Dairy milk truck equipped with a loudspeaker that his father drove around town while campaigning. "I remember— even years after he was an elected official — our dinner table

to spend those limited resources, defining a mission, and figuring out some way of measuring what you produce and whether your goals are achieved."

Rep. Doug Meslow (R-White Bear Lake) has worked with Latz on court cases in the past and now sits with him on the House Higher Education Finance Committee. He says Latz's professionalism and integrity have carried into his work so far at the Capitol. "I see him using the same skills that I've seen him use effectively in court," Meslow said. "Those same skills have translated to his good work in the Legislature."

Latz says his primary concerns will be preserving funding for public schools and improving access to higher education. He would also like to see something done about the bottleneck on Highway 100 in St. Louis Park and take steps to protect the environment across the state.

"Ron is a global thinker," Mayor Jacobs said. "He knows that all that is good for St. Louis Park is not happening in a vacuum... it has to

"You still have to go through the process of not having unlimited resources, having to decide how to spend those limited resources, defining a mission, and figuring out some way of measuring what you produce and whether your goals are achieved."

— Rep. Ron Latz

conversations were about what was going on in the world around us," Latz says. "We talked about the university, we talked about local issues in Golden Valley, we talked about civil rights issues. And I saw that my parents went out and did something about those issues, too."

Latz's own two children, ages 4 and 17-months, will likely be noticing the same about their father. In addition to his law practice, Latz has served a variety of nonprofit organizations including the American Cancer Society, the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing, and the Anti-Defamation League.

He says state government isn't all that different from working in the nonprofit community. "We're all constrained by tight budgets," he says. "The prioritizing will be the same. You still have to go through the process of not having unlimited resources, having to decide how

be part of a bigger plan. Ron is the kind of guy that will see the implications of his actions."

"I like politics for what it could do. And I like the process," Latz says. "I help people who need help. It's sort of my organizing philosophy."

DISTRICT 44B

Population: 36,939
 Largest city: St. Louis Park
 County: Hennepin
 Location: western Twin Cities suburbs
 Top concern: "Access to higher education for anyone who has the motivation and the ability to be there — it is the economic engine of the state, and it is the long term future of our economy."

— Rep. Ron Latz

Fighting for education

Wardlow hopes teaching experience will help in legislative efforts to improve things for those in the profession

By MIKE COOK

For someone who had never previously sought political office, Rep. Lynn Wardlow (R-Egan) has some big shoes to fill.



Rep. Lynn Wardlow

The Republican replaces Gov. Tim Pawlenty as the representative for much of eastern and southern Egan. "Thank God I didn't lose because he's now the governor," he said with a laugh at a New Member Orientation session.

Still Wardlow hopes to be as effective as his predecessor.

"He's smart, articulate, understands the issues, has a passion, and a tender heart for the common man," Wardlow said. "Just to come close to representing the district like he did is my goal."

And it's not as though Wardlow has not been involved politically, though this was his first time as a candidate.

Having helped U.S. Rep. John Kline on two campaigns, Wardlow was content to help out for a third time. Then he received a phone call from Rep. Tim Wilkin (R-Egan) last February encouraging him to run.

"I was trying to help recruit a successor for (Pawlenty) and I was looking over a list of delegates and community activists and Lynn's name was there," Wilkin said. He also knew of Wardlow's teaching career, military background, and how he was well known to many residents. "When I called him, I don't think he had really thought about running. I could almost hear him fall off his chair," Wilkin said.

At the time of the call Wardlow said, "My wife, Sheryl, is laying on the couch asleep, but she kind of woke up and asked 'What was that all about?' I said that they want me to run for office. I remember her eyes got to about the size of silver dollars when she asked what I was

going to do. I had told Tim to 'Let me think about it and I'll call you back.'"

Wardlow said Wilkin later told him "I was so thankful to get a maybe."

"I think Lynn was at a perfect time in his life to run," Wilkin said, knowing that Wardlow was about to retire from teaching and he had an interest in politics. "I think he just needed a spark."

A decorated Marine Corps veteran, who spent 29 years fighting for his country, including 26 combat missions in Vietnam, Wardlow also got a push from his two sons, Jason, a Marine Corps pilot, and Doug, who is studying law at Georgetown University.

A mathematics instructor for more than 31 years, mostly at the middle-school level, Wardlow is all too aware of the issues facing today's educators. "I support teachers and will do what I can to help," he says. Before retiring in December, Wardlow was also a wrestling and football coach.

He said many teachers, including those who are not Republican, said they would vote for him because of his willingness to fight for them. "I always told them I would do my best to help them, but I couldn't make any promises."

Wardlow campaigned on local control, equitable school funding, the replacement of the Profile of Learning, and helping small businesses.

Serving on the House Education Finance and Education Policy committees gives Wardlow an opportunity to work on many of those issues. He also serves on the House Civil Law Committee.

Wardlow does not want to hurt people when

"I support teachers and will do what I can to help. . . . I always told them I would do my best to help them, but I couldn't make any promises."

— Rep. Lynn Wardlow

"They used to tell me 'Dad you should run for office,'" Wardlow said. "Doug told me 'Dad if you don't do it I'm going to come home and run for the seat,' and I said 'No, you're staying in school.'"

Once in the race, Wardlow found it tough to secure the party endorsement — needing nine rounds of balloting to do so. Yet, he won the general election with 52.6 percent of the vote. The race had four candidates, including the person he defeated for the Republican endorsement who ran as the Independence Party candidate.

Wardlow also got some help from Laura Bush. The First Lady appeared at an Egan High School rally for U.S. Sen. Norm Coleman three days before the election, and an admittedly nervous Wardlow got to introduce her because of his belief in improving educational opportunities for all. "At the end of it I got a thundering standing ovation that felt really good," Wardlow said.

the Legislature deals with the deficit for the next biennium, but he said that he sadly knows his vote may likely do just that. "This is a tough decision to make. It'll be difficult, and it'll take a lot of talking and probably a lot of arguing."

DISTRICT 38B

2002 population: 36,661

Largest city: Egan

County: Dakota

Location: southern Twin Cities metropolitan area

Top concern: "Education is my number one issue and number one and a half is civil law."

— Rep. Lynn Wardlow

Monday, Feb. 17

HF426—Kuisle (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 Water quality assessment process rulemaking required.

HF427—Strachan (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Municipal fire aid apportionment population definition modified.

HF428—Blaine (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Cities authorized to collect unpaid emergency service charges by special assessment.

HF429—Severson (R)
Civil Law
 Joint and several liability apportionment regulation provided.

HF430—Kelliher (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
 Minneapolis; Minnesota Planetarium funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF431—Meslow (R)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
 Identity theft criminal penalties increased, and sentencing guidelines modified.

HF432—Meslow (R)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
 First-degree murder definition modified relating to child abuse.

HF433—Strachan (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 State and other governmental agency response deadline provisions modified relating to zoning.

HF434—Severson (R)
Taxes
 Homesteads of persons at least age 65 valuation increase prohibited.

HF435—Paymar (DFL)
Taxes
 St. Paul authorized to create multiple tax increment financing housing districts.

HF436—Holberg (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
 Family planning grant funds use limited.

HF437—Bradley (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
 Alternative quality assurance licensing system expanded, sunset eliminated, and money appropriated.

HF438—Lindner (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
 Interest rates on rental security deposits provided.

HF439—Urdahl (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
 State park and recreation area acquisition funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF440—Thissen (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 Voter registration forms distributed to students who will be eligible to vote in upcoming elections.

HF441—Kohls (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
 Carver County hospital construction moratorium exemption provided.

HF442—Wasiluk (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Minimum wage increased.

HF443—Wasiluk (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Employee invention agreements regulated.

HF444—Swenson (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
 Municipal contract judgment awarding of attorney fees authorized in certain cases.

HF445—Nelson, M. (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Youth deer license provisions modified to include archery.

HF446—Wardlow (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Minors exempted from minimum age restrictions for work as youth athletic program referees.

HF447—Blaine (R)
Agriculture Policy
 Farm land ownership restrictions modified.

HF448—Kuisle (R)
Higher Education Finance
 University of Minnesota required to utilize a competitive grant process in order to obtain state funding.

HF449—Kuisle (R)
Higher Education Finance
 Higher education grant eligibility modified.

HF450—Brod (R)
Transportation Policy
 License plates; alternative E85 fuel special license plates authorized, and use of high-occupancy vehicle lanes authorized.

HF451—Seagren (R)
Education Policy
 Alternative school district organization provided.

HF452—Seagren (R)
Education Policy
 Charter school additional formation and sponsorship methods provided.

HF453—Meslow (R)
Civil Law
 Uniform Parentage Act (2000) adopted.

HF454—Dill (DFL)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
 Lake County tax-forfeited land private sale authorized.

HF455—Fuller (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 Sandy Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa defined as a state-recognized Indian tribe.

HF456—Mullery (DFL)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
 Hennepin; Victory Memorial Drive designated as a historic district.

HF457—Holberg (R)
Civil Law
 Family law *de facto* custodian provisions modified.

HF458—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
 Health plan prompt payment requirements modified.

HF459—Wagenius (DFL)
Regulated Industries
 Public Utilities Commission required to establish fund for health costs associated with coal-fired power plants, and money appropriated.

HF460—Haas (R)
Transportation Finance
 Highway 10 reconstruction funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF461—Pugh (DFL)
Taxes
 Estate tax federal exemption amounts adopted.

HF462—Tingelstad (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Finance
 Metropolitan parks system operation and maintenance funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF463—Pugh (DFL)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
 Mail theft prohibited and venue for identity and mail theft prosecution provided.

HF464—Biernat (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Consumer privacy, confidentiality, and secrecy of financial records protection provided, and consumer authorization required for disclosure of financial information.

HF465—Lesch (DFL)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
 Postal inspector state arrest authority and indemnification granted under certain circumstances.

HF466—Lesch (DFL)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
 Position of trust added to list of aggravating factors pertaining to identity theft sentencing guidelines.

HF467—Davnie (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Credit card number listing on sales receipts prohibited.

HF468—Davnie (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Social Security number use and display restricted.

HF469—Sieben (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Credit card marketing practices pertaining to students prohibited in certain instances.

HF470—Murphy (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
 Telecommunications consumer privacy act adopted.

HF471—Knoblach (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy
School district election primaries
required.

HF472—Olson, M. (R)
Education Policy
School district opt-out procedures
provided regarding certain state
mandates.

HF473—Olson, M. (R)
Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs
Local government opt-out proce-
dures provided regarding certain state
mandates.

HF474—Olson, M. (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy
Missile defense system deployment
requested by resolution of Congress.

HF475—Olson, M. (R)
Civil Law
Legal reform support urged through
congressional resolution.

HF476—Olson, M. (R)
Education Policy
American heritage education in Min-
nesota public schools act adopted.

HF477—Olson, M. (R)
Transportation Policy
Minnesota regulated public transit
utilities act established.

HF478—Dempsey (R)
Taxes
Red Wing tax increment financing
districts extension authorized.

HF479—Ellison (DFL)
Jobs & Economic
Development Finance
Minneapolis empowerment zone
subproject funding provided for the
Heritage Park project, North-South
greenway, and other projects; bonds
issued, and money appropriated.

Thursday, Feb. 20

HF480—Knoblach (R)
Civil Law
Job reference information disclosure
protections provided, and schools
required to disclose data relating to
acts of violence or inappropriate
sexual contact with students.

HF481—Meslow (R)
Transportation Finance
Rush Line corridor transitway fund-
ing provided, bonds issued, and
money appropriated.

HF482—Lipman (R)
Civil Law
Medical malpractice judgment peri-
odic payments required, jury instruc-
tions provided, and non-economic
loss damages limited.

HF483—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Jobs & Economic
Development Finance
Itasca County training and technol-
ogy grant provided, bonds issued, and
money provided.

HF484—Thissen (DFL)
Transportation Finance
Bloomington and Richfield I-494 ex-
pansion provided, bonds issued, and
money appropriated.

HF485—Hilstrom (DFL)
Taxes
Local government aid formula
modified.

HF486—Bernardy (DFL)
Taxes
Local government aid city aid base
replaced with a per capita aid amount.

HF487—Severson (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy
Legislator and constitutional officer
salaries decreased.

HF488—Kuisle (R)
Environment &
Natural Resources Policy
Board of Soil and Water Resources
and watershed district authority to
require permits or approval for high-
way construction projects restricted.

HF489—Rhodes (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy
Statewide volunteer firefighter retire-
ment plan task force created, and
money appropriated.

HF490—Beard (R)
Transportation Policy
License plates; special “Proud to be a
Veteran” license plates authorized for
self-propelled recreational vehicles.

HF491—Samuelson (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nursing facility regulatory require-
ments and standards modified.

HF492—Huntley (DFL)
Jobs & Economic
Development Finance
Spirit Mountain Recreation Area Au-
thority improvements authorized,
bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF493—Huntley (DFL)
Jobs & Economic
Development Finance
Duluth aerial lift bridge restoration
funding provided, bonds issued, and
money appropriated.

HF494—Huntley (DFL)
Education Policy
Independent School District No. 709,
Duluth, at-large school board mem-
ber reduction authorized.

HF495—Johnson, J. (R)
Taxes
Metropolitan fiscal disparities law
abolished.

HF496—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Nurse temporary licensure provisions
modified.

HF497—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Jobs & Economic
Development Finance
Koochiching County testing, educa-
tional, and training facility grant pro-
vided; bonds issued; and money
appropriated.

HF498—Dill (DFL)
Environment &
Natural Resources Finance
Cook County leased state lands lease
rates modified.

HF499—Meslow (R)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
DWI; refusing to submit to a chemi-
cal test penalty enhanced.

HF500—Erhardt (R)
Transportation Policy
Eminent domain acquisition prop-
erty appraisal fee reimbursement to
owner maximum increased.

HF501—Meslow (R)
Commerce, Jobs &
Economic Development Policy
Travel clubs regulated.

HF502—Seifert (R)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
Prison privatization proposals re-
quested, prison services contracting
standards established, and report
required.

HF503—Kielkucki (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy
Ballot preparation provisions
clarified.

HF504—Kielkucki (R)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy
Ballot questions limited to those
meeting all deadlines.

HF505—Wardlow (R)
Civil Law
Eviction records discretionary
expungement provisions modified.

HF506—Adolphson (R)
Local Government &
Metropolitan Affairs
Hennepin County conflict of interest
exception clarified relating to pro-
viding licensed family foster care.

HF507—Hornstein (DFL)
Taxes
Clean-fuel vehicles exempted from
the motor vehicle sales tax.

HF508—Hausman (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Local governments authorized to de-
velop programs to detect and cite traf-
fic signal violations by use of
photographic evidence.

HF509—Fuller (R)
Education Policy
Indian scholarship program author-
ity transferred to the Higher Educa-
tion Services Office.

HF510—Tingelstad (R)
Environment &
Natural Resources Policy
Individual sewage treatment systems
provisions modified, and money
appropriated.

HF511—Hilstrom (DFL)
Transportation Finance
Brooklyn Center transit center con-
struction mandated through the Met-
ropolitan Council.

HF512—Hilstrom (DFL)
Governmental Operations &
Veterans Affairs Policy
Conflict of interest and economic
interest disclosure by public officials
provisions modified.

HF513—Kohls (R)
Civil Law
Seat belt evidence admissibility pro-
hibition repealed.

HF514—Lenczewski (DFL)
Taxes
Metropolitan Revenue Distribution
Act abolished.

HF515—Otremba (DFL)
Transportation Policy
License plates; special “choose life”
license plates authorized, adoption
support account established, and
grants provided to counties to sup-
port adoption.

HF516—Otremba (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Pharmacists permitted to refuse to
dispense drugs the pharmacist op-
poses for moral or religious reasons.

HF517—Demmer (R)
Education Policy
Department of Children, Families and Learning renamed the Department of Education.

HF518—Holberg (R)
Civil Law
County officers exempted from liability for good faith actions arising from the exercise of the power of eminent domain with respect to county and county state-aid highways.

HF519—Smith (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Teachers retirement association provisions modified relating to survivor benefits, and administrative revisions provided.

HF520—Smith (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Minneapolis Firefighters Relief Association executive secretary compensation authorized.

HF521—Stang (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Occupational safety and health penalty provisions clarified relating to small business owners.

HF522—Strachan (R)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
Search warrant regulations modified.

HF523—Solberg (DFL)
Education Finance
Retired school district employee health benefit levy modified.

HF524—Solberg (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
University of Minnesota research and outreach centers funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF525—Sieben (DFL)
Transportation Finance
Wakota Bridge construction project mitigation funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF526—Solberg (DFL)
Higher Education Finance
Grand Rapids; University of Minnesota research and outreach center funding provided for tree research and farm machinery repair, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF527—Strachan (R)
Transportation Finance
Dakota County highway overpass funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF528—Fuller (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Emergency medical services four-year contracts permitted, license plate provisions for volunteer ambulance attendants modified, ambulance service claims against tax refunds permitted, and use of police equipment regulated.

HF529—Hackbarth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Mourning dove hunting season authorized, and stamps and report required.

HF530—Hackbarth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Mourning dove hunting season authorized and report required.

HF531—Smith (R)
Civil Law
Judicial selection and retention task force created.

HF532—Howes (R)
Transportation Policy
Snowmobile use of highway right-of-way provisions modified.

HF533—Johnson, J. (R)
Transportation Policy
High-occupancy vehicle lanes on Interstate Highways 394 and 35W regulated.

HF534—Seifert (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Good cause rule exemption notice requirements imposed.

HF535—Nelson, C. (R)
Education Policy
Independent School District No. 535, Rochester, authorized to begin school year on any date set by school district.

HF536—Simpson (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development
Joint underwriting association coverage and market assistance responsibilities modified.

HF537—Goodwin (DFL)
Health & Human Services Policy
Health Department collection of health records with patient names restricted.

HF538—Goodwin (DFL)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
Firearm possession, shipping, and transport lifetime prohibition imposed on certain felons, and crime of violence definition modified.

HF539—Dorman (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Campaign and election contributions and solicitations prohibited during special legislative sessions.

HF540—Dorman (R)
Taxes
Tax amnesty period provided, and money appropriated.

HF541—Sertich (DFL)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Family homeless prevention and assistance program funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF542—Mahoney (DFL)
Taxes
Local government aid to cities increase limits eliminated.

HF543—Urdahl (R)
Jobs & Economic Development Finance
Dassel wastewater treatment facility improvements funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF544—Fuller (R)
Higher Education Finance
Bemidji State University John Glas Field House construction funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF545—Anderson, I. (DFL)
Transportation Policy
Snowmobile two-way operation on either side of highway right-of-way allowed in certain instances.

HF546—Tingelstad (R)
Transportation Finance
Coon Rapids interchange at Hanson Boulevard and Highway 10 and travel lanes between Egret and Round Lake boulevards funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF547—Davids (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Farm implement dealers warranty work payment regulated, and definition of heavy and utility equipment modified.

HF548—Mahoney (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Boiler inspections by nationally certified agencies authorized.

HF549—Rukavina (DFL)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
American flag sales regulated.

HF550—Hilstrom (DFL)
Judiciary Policy & Finance
Life imprisonment without possibility of release penalty provided for persons causing the death of a child under 14 with premeditation and intent.

HF551—Abeler (R)
Health & Human Services Policy
Adult foster care license capacity expanded.

HF552—Eken (DFL)
Taxes
Local government aid distributed via the city formula.

HF553—Kielkucki (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Optional election of certain town offices provided.

HF554—Buesgens (R)
Local Government & Metropolitan Affairs
Title examiner alternative means of compensation provided.

HF555—Krinkie (R)
Governmental Operations & Veterans Affairs Policy
Duplicating and printing service requirements relating to Administration Department repealed, and outside service contracts authorized.

HF556—Hackbarth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Sales tax receipts dedicated for natural resource purposes, heritage enhancement fund and council created, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF557—Hackbarth (R)
Environment & Natural Resources Policy
Sales tax receipts dedicated to game and fish purposes, heritage enhancement fund and council created, and constitutional amendment proposed.

HF558—Abeler (R)
Education Finance
School district pursuit of additional revenue sources authorized.

HF559—Gunther (R)
Commerce, Jobs & Economic Development Policy
Manufactured home rental increases authorized.

HF560—Mahoney (DFL)
Education Finance
St. Paul; Asian community center funding provided, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

Schedule is subject to change.
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MONDAY, February 24

12:30 PM

Higher Education Finance
 Room: 300S State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Doug Stang
Agenda: HF330 (Sviggum) State employee labor agreements and compensation plans ratified with certain exceptions.
 Witnesses: John Shabatura, Associate Vice Chancellor for Labor Relations, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Russ Stanton, InterFaculty Organization Governor's FY04-05 Higher Education budget overview.
 Witness: Heather Johnston, Executive Budget Officer, Finance Department.

Health and Human Services Policy
 Room: 10 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Lynda Boudreau
Agenda: HF212 (Abeler) Delay sunset until 2007 on advisory committees for health professionals. HF278 (Bradley) Eliminate reporting requirements for new hospital equipment and facilities.

HF266 (Finstad) Technical changes on stop-loss rules for insurance buyers' group.

Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy
 Room: Basement Hearing Room
 Chair: Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: HF471 (Knoblach) School district election primaries required. Other agenda items to be announced.

3:00 PM

THE HOUSE MEETS IN SESSION.

TUESDAY, February 25

8:15 AM

Health and Human Services Finance
 Room: 10 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: Presentation of Governor's budget proposals by Department of Education, Veterans Home Board, Ombudsperson for Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Ombudsperson for Families, and Health Related Boards.

Environment and Natural Resources Finance
 Room: 5 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview.

Education Policy
 Room: 200 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: HF 424 (Nelson) Charter school leave provisions modified. HF472 (Olson) School district opt out procedures provided regarding certain state mandates. HF99 (Opatz) High school graduation projections required.

Transportation Finance
 Room: 500S State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. William Kuisle
Agenda: Budget presentation by the Department of Transportation.

Jobs and Economic Development Finance
 Room: Basement Hearing Room
 Chair: Rep. Bob Gunther
Agenda: Review of Governor's budget proposal.

10:15 AM

Environment and Natural Resources Policy
 Room: 5 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Tom Hackbarth
Agenda: State Solid Waste Administrators Association: Jerry Johnson, Coordinator. HF407 (Howes) Minnesota conservation corps transferred to the friends of the Minnesota conservation corps, assets transferred, and money appropriated. HF445 (Nelson, M.) Youth deer license provisions modified to include archery.

Taxes
 Room: 200 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: Continued presentation and hearing on proposed FY 2004-2005 budget.

Judiciary Policy and Finance
 Room: Basement Hearing Room
 Chair: Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: Overview of Governor's recommendations by Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

Education Finance
 Room: 10 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: Review of Governor's 2004-2005 education budget proposal.

12:30 PM

Commerce, Jobs and Economic Development Policy
 Room: 10 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Greg Davids
Agenda: Department of Commerce -Overview of department re-organization -Credit Scoring HF51 (Davids) Health insurance provisions clarified relating to long-term care insurance.

Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy
 Room: Basement Hearing Room
 Chair: Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: Agenda items to be announced.

Agriculture and Rural Development Finance
 Room: 5 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Elaine Harder
Agenda: To be announced.

2:30 PM

Regulated Industries
 *** Note: *** Change in meeting room
 Room: 10 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Torrey Westrom
Agenda: Public testimony regarding additional nuclear storage at Prairie Island.

Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs
 Room: 200 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Jerry Dempsey
Agenda: HF245 (Westrom) Alexandria; lakes area economic development authority established. HF394 (Wardlow) Municipal guaranteed energysavings contracts maximum length extended to 15 years. HF244/SF231 (Lesch) St. Paul civil service separation retroactive effective date established.

State Government Finance
 Room: 500N State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Bill Haas
Agenda: Overview of the Governor's budget

Civil Law
 Room: 5 State Office Building
 Chair: Rep. Mary Liz Holberg
Agenda: HF339 (Davnier) Graffiti damages recovery action provided. HF457 (Holberg) Family law de facto custodian provisions modified. HF417 (Pugh) Removal of a child's residence from Minnesota provisions modified. HF170 (Kohls) Uniform Conflict of Laws-Limitations Act adopted regulating limitation periods of certain actions.

WEDNESDAY, February 26

8:15 AM

Health and Human Services Policy
Room: 10 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Lynda Boudreau
Agenda: HF 419 (Sykora) "Experienced Aides" update for child care centers.

Environment and Natural Resources Finance
Room: 5 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview.

Transportation Finance
Room: 200 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. William Kuisle
Agenda: Budget presentation by the Department of Transportation.

Jobs and Economic Development Finance
Room: Basement Hearing Room
Chair: Rep. Bob Gunther
Agenda: Review of Governor's budget

10:15 AM

Taxes
Room: 200 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: Continued hearing on proposed FY 2004-2005 budget.

Judiciary Policy and Finance
Room: Basement Hearing Room
Chair: Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: HF261 (Boudreau) Minnesota Citizens' Personal Protection Act of 2003 adopted recognizing the right of law-abiding citizens to self-protection, authorizing pistol permits, providing criminal penalties, and appropriating money.

Education Finance
Room: 10 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: Review of Governor's 2004-2005 education budget proposal.

12:30 PM

Agriculture Policy
Room: 5 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Howard Swenson
Agenda: HF447 (Blaine) Farm land ownership restrictions modified. HF258 (Dorman) Arsenic; fertilizers containing arsenic prohibited. Overview of Aquaculture report.

Transportation Policy
Room: 200 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Ron Erhardt
Agenda: Presentation on Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) by MnDOT.

Higher Education Finance
Room: 300S State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Doug Stang
Agenda: Governor's FY04-05 Higher Education budget overview. Witness: Heather Johnston, Executive Budget Officer, Finance Department.

Governmental Operations and Veterans Affairs Policy
Room: Basement Hearing Room
Chair: Rep. Jim Rhodes
Agenda: Agenda items to be announced.

2:30 PM

Regulated Industries
*** Note: *** Change in meeting room
Room: 10 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Torrey Westrom
Agenda: HF208 (Kuisle) A bill for an act relating to energy, providing that renewable energy sources include mixed municipal waste. Continued public testimony regarding additional nuclear storage at Prairie Island.

Capital Investment
Room: Basement Hearing Room
Chair: Rep. Phil Krinkie
Agenda: Review of Amateur Sports Commission's National Children's Golf Course appropriation, Laws 1998, Chapter 404, Section 15 Subd. 2

State Government Finance
Room: 500N State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Bill Haas
Agenda: Overview of the Governor's budget

Local Government and Metropolitan Affairs
Room: 200 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Jerry Dempsey
Agenda: HF 427 (Strachan) Municipal fire aid apportionment population definition modified. Other bills to be added

Civil Law
Room: 5 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Mary Liz Holberg
Agenda: HF168 (Sykora) Nonpublic school student data collected by public schools classified and data access specified. HFXXXX (Knoblach) Job reference.

THURSDAY, February 27

8:15 AM

Education Policy
Room: 200 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Barb Sykora
Agenda: HF 451 (Seagren) Alternative school district organization provided. HF452 (Seagren) Charter school additional formation and sponsorship methods provided.

Health and Human Services Finance
Room: 10 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Fran Bradley
Agenda: Presentation of Governor's budget proposal by Department of Human Services.

Environment and Natural Resources Finance
Room: 5 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Dennis Ozment
Agenda: Department of Natural Resources budget overview.

Jobs and Economic Development Finance
Room: Basement Hearing Room
Chair: Rep. Bob Gunther
Agenda: To be announced.

10:15 AM

Environment and Natural Resources Policy
Room: 5 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Tom Hackbarth
Agenda: HF335 (McNamara) Irrigation system moisture or rainfall sensing equipment required.

HF414 (Cox) Soil and water conservation district law updates provided.

Taxes
Room: 200 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Ron Abrams
Agenda: To be announced.

Judiciary Policy and Finance
Room: Basement Hearing Room
Chair: Rep. Steve Smith
Agenda: Overview of Governor's recommendations by the Minnesota Courts.

Education Finance
Room: 10 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Alice Seagren
Agenda: To be announced.

12:30 PM

Commerce, Jobs and Economic Development
Room: 10 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Greg Davids
Agenda: HF177 (Davids) Ambulance service liability insurance study required. HF446 (Wardlow) Minors exempted from minimum age restrictions for work as youth athletic program referees.

Agriculture and Rural Development Finance
Room: 5 State Office Building
Chair: Rep. Elaine Harder
Agenda: To be announced.

Where to find information


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.

homeowner, and thereby freezing the taxes, upon their 65th birthday.

Governor's budget addresses would evolve further over the latter decades of the 20th century, into pleas for public support for policy choices. Gov. Al Quie's April 1981 message, addressing the continuing budget concerns for which he resorted to his unallotment powers, specifically appealed to the public for understanding. He said he hoped the public could see how difficult it is to cut the large state budget in a time of deficit without raising taxes.

Though Quie did resort to the executive power to trim budgets, many governors addressed their desire to let the Legislature set the budget, and cut it accordingly in tougher times.

Said Preus: "Neither the appropriating power or responsibility should be usurped by the executive. It should be left to the Legislature." 

Minnesota State Agencies

(Area code 651)

Administration	296-6013
Agriculture	297-2200
Toll Free	1-800-967-2474
Children, Families and Learning	582-8200
Commerce	296-4026
Corrections	642-0200
Economic Security	296-3711
Toll Free	1-888-GET-JOBS
Employee Relations	297-1184
Job Information Hotline	296-2616
Finance	296-5900
Health	215-5800
Human Rights	296-5663
Toll Free	1-800-657-3704
Human Services	297-3933
Labor and Industry	284-5000
Toll Free	1-800-342-5354
Military Affairs	282-4662
Natural Resources	296-6157
Toll Free	1-888-MINNDNR
Pollution Control Agency	296-6300
Toll Free	1-800-657-3864
Public Safety	282-6565
Driver and Vehicle Services	296-6911
Fire Marshal	215-0500
Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division	296-6979
State Patrol	282-6871
Revenue	
Taxpayer Assistance	296-3781
Trade and Economic Development	297-1291
Toll Free	1-800-657-3858
Office of Tourism	296-5029
Toll Free	1-800-657-3700
Transportation	296-3000
Toll Free	1-800-657-3774
Veterans Affairs	296-2562

Reflections

A well known and heavily sought after item at the beginning of a two-year legislative session is the Green Book, a pocket-sized directory published by the House and Senate.

During the early 1970s, the Green Book – the *Members Directory of the Minnesota Legislature* – became a go-between until the Red Book – the *Official Directory of the Minnesota Legislature* – was published. Red Books have often been delayed as staff waits for approval of the Joint House and Senate Rules, which are essential to the contents, and permanent rules of both bodies.

Records in the House Public Information Services Office maintain as its oldest copy a 1974 version of the Green Book. The 1970s copy had only 30 pages and a light green glossy cover.

For almost 100 years, members, staff, and the general public had to wait well into a legislative session or after adjournment before an “official directory” of the Legislature was available, or until the secretary of state’s office printed the *Minnesota Legislative Manual* – the present-day “Blue Book.”

Beginning in the late 1800s, any temporary facts or schedules were relegated at first to one handwritten copy. With the advent of carbon paper and typewriters, a few more copies could be made while waiting for official printed versions to be completed. Today, Green Book devotees can get all the information they need to be knowledgeable about day-to-day activities around the Capitol.

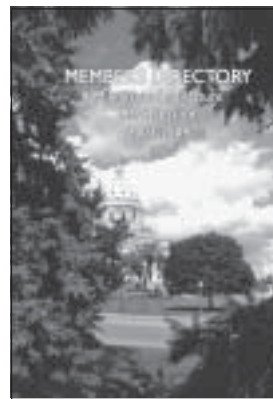
Within its pages, readers can find biographical information about each member

Many of the resources that are in the Green Book are available on the House and Senate Web sites. For a Green Book alternative you can print yourself, go to <http://www.house.mn/hinfo/gdalt.htm>

of the House of Representatives and the Senate, as well as details about the committees in the House and the Senate. The directory includes all the committee assignments for each member and the key staff members assigned to each committee.

There’s also important information about the service offices in the House and the Senate, as well as joint departments serving both bodies.

Among the other information is contact information for Minnesota’s Congressional Delegation and key state agencies.



While temporary information was handwritten 100 years ago, the Green Book is a major improvement for informing the public in a more expedient manner since the directory was available within three weeks of the start of the 2003 Legislative Session.

Although the Green Book and other official information will continue to serve as a temporary resource for the public, budget constraints have reduced the printed copies available. But alternatives are also readily available.

Information found in the Green Book can be located on the House Information Web site at www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/hinfo.htm under 2003 Members Directory. You will always be able to get the key biographical and contact information for your representative and senator when you need to contact them about an issue or other government concern.

— LECLAIR GRIER LAMBERT

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE: STEVE SVIGGUM
 MAJORITY LEADER: ERIK PAULSEN
 MINORITY LEADER: MATT ENTENZA

MINNESOTA INDEX

Farming in Minnesota

Millions of acres in state that are agricultural	28.5
As percent of state's total area	56.5
State agriculture expenses for fiscal year 2002, in millions	\$92.6
Millions to Department of Agriculture	\$46.1
Millions in ethanol producer payments	\$33.7
Number of farms in 2001	79,000
1997	81,000
1994	84,500
Average farm size in 2001, by acreage	361
In 1991	341
Average value of farmland (including buildings) per acre on Jan. 1, 2001	\$1,320
On Jan. 1, 1998	\$1,160
Average Minnesota net farm income in 2001	\$8,804
Average per farm government payments in 2001	\$15,696
Average net farm income in 1996	\$26,710
Average per farm government payments, 1996	\$4,009
Average age of a farmer in 2001	51
Average hourly wage earned by farm laborers in 2001	\$9.53
In 1997	\$8.45
Value of livestock inventory statewide on Jan. 1, 2002, in billions	\$2.61
Billions in 1998	\$2.14
Billions in state gross farm income in 2001	\$10.27
Billions in 1996	\$9.89
Billions in 1993	\$7.71
Cash receipts from livestock in 2001, in billions	\$4.29
Percent from hogs	33
Percent from dairy	30.2
Cash receipts from crops and vegetables in 2001, in billions	\$3.81
Percent decrease from 1996	18.1
Billions in farm exports in 2001	\$2.3
State rank	7
Billions in exports in 1997	\$2.61
Percentage of Minnesota's agricultural production destined for exports	30
Percentage of United States total	26
Percentage of state exports made up by soybeans, corn, and wheat	63

Sources: *Minnesota Agricultural Statistics 2002*, Minnesota Agricultural Statistics Service, July 2002; *Minnesota Data Book for Legislators*, House Research Department, January 2003, January 1999, and January 1997; Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For general information, call:
 House Information Office
 (651) 296-2146 or
 1-800-657-3550

To obtain a copy of a bill, call:
 Chief Clerk's Office
 (651) 296-2314

To find out about bill introductions or
 the status of a specific bill, call:
 House Index Office
 (651) 296-6646

For an up-to-date recorded message
 giving committee meeting times and
 agendas, call:
 Committee Hotline
 (651) 296-9283

The House of Representatives can be
 reached on the World Wide Web at:
<http://www.house.mn>

Teletypewriter for the hearing
 impaired.

To ask questions or leave messages,
 call:
 TTY Line (651) 296-9896 or
 1-800-657-3550

Check your local listings to watch
 House committee and floor sessions
 on TV.

Senate Information
 (651) 296-0504
 1-888-234-1112

Senate Index
 (651) 296-5560

This document can be made available in alternative
 formats to individuals with disabilities by calling
 (651) 296-2146 voice, (651) 296-9896 TTY, or
 (800) 657-3550 toll free voice and TTY.