

A NONPARTISAN PUBLICATION

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SESSION Weekly

MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES • PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES

VOLUME 22, NUMBER 18 • MAY 4, 2005

INSIDE: CLIPPING THROUGH PARTY LINES, RAISING MINIMUM WAGE, INFLUENCING THE HOUSE, MORE

This Week's Bill Introductions HF2488-HF2503

Session Weekly

Session Weekly is a nonpartisan publication of the Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Services office. During the 2005-2006 Legislative Session, each issue reports daily House action between Thursdays of each week, lists bill introductions, and provides other information. No fee.

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Session Weekly (ISSN 1049-8176) is published weekly during the legislative session by Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Services office, 175 State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155-1298. Periodicals postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Session Weekly*, Public Information Services office, Minnesota House of Representatives, 175 State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155-1298.

Printed on recycled paper which is 50% recycled,
30% post-consumer content.



CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS

Agriculture • 5
Crime • 5
Education • 5
Elections • 6
Employment • 6
Environment • 7

Game & Fish • 8
Government • 8
Health • 9
Higher Education • 9
Recreation • 9

Retirement • 10
Safety • 10
Transportation • 10
Veterans • 11
Late Action • 20

BILL INTRODUCTIONS (HF2488-HF2503) • 23

FEATURES

FIRST READING: Lobbyists play second fiddle to constituents • 3

CAPITOL CENTENNIAL: The cornerstone, keeper of the past • 4

AT ISSUE: Environment gets a hearing • 14

AT ISSUE: Raising minimum wage • 15

AT ISSUE: Driving to the state for non-stop shopping • 16

AT ISSUE: Taxpayers could have say on any levy increase • 17

FEATURE: 'Ken the Barber' clips through party lines • 18

FEATURE: War and remembrance brings House members together • 19

DEPARTMENTS/RESOURCES

Frequently called numbers • 11
How a bill becomes law • 12-13
Members by Seniority • 21

Minnesota Index: Minnesota Exports • 24
For more information • 24

On the cover: The State Capitol is reflected in the chrome of a 1960 Dodge Matador. Members of the Minnesota Street Rod Association brought nearly 40 collector cars to the Capitol May 3 as part of the association's Annual Run to the Hill.

—Photo by: Andrew VonBank



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

As is the case most days, lobbyists gather outside the House Chamber waiting to speak with House members about issues. As of January 2005, there were about 1,200 lobbyists registered with the state Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.

Influencing the House

Lobbyists are invaluable, but constituents rule

By **BRETT MARTIN**

Rep. Bud Heidgerken (R-Freeport) begins his workday having coffee with lobbyists at the hotel he stays at in St. Paul.

"They're a wealth of information," Heidgerken said. "Each lobbyist presents good, good ideas. I seek them out."

Lobbyists know the impact of bills, the histories behind them and who will be affected if the legislation becomes law, he said.

"We'd be lost without them down here," he said. "They provide pertinent information that I don't get anywhere else."

Valuable resources

With lobbyists outnumbering legislators by a nearly 6-1 ratio, representatives don't have to look too hard to find a lobbyist who can help with their legislative agenda.

As of January 2005, there were approximately 1,200 lobbyists registered with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board representing approximately 1,100 associations.

"There are so many lobbyists because the number of issues multiplies each year," said Bill Blazar, president of the Minnesota

Governmental Relations Council and senior vice president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. "There are many, many, many more organized groups that have an interest in what goes on at the Capitol."

Once people realize the impact the Legislature has on them, they want someone representing their interests, Blazar said.

Rep. Denise Dittrich (DFL-Champlin) said lobbyists have changed her mind on bills.

"The advice I got from other members who have been here awhile is, 'You can and should use lobbyists as resources,'" she said. "As a freshman, you can't possibly know all of the information. You do depend on them to shape perspectives."

The best advice she got concerning lobbyists is that the good ones will present both sides of an issue.

Full disclosure on legislation is key to gaining a member's trust, said Rep. Ray Vandever (R-Forest Lake). The lobbyist should explain the pros and cons of a bill, then tell why one side is better than the other.

"Things can sound very reasonable when you only hear one-third of it," he said.

Lobbyists can also inform legislators about who will be opposed to their bills and why.

"They can tell you, 'If you do this, your resistance is going to come from here. So and so will be against it,'" Heidgerken said, adding that it's better to hear the opposition from lobbyists and be prepared than to be surprised in committee or on the House floor.

A good lobbyist is equal parts persistence, creativity, knowledge and sense of humor, Blazar said. They have to offer all viewpoints, and they have to be honest.

"You're only as good as your word," he said. "You have to know what you're talking about."

If misinformation is given to members or they get blindsided by the opposition, that lobbyist will never be trusted again.

Good work, poor perception

While lobbyists may provide a needed service to legislators, they suffer from a poor public perception. They're often viewed as slicksters in designer clothes cutting deals with legislators — a perception that Blazar says is unfair.

"I'd invite the public to walk around the Capitol. They would find lobbyists are dedicated to their respective clients — that's their job — but they're also committed to the process," he said. "Having lobbyists leads to more democracy."

Lobbying is geared toward grassroots efforts and gets people involved in government, which is what democracy is all about, Blazar said.

"None of these bills miraculously shows

First Reading continued on page 4

First Reading continued from page 3

up at the revisor's office," he said. "For the vast majority of bills, somebody asked the legislator to pursue the bill, and the person making the request is a lobbyist for it, even if the person is not a paid lobbyist."

Dittrich had a skeptical view of lobbyists when she started serving her first term in January, but she has been pleasantly surprised.

"My perceptions have changed. The majority of lobbyists have been professional, information-based and understand where I'm coming from," she said. "The stereotypical idea that they would try to strong-arm me into voting a certain way didn't happen."

Still, Dittrich, like most legislators, seeks information from a variety of sources. She often turns to her school board and city council for input because they understand the needs and values of her community.

"They are my go-to people," Dittrich said. She also values the expertise of legislators from both parties. "They are, for the most part, very well informed. I do stand in awe of the people who have experience here. Balance for me is the whole key."

Vandever views his peers as resources, too,

noting that some are experts in particular areas.

"You know them and trust their input," he said, pointing out that many issues are nonpartisan and DFL members can provide valuable insight.

If a legislator only spoke to lobbyists, the person would hear the same information over and over, Vandever said.

"Serving here is like being in a fish bowl," he said. "Pretty soon, you start thinking like everybody else, and then you're in trouble."

Constituent power

Lobbyists may wield influence at the Capitol, but they still take a back seat to an even more powerful group — constituents. At least one representative excludes lobbyists from her schedule.

"Meeting with lobbyists leaves less time for constituents. What time I have, I want to give to the people I represent," said Rep. Barbara Goodwin (DFL-Columbia Heights). "The best source of information is the people you represent."

A former lobbyist, Goodwin prefers to gather her own research rather than rely on lobbyists. She has also had constituents give her carefully

researched information, such as the person who provided detailed research on the link between mercury in vaccines and autism.


"Constituents are probably the most influential," Vandever said. He always takes time to listen to the people he represents. "One of the jobs of a representative is to listen. A lot of times, people respect that you are listening, honestly listening."

Like most members, he attends town hall meetings to solicit input from constituents, asking for their ideas and concerns.

During committee hearings, he finds citizen testimony invaluable because people are taking the time to come to the Legislature and explain how bills could impact them. It puts a face to the legislation.

"They bring the real world perspective," Vandever said. "They have an agenda called, 'Don't hurt me.'"

Lobbyists can also help with constituents, Heidgerken said. They provide handouts and research that's needed for bills, and that information helps explain votes back home.

"I've taken this information and sent it to constituents to say, 'This is why I voted like I did,' he said. "Lobbyists help me with information, and it helps justify my vote." 



"The strength of man is in his brain and bone; That of the temple in its corner stone."

With these words, Judge Charles E. Flandrau of St. Paul handed Alexander Ramsey, first governor of the Minnesota Territory

and second governor of the state, a silver trowel to spread the mortar as the Capitol cornerstone was hoisted into place July 27, 1898.

The ceremony is well documented in *Laying of the Corner Stone of the New Capitol of Minnesota*, a commemorative book published by the Pioneer Press Company in 1898.

"We have met to perform a great political ceremony; to dedicate, by an impressive symbolism, employed by many nations throughout all time, the edifice which represents and typifies the state.

"The corner stone has always conveyed a mystical and symbolic meaning, even in divine utterances,"

Capitol cornerstone

A symbol of progress, keeper of past

said then U.S. Sen. Cushman K. Davis in a lengthy oration. Davis was the state's seventh governor, serving from January 1874 to January 1876. "The hand that laid the ideal foundation of this state 50 years ago, in the dining room of a frontier tavern, now lays the corner stone of this, the capitol of the completed commonwealth."

The stone is located near the southeast

ground level door, just to the right of the *porte cochère* (coach door) entrance beneath the Capitol's front steps.

It holds a cache of items near and dear to Minnesotans in the waning years of the 19th century.

"In this box made of copper we have placed various articles and memorials indicative of our progress in art, literature and agriculture," said then Gov. David M. Clough.

This time capsule of sorts includes: a Bible; state law books and legislative manuals; the original draft of the bill authorizing the Capitol construction; copper plate etchings of the building's floor plans; a history of Minnesota volunteers in the "War of the Rebellion;" gold, copper, nickel and silver coins; photographs from around the state; and an "Epitome of Memorable Events" in the state's history, with a timeline from 1784 to 1895.

(N. Wood)



The Capitol cornerstone was hoisted into place July 27, 1898. It is engraved with important dates in state history: "TERRITORY ORGANIZED MAR 3 1849, THE STATE ADMITTED TO THE UNION MAY 11 1858, THIS CORNERSTONE LAID JULY 27 AD 1898."

Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society

Adjournment date approaching

The Minnesota Constitution stipulates that the Legislature cannot meet in regular session after the first Monday following the third Saturday of May in any year.

This means that the 2005 Legislature must adjourn no later than May 23.

If its work is not completed on time, only the governor can call a special session.

However, he or she cannot specify issues to be acted upon once a special session is called.

If needed, this would be the third straight biennium that a special session would be required to pass budget bills for the following biennium.

A one-day special session in 2002 was needed to provide flood relief for Roseau. Also considered were charitable deductions and a sales tax exemption on the delivery of aggregate materials and concrete block.

★ AGRICULTURE

E20 down the pike

The state's ethanol industry would receive a boost, under a bill on its way to the governor.

After a House-Senate conference committee worked out differences over the timeline, liability provisions and small engine reports, the House voted 100-32 May 5 to double the state ethanol mandate, under certain conditions. The Senate repassed HF223/SF4* a day earlier by a 57-8 margin.

Currently, the state requires that motor vehicle gasoline sold in Minnesota contains an "E10" blend, meaning 10 percent agriculturally derived ethanol by volume.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Gregory M. Davids (R-Preston) and Sen. Dallas C. Sams (DFL-Staples), would raise the blend to 20/80 by Aug. 30, 2013, unless, by Dec. 31, 2010, the state is already using a 20 percent denatured ethanol blend in the gasoline supply or federal approval has not been granted for the E20 blend.

"Ethanol isn't just a rural issue," said Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar). "It's an issue of energy independence and it's an issue of being net exporters of energy from the state in the very near future."

The bill contains a provision to protect dealers and refiners from lawsuits alleging damages from defective gasoline. The immunity would not apply to situations of "simple or willful negligence or fraud" or environmental or public health damages.

"This is a liability exclusion with a hole so

ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Lt. Gov. Carol Molnau, left, and representatives from the Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Society of Arborists plant a tree on the Capitol grounds as part of the official State Arbor Day Celebration April 29.

big you could drive an ethanol truck through it," said Rep. Paul Kohls (R-Victoria) in opposition to the language altered by the conference committee.

Under the bill, the Agriculture Department, in consultation with other agencies and stakeholders, is directed to review the effects of E20 on the ethanol industry and Minnesota consumers. Reports are due to the Legislature Jan. 15, 2009, and Jan. 15, 2011.

Additionally, the Commerce Department would be required to report to the Legislature by Jan. 15, 2008, on the appropriate use of E20 gasoline in small engines and make recommendations on marketing tactics and ways to increase E20 availability.

★ CRIME

No quotas

A prohibition on quotas for issuing traffic and vehicle inspection citations would be expanded under HF998/SF1486*, passed by the House 127-0 May 3.

Currently, the prohibition applies only to the Minnesota State Patrol. The bill would prohibit law enforcement agencies, along with the state patrol, from requiring troopers, commercial vehicle inspectors or law enforcement representatives to issue a certain number

of citations over any given period of time.

"This is a bill that doesn't have any opposition. It just reinforces the fact that commercial vehicle inspectors do not have quotas just like the state troopers don't," said Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia), the sponsor of the bill with Sen. David J. Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm).

Passed by the Senate 61-0 April 28, the bill now goes to Gov. Tim Pawlenty for his consideration.

★ EDUCATION

Omnibus K-12 education bill

Most Republicans would give an "A" to the omnibus K-12 education bill, passed 70-63 by the House May 4, while most DFLers would assign a lower grade.

The bill now moves to the Senate, which has its own education finance omnibus bill. A conference committee will likely be needed to reach a compromise.

"This is a bill that everyone can vote for, a very fair bill," said Rep. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), sponsor of HF872.

The bill would increase the basic state aid formula by 3 percent in fiscal year 2006 and 3.1 percent in fiscal year 2007, which would result in the second- and third-largest

amounts ever put into education, according to Sykora.

Total state funding for K-12 education, the largest chunk of the state's budget, would be \$12.4 billion during the biennium under House budget Option A, and \$12.6 billion under Option B, if the racino bill (HF1664) becomes law.

The bill also includes increases for gifted and talented education, early childhood programs, community education, school safety, technology and Internet access, and transportation aid for sparsely populated rural districts.

But opponents said the bill fails to provide enough funding to prevent further staff layoffs and program reductions.

"This bill will mean that every single school district in the state would continue to make cuts," said House Minority Leader Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul). The bill would also result in \$112 million in local property tax increases that school districts could levy without voter approval, he said.

Representatives missed a chance to return local control by rejecting an amendment that would have limited the mostly unfunded mandates in the federal No Child Left Behind law, said Entenza. Similar bills are being passed in other states, most recently in Utah, he added.

Geographic differences emerged when rural legislators tried to block a provision that would allow districts (mostly suburban), already at the referendum levy limit, to ask voters for additional operating funds.

It's not equal education when property-rich districts can offer eight world languages while property-poor school districts barely have enough money to pay for English classes, said Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia).

Another sore spot was a move that began in the House Ways and Means Committee to divert \$4 million in compensatory aid (paid to districts with high concentrations of poor students) to a pilot project in the Anoka-Hennepin School District.

Sykora said the project would look for better ways to assist struggling students, and that information could help all districts. Opponents said it was unfair to take money away from schools that need it the most and give it to one particular district. Instead, the pilot project will be funded with a portion of funds designated for Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs for top students.

DFLers tried unsuccessfully to reduce the \$98 million going to a new teacher compensation program, that would create multiple career paths and provide rewards for improving student and school performance, and instead put the money toward per pupil

funding that would benefit all districts.

Among policy changes is a provision that students who are truant, risk losing their driver's license or state identification card.

The bill would also require that 65 percent of school districts' funding goes to the classroom.

Coaching contracts

School boards that decide not to renew a high school varsity coach's contract must give timely notice of the basis for the decision, under HF68, which was passed 112-19 by the House May 2.

If a coach requests reasons for the non-renewal of the contract, the board must respond, in writing, within 10 days of the request. A coach then has the chance to respond at a school board meeting that may be open or closed at the board's discretion.

"This gives recourse to coaches non-renewed out of season. It's simply a matter of fairness," said Rep. Dean Urdahl (R-Grove City), the bill's sponsor.

Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan) said under current law, head varsity coaches know up front they have annual contracts. When a coach is let go at the end of the contract, it's a non-renewal and not a termination, he said. "The distinction is important to make."

The bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Steve Dille (R-Dassel) is the sponsor.

ELECTIONS

No primaries in uncontested elections

Primary elections would no longer be required under certain circumstances if a bill passed by the House 129-0 May 3 becomes law.

Passed by the Senate 64-1 March 7, the bill now awaits action by Gov. Tim Pawlenty.

HF1110/SF879*, sponsored by Rep. Larry Hosch (DFL-St. Joseph) and Sen. Michelle L. Fischbach (R-Paynesville), states that no primary election would be required in cases where there are uncontested local races.

It also provides that at least 15 days after the close of filings the municipal clerk, county auditor and secretary of state's office must be notified that no primary will be held.

"This is a common sense bill," Hosch said. "All this really does is recognize the fact that many times we have uncontested primaries across the state" and that costs cities and townships a lot of money. "There was one township where four people came and voted all day long, and they were actually the election judges who worked at the poll," he said,

noting those four votes cost the township more than \$2,500.

Under current law, a state primary is held the first Tuesday after the second Monday in September in each even-numbered year when more than one person from each party has filed to run for the same elected position. The primary is used to select only one nominee from each of the major political parties to be on the general election ballot in November.

EMPLOYMENT

Jobs and development appropriations

A bill that appropriates almost \$385 million for jobs and economic development was passed by the House on a 68-66 party-line vote April 29, and now goes to the Senate.

Committee Chair Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont), sponsor of HF1976, said the bill was crafted with one thing in mind: "Helping Minnesotans have the best job they can possibly have."

However, House Minority Leader Matt Entenza (DFL-St. Paul) disagreed, saying the bill did not provide enough money for affordable housing, jobs and training. "This is not a bill for jobs. It's a jobless bill. The bill is a product of a whole lot of bad decisions," he said.

Among the amendments successfully added to the bill was one by Rep. Nora Slawik (DFL-Maplewood) that would require license holders and caregivers at child-care centers to complete 12 hours of in-service training every year.

Slawik said child-care is important because of the important decisions young Minnesotans will make in the future. "Kids in child-care are going to be the same kids going to school, the same kids that will fill the seats here," she said.

Funding in the bill includes more than \$63 million for the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, including \$7.4 million for programs to help the homeless and \$3.2 million for rental housing assistance for the mentally ill.

More than \$54.2 million would go to workforce services, including \$23.4 million for extended unemployment services for people with severe disabilities, nearly \$9.9 million for State Services for the Blind activities, \$2 million to help mentally ill people find and keep jobs, and \$350,000 to the Minnesota Employment Center for People who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing.

Included in the \$45.3 million allocated for the Minnesota Historical Society is \$1.49 million for the operation of seven historic sites: Oliver H. Kelley Farm, James J. Hill House, the Lower Sioux Agency, Fort

Ridgely, Historic Forestville, the Forest History Center and the Comstock House; \$120,000 for Capitol tours, while prohibiting the society from charging a fee for general tours; and \$50,000 for the Sesquicentennial Commission.

A total of \$45.1 million would go to the Department of Labor and Industry, including \$20.6 million for workers compensation.

The bill offers \$14.9 million for business and community development, including \$500,000 to start a revolving loan fund for cleanup of methamphetamine labs; a grant of \$300,000 each for WomenVenture, for women's business development programs, and to the Rural Policy and Development Center at Minnesota State University, Mankato for operations; \$200,000 each to the Metropolitan Economic Development Association for minority business development programs in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and to help small businesses access federal money through consulting and training. Another \$100,000 would go to the Minnesota Inventors Congress.

Another \$14.9 million would go to workforce partnerships, including \$1.75 million to programs at the Opportunities Industrialization Centers around the state to provide education and jobs training for disadvantaged people, and \$500,000 to Twin Cities RISE! to provide jobs training for disadvantaged people.

★ ENVIRONMENT

When is a boathouse a houseboat?

The definition of a boathouse and a houseboat, and where and how each can be moored on public waters, is clarified in HF894, sponsored by Rep. Ray Cox (R-Northfield).

The House passed the measure 118-15 May 2. It now moves to the Senate, where Sen. Dennis R. Frederickson (R-New Ulm) is the sponsor.

Boathouses on public waters are prohibited under current law, except "in areas of historic use for such structures," as determined by the Department of Natural Resources commissioner, when approved by the local government unit and where the boathouse has been moored on public waters prior to Jan. 1, 1997.

The bill would alter the exceptions and clarify the definition of "boathouse."

"Due to problems with definitions in the statute and the rule, people have been trying to find innovative ways to build boathouses on public waters in areas and under circumstances where they are prohibited," according to the department.

Currently, the following definitions can be found in state law:

- Boathouse – "a floating structure that is moored by spuds, cables, ropes, anchors, or chains that may be intended for habitation and has walls, a roof, and either an open well for boats or a floor from wall to wall and does not include houseboats."
- Houseboat – "a motorboat that has either a pontoon or a flat-bottomed hull configuration, and a permanent enclosed superstructure housing, at a minimum, built-in sleeping, cooking, and toilet facilities."

Under the bill, the following definitions would apply to structures in or adjacent to public waters:

- Boathouse – "a structure or watercraft that is moored by spuds, cables, ropes, anchors, or chains that may be intended for habitation and has walls, a roof, and either an open well for boats or a floor from wall to wall and does not include watercraft that are designed and operated as motorboats."
- Motorboat – "a watercraft that is designed for and is capable of navigation on the water and that has an adequately sized external or internal mechanical propulsion system for the type of watercraft."

Another provision in the bill would allow the department to issue cease and desist orders for illegal activities that adversely affect groundwater. Current law grants it this authority over wetlands and public waters.

The bill also would add depleted quarries and sand and gravel pits to the public waters inventory when the water body exceeds 50 acres and the shoreland has been zoned for residential development.

An amendment successfully offered by Rep. Anthony "Tony" Sertich (DFL-Chisholm)

removed mine pits from these additions.

Sertich said there are abandoned mine pits on the Iron Range that are being converted to lakeshore property but the development is far from complete.

"We are just looking for a little less restriction so we can make sure we can get the abandoned mine pits in the shape we need them in before the DNR takes over and we have water issues," he said.

Inspector installers

Sometimes the person who installs an individual sewage treatment system is the same person who inspects it to make sure it meets state and local standards.

HF731, sponsored by Rep. Ray Cox (R-Northfield), aims to modify Minnesota's sewage system inspection requirements to prevent any potential conflict of interest without preventing the installer and inspector from being the same person.

The House passed the measure 128-0 May 3. It now moves to the Senate, where Sen. Michael J. Jungbauer (R-East Bethel) is the sponsor.

"There's been a little issue with some counties where individual installers are also contracted to do the inspections," Cox explained.

"The bill brings forward language to prevent them from sort of doing the same thing at the same time for individuals," he said. "It doesn't prevent them from installing systems that they inspect at a later date."

Under the bill, "No system professional may use their position with government, either as an employee or a contractor, to solicit business for their private system enterprise."

CHARTER SCHOOL DAY



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHEID

Students in the West African Drum and Dance group from the Wise Charter School in Minneapolis perform on the Capitol steps May 3 as part of Charter School Day.

Riverbend Board eliminated

A bill on its way to the governor's desk would eliminate a formal board with oversight of development along a stretch of the Minnesota River, but proponents say protection efforts will not be diminished.

HF2042/SF1841*, sponsored by Rep. Tony Cornish (R-Good Thunder) and Sen. John C. Hottinger (DFL-St. Peter), would eliminate the Project Riverbend Board.

The House passed the measure 128-0 May 3, after the Senate did the same 65-0 April 18.

The board, consisting of representatives from Renville, Redwood, Brown, Nicollet, Blue Earth, and Le Sueur counties, was created in 1980, Cornish said. It has not met since 1994.

Tina Rosenstein, Nicollet County environmental services director, told the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee that the board was established to set standards for development, similar to the state Wild and Scenic River designation, for a stretch of the Minnesota River from Franklin in Renville County to Le Sueur in Le Sueur County.

County ordinances will continue to protect that portion of the river, Rosenstein said, even without a formal arrangement.

Protecting the paths

The Department of Natural Resources is seeking greater input into the process when townships and municipalities decide whether to give up public access rights to roads leading to public waters.

HF436, sponsored by Rep. Denny McNamara (R-Hastings), would require local authorities to consult with the department and increase the timeline for notifying the department, as required under state law, from 30 days to 60 days prior to the local road vacation public hearing.

The House passed the measure 125-9 May 2. It now moves to the Senate, where Sen. Dennis R. Frederickson (R-New Ulm) is the sponsor.

McNamara explained that the roads under the scope of the bill are typically undeveloped tracts of land between 10 feet and 33 feet in width that lead to public waters.

The bill was prompted by a situation in Lakeland, he said, where the city gave back a 30-foot wide easement to the neighboring property owners and no one was given the opportunity to explain that a lot of children were using it to go down to fish along the St. Croix River.

"This will protect some of these entry points to our public waters," McNamara said.

★ GAME & FISH

Silencing the cormorants

The double-breasted cormorant population on Leech Lake is negatively impacting walleyes and threatening common terns, according to the area's aquaculture industry and natural resources officials.

HF42, passed by the House 121-1 May 3, would give federal, state, tribal and local peace officers a quiet, yet targeted method of cormorant population control.

Sponsored by Rep. Larry Howes (R-Walker), the bill would allow the use of silencers to muffle firearms discharged by peace officers for wildlife control purposes. It now moves to the Senate, where Sen. John Marty (DFL-Roseville) is the sponsor.

Silencers are already legal for peace officers to use in tactical emergency response operations against criminal activity.

"Right now, up on Little Pelican Island on Leech Lake, we have federal sharpshooters up there trying to limit the population of the cormorant and they're using BB guns," Howes said. "We need to give them a little help."

He presented some statistics: As little as six years ago there were about 260 nesting pairs of cormorants. Today, there are more than 5,000 nesting pairs. The cormorants number between 8,000 and 12,000 birds. Each bird eats an average of 1 pound of fish per day.

"That's an average of 10,000 pounds of fish per day," Howes said. "Leech Lake is failing."

The cormorant population has largely contributed to the fall of the walleye fishery on Leech Lake, said Rep. Frank Moe (DFL-Bemidji), whose district includes much of the lake. "Walleye fishing is extremely important in our area," he said, and the silencer option is part of a comprehensive Department of Natural Resources plan to improve the quality of the fishery.

The silencer bill is not directed solely toward cormorant control. It would give natural resources management agencies a more effective control method for other wildlife populations, proponents said during committee testimony.

★ GOVERNMENT

Employee compensation plan

Unclassified employees of the State Board of Investment could find themselves under a new compensation plan under a bill passed 121-8 by the House May 2.

Rep. Neil W. Peterson (R-Bloomington), sponsor of HF1692, said the bill would

allow "unclassified employees who are not now covered by collective bargaining to be compensated under the terms of a compensation plan that (the board) would adopt."

The bill now goes to the Senate where Senate President James P. Metzen (DFL-South St. Paul) is the sponsor.

"The current plan does not pay competitively," Peterson said. The board is having trouble retaining employees because private sector companies can offer better compensation plans.

Once the board establishes a compensation plan, it must be submitted to the Department of Employee Relations for review within 14 days. Under the bill, the Legislature and the Legislative Coordinating Commission must also approve the plan.

Another provision exempts the executive director from the salary cap placed on commissioners that maximizes their compensation at 95 percent of the governor's salary.

"Why should (the salary) be more than other commissioners," Rep. Mark Buesgens (R-Jordan) asked on the House floor. Buesgens was one of eight members who voted against the bill.

Peterson said the executive director's role is similar to investment officers and retention has been a problem.

Optional locations for meetings

County boards may soon have the option of holding a meeting at any location within the county, under a bill passed 134-0 by the House May 3.

Passed 60-0 by the Senate April 26, the bill now goes to the governor.

The bill states that a board, "may meet" on other days "and at other locations within the county." Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Red Wing), who sponsors HF2318/SF2112* with Sen. Steve Murphy (DFL-Red Wing), said the bill came to him as a request from the counties.

Robert Davis, veterans service officer and legislative liaison for Goodhue County, testified in a House committee that Goodhue County now holds meetings at county fairs, but cannot make the meetings official because of current state law.

Current law states, "the board shall meet at the county seat for the transaction of business on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January, and on other days it prescribes as necessary for the interests of the county."

Noxious weed appeals

Counties would be permitted to reassign appeals duties related to laws controlling and eradicating noxious weeds to a county board

of adjustment, under a bill passed by the House 128-0 May 3.

The bill was passed 64-0 by the Senate April 18, and it now awaits action by the governor.

Rep. Rick Hansen (DFL-South St. Paul), who sponsors HF1084/SF1016* with Sen. Pat Pariseau (R-Farmington), said the bill is “streamlining county government processes.”

Each county now has the ability to have a noxious weed appeal board, but counties have to solicit members to join a rarely used board, Hansen said. Counties could reduce their efforts in trying to find members by having an existing board handle the appeals that may come from the public, he added.

“At its option, the county board of commissioners, by resolution, may delegate the duties of the appeal committee to its board of adjustment,” according to the bill. “When carrying out the duties of the appeal committee, the zoning board of adjustment shall comply with all of the procedural requirements.”

★ HEALTH

Omnibus bill passed by House

The omnibus health finance bill continued on its contentious journey after passage by the House April 29. The 74-59 vote followed more than five-and-a-half hours of floor debate and two-dozen proposed amendments.

The Senate passed its omnibus health and human services bill, sponsored by Sen. Richard J. Cohen (DFL-St. Paul), 38-29 May 4. A conference committee is expected to work out the differences.

“This bill represents outstanding balance,” said Rep. Fran Bradley (R-Rochester), sponsor of HF1422.

“There’s very little good in this bill,” countered Rep. Barbara Goodwin (DFL-Columbia Heights). “This bill moves health care into welfare.”

She said the bill includes 76 new fees or fee increases, and eliminates funding for suicide prevention, the second leading cause of death for Minnesotans ages 10 to 24.

The \$7.3 billion bill, representing 27 percent of the state budget, attempts to curb the trend of increased health care spending. Highlights of the bill include changing the cost shift for intermediate care facilities for people with developmental disabilities from 80 percent state and 20 percent county to 95 percent state and 5 percent county and providing a 2 percent increase for long-term care providers in both years of the biennium.

Under the bill, two-thirds of the 2 percent

increase would need to be used for employee salaries, benefits and associated costs. Rep. Patti Fritz (DFL-Faribault) unsuccessfully offered an amendment that would require the money to go to non-administration staff.

Other provisions would encourage community-based options for mentally ill and elderly people and utilize changes in the Federal Medicare Modernization Act for a \$17 million savings in state prescription drug programs.

The most controversial aspect of the bill would restructure MinnesotaCare eligibility, eliminating health care coverage for more than 20,000 people. The bill would make a conforming change that would eliminate eligibility for adults without children, effective Oct. 1, 2005.

An amendment offered by Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth) would have restored that coverage, but was ruled out of order.

An amendment successfully offered by Rep. Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Mpls) calls for the health commissioner to develop a cervical cancer prevention plan that would include improved screening rates.

“This is our first chance to eliminate a cancer,” Kahn said.

Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls) unsuccessfully offered an amendment to create the “Emergency Care for Sexual Assault Victims Act,” which would require emergency rooms to provide rape victims with information about emergency contraception.

★ HIGHER EDUCATION

Planning for the future

Creating more access to success is the goal of new strategic positioning initiatives for the University of Minnesota.

“We need to better try to manage our future and manage the priorities of the university,” President Robert Bruininks told the House Higher Education Finance Committee May 4. “It’s all about strengthening the university for the long haul.” The committee took no action.

This was the first time in a decade the university has stepped back and thought in this way about its future, Bruininks said. Eventually, about 40 recommendations came from two working groups that addressed academic priorities and administrative issues, respectively. After about a year of work, the recommendations were released March 30.

“The reports cover a wide range of issues,” Bruininks said. “Some recommendations talk about realigning colleges and academic departments. They would reduce the total number of colleges on the Twin Cities campus

to create strengthened centers of leadership and more collaboration between and among fields that really have a reason and a purpose to work more effectively together.”

Among the proposed changes is integrating the Family Social Science Department and the School of Social Work with current academic units in the College of Education and Human Development to create a college to address issues of lifelong learning and human development. “Instead of having resources in three or four different colleges that address these issues we’d bring them together in one college with a great deal of academic strength,” Bruininks said.

Also, the university’s General College would become an academic support department within the College of Education and Human Development. “You do not need a college to educate a student at the University of Minnesota,” Bruininks said. “If that was true, we’d have \$70 million more in overhead and we’d have about 60 colleges.”

The committee is expected to have a hearing devoted to the proposed General College changes before the Legislature is scheduled to adjourn May 23.

Rep. Carlos Mariani (DFL-St. Paul) sought assurances that the changes would not mean less focus on providing for diversity. “I don’t want to insult your colleges, but in looking at the numbers I see some real big challenges.”

Bruininks countered, “There’s a deep and abiding commitment for the university to maintain its commitment to diversity in all forms and aspects. There are some exciting ideas and recommendations on the table to achieve those values and aspirations.”

★ RECREATION

For adults only

Adults who swim in zero-depth entry public pools would not need lifeguard supervision, under a bill approved by the House 128-2 May 3. The Senate approved the bill 57-4 April 26. It now awaits the governor’s signature.

HF604/SF284*, sponsored by Rep. Sandra Peterson (DFL-New Hope) and Sen. David Gaither (R-Plymouth), would exempt zero-depth pools, when used by people 18 years of age or older, from lifeguard requirements.

The bill would bring these pools in sync with regulations for regular pools, which are currently exempt from the lifeguard requirement when used by adults.

A zero-depth entry pool has a slope that begins at grade level, and deepens in a uniform slope to a depth of 3 feet or more. The gradual slope makes it easier for some people to get in and out of the pool.

The bill would allow health clubs to hold aqua-aerobic classes for adults in zero-entry pools without being required to have a life-guard present.

License requirements for pools would not change under the legislation. It would have no fiscal impact, add no additional regulatory responsibilities to the state or local government and not affect the need for inspections.

★ RETIREMENT

Plan changes

The House State Government Finance Committee approved a bill May 4 that would make several changes to state pensions and retirement plans.

Rep. Steve Smith (R-Mound) and Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley) sponsor HF2092/SF427* that incorporates more than 30 bills dealing with pensions and retirement options for legislators; elected state officers; uniform judges; members of the Minnesota State Retirement System, Minneapolis Teachers Retirement Fund Association and Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund; First Class City Teacher Plans; Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system Individual Retirement Account Plans; and others.

The bill, which now goes to the House Ways and Means Committee, was passed 56-1 by the Senate April 27.

According to a summary provided by the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement, the bill would:

- change or add definitions of dependent child, constitutional officer, former legislator, member of the Legislature and salary while making technical changes to statutes;
- revise the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system Individual Retirement Account plans to not offer all of the State Board of Investment Supplemental Fund investments options;
- extend supplemental retirement plan status to the local laborers pension fund, and increase the maximum employer contribution to trade union supplemental retirement plans from \$2,000 to \$5,000;
- make a financial statement requirement applicable to volunteer firefighter relief associations and report to the State Auditor's office;
- allow the volunteer firefighter plans for Aurora, Biwabik, Hoyt Lakes and Palo to consolidate to pay a smaller pension amount than general law requires, and allow the Maplewood and Oakdale firefighter plans to enter into an agreement to provide pension portability for six

firefighters with service in the two relief associations; and

- create a taskforce to study creating a state-wide volunteer firefighter retirement plan, including the possible investment in vehicles.

A successful amendment by Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) removed a \$40,000 appropriation for the taskforce study.

★ SAFETY

Conceal bill gets another hearing

When HF2428, the so-called "conceal and carry" bill, was drafted, an important provision was left out. The House Civil Law and Elections Committee corrected the omission May 4 and made technical changes to the bill it previously passed April 27.

Sponsored by Rep. Larry Howes (R-Walker), the bill would reenact a 2003 law that liberalized the process to acquire a handgun permit. That law was ruled unconstitutional by a district court because it was attached to an unrelated bill at the time of passage. The Minnesota Court of Appeals upheld the ruling in mid-April. But language contained in the two rulings differed on a provision dealing with the availability of permits to violent felons.

As amended, the bill would deny violent felons from ever receiving a permit to carry a handgun. The bill's enactment date was also changed to the day following final enactment.

A companion bill (SF2259), sponsored by Sen. Pat Pariseau (R-Farmington), awaits action on the Senate Floor.

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

★ TRANSPORTATION

Revived omnibus bill moves on

House Transportation Finance Committee Chair Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville) said her committee's omnibus bill would take many twists and turns before it reaches the governor's desk. This past week she was proved prophetic.

Six days after HF2461, the committee's \$3.98 billion bill that would pay for Minnesota's transportation needs for the next two years and beyond, was rejected by the House Taxes Committee. The committee approved a revised version May 4 and sent it to the House Ways and Means Committee.

The motion to reconsider the bill came from House Taxes Committee Chair Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview). "It is important that we at least do something to fund transportation."

DFL members protested the lack of public notice of the action, as the committee had been scheduled to take up its omnibus tax bill.

DOUBLE DUTY



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Members of the Welfare Rights Committee drape their protest sign from the second floor of the Rotunda as sixth-graders from Murray County School in southwest Minnesota lay on the floor to get a better view of the dome during an April 29 Capitol tour.

"This is something no city would even get away with," said Rep. Paul Marquart (DFL-Dilworth).

Krinkie successfully offered one amendment to strip the increase in license tab fees from the bill. That would reduce the bill's funding capacity by approximately \$40 million, Holberg said, so that would increase debt service. The net effect would be to postpone some projects, she said.

"It increases tab fees by \$1.3 billion over the next 10 years. I consider that a significant tax increase," Krinkie said between votes. "While I wish there might be some other way to infuse some additional revenue to better maintain highways, I don't think that's the way to do it."

DFLers unsuccessfully offered several amendments May 4, including a proposal from Rep. Irv Anderson (DFL-Int'l Falls) to raise the gas tax by 3 cents a gallon to help fund transportation needs.

The vote April 28 was 16-12, with Reps. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), Ray Vandever (R-Forest Lake) and Krinkie joining DFLers against the bill.

Holberg never seemed worried. "You've got to fund the State Patrol and (the Department of Transportation)," she said. "It's a divisive issue. There's no perfect transportation bill."

Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) agrees that it's a contentious issue. "It's got all that bonding up over time, let's not have our kids pay for our problems," he said. The bill features at least \$1.5 billion in future highway bonding projects through 2015.

The bill approved by the House Transportation Finance Committee included a clause to repeal a state law that prohibits service stations from selling gasoline below cost. However, the tax committee removed that clause.

The bill still calls for a constitutional amendment in which voters would be asked whether to dedicate Motor Vehicle Sales Tax proceeds to highways and transit. Now, some of that money goes to the General Fund.

Driver's license fees would increase \$3, under the bill, and a variety of special license plates would be available for veterans.

Goodbye to temporary tags

A bill that would allow customers to get license plates straight from the dealer when purchasing a new or used vehicle was approved by the House May 3. The vote was 125-2.

HF1134/SF1056*, sponsored by Rep. Dan Severson (R-Sauk Rapids) and Sen. Mee Moua (DFL-St. Paul), was passed by the Senate 60-0 April 27. It now goes to the governor.

The bill would allow the Department of Public Safety to distribute license plates and

stickers to automobile dealerships. Dealers would then issue plates and stickers at the time of purchase. The information would be electronically transmitted to the state and a deputy registrar would review the transaction before issuing the registration.

Cost to customers in other states average \$20, but the cost has not been set here. Using the service would be optional.

Severson said he had heard of no organized opposition to the bill.

Rep. Gregory M. Davids (R-Preston) said the bill would be welcome. "This bill makes everyone's life a lot easier. It will help consumers in Minnesota."

VETERANS



Preserving disabled veterans land

The Disabled Veterans Rest Camp on Big Marine Lake in Washington County would be excluded from certain zoning controls, under a bill passed 134-0 by the House May 3.

Approved 60-0 April 26 by the Senate, HF34/SF467* now goes to the governor for his signature.

"This shows our appreciation for the sacrifices that our disabled veterans have made for us," said Rep. Ray Vandever (R-Forest Lake), who sponsors the bill with Sen. Michele Bachmann (R-Stillwater).

The bill would also require the camp to continue developing and promoting camp features for veterans who are disabled, prohibit the taking of land from the park by eminent domain, require access to the park be unrestricted and would exclude the camp from property taxes effective for taxes levied in 2005, payable in 2006, and thereafter.

The Disabled American Veterans, in a written letter to a House committee, said there have been numerous attempts by the Washington County Park Commission and members of the Washington County Board of Commissioners to acquire the land and make it part of the Big Marine Park Reserve.

The proposal "ensures that (the camp) is going to be there for the next 100 years," said Donald Drigans, camp treasurer.

"We've been working with the veterans," and things are going fairly well on issues that need to be addressed, said Myra Peterson, chair of the Washington County Board.

Concerns have been raised about how the county would be able to purchase the land if the camp wanted to sell the land in the future, she said. According to the bill, "The camp, by terms of separate agreements, must offer Washington County the right of first refusal to purchase the rest camp property if a sale is

ever contemplated and provide an easement across the main Veterans Rest Camp Road in order to provide a connection of the north and south areas of the park."

Commemorative plaque

A commemorative plaque to honor Minnesota veterans who served in the Persian Gulf War would be placed in the Court of Honor on the Capitol grounds, under a bill passed 128-0 by the House May 3.

HF1394, sponsored by Rep. Judy Soderstrom (R-Mora), says the plaque is "to recognize the valiant service to our nation by thousands of brave men and women who served honorably as members of the United States armed forces during the Persian Gulf War."

The plaque would have "no cost directly to the state, the money would be raised by the veterans organizations," Terrence Logan, director of the veterans benefits division of the Department of Veterans Affairs, told a House committee.

The bill states, "the plaque must be furnished by a person or organization other than the Department of Veterans Affairs and must be approved by the commissioner of veterans affairs and the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board."

According to the nonpartisan House Research department, included in the plaques honoring the following people or groups that are now part of the Court of Honor, the semi-circular granite wall in front of the Veterans Service Building, are: Gen. George Washington; veterans of the Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, 194th Tank Battalion Bataan Death March, Korean Conflict and Vietnam War; and POW/MIA and women veterans of all wars.

The bill now goes to the Senate where Sen. Carrie L. Ruud (R-Breezy Point) is the sponsor.

Frequently called numbers (Area code 651)

Information Services, House Public	
175 State Office Building	296-2146
Chief Clerk of the House	
211 Capitol	296-2314
Index, House	
211 Capitol	296-6646
TTY, House	296-9896
Toll free	1-800-657-3550
Information, Senate	
231 Capitol	296-0504
TTY, Senate	296-0250
Toll free	1-888-234-1112
Secretary of the Senate	
231 Capitol	296-2344
Voice mail/order bills	296-2343
Index, Senate	
110 Capitol	296-5560

How a Bill Becomes

Idea

1 A bill is an idea for a new law or an idea to change an old law. Anyone can suggest an idea for a bill — an individual, consumer group, professional association, government agency, or the governor. Most often, however, ideas come from legislators, the only ones who can begin to move an idea through the process. There are 134 House members and 67 senators.

Legal form

2 The Office of the Revisor of Statutes and staff from other legislative offices work with legislators in putting the idea for a new law into proper legal form. The revisor's office is responsible for assuring that the proposal's form complies with the rules of both bodies before the bill can be introduced into the Minnesota House of Representatives and the Minnesota Senate.

Authors

3 Each bill must have a legislator to sponsor and introduce it in the Legislature. That legislator is the chief author whose name appears on the bill along with the bill's file number to identify it as it moves through the legislative process. There may be up to 34 co-authors from the House and four from the Senate. Their names also appear on the bill.

General Register

7 In the House, the General Register serves as a parking lot where bills await action by the full body. Bills chosen to appear on the Calendar for the Day or the Fiscal Calendar are drawn from the General Register.

In the Senate, a different procedure is used. Bills are listed on the General Orders agenda. Senate members, acting as the "committee of the whole," have a chance to debate the issue and offer amendments on the bill. Afterwards, they vote to recommend: passage of the bill, progress (delay action), or further committee action. And sometimes they recommend that a bill not pass. From here, the bill is placed on the Calendar.

Calendar for the Day

8 In the House, the Calendar for the Day is a list of bills the House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee has designated for the full House to vote on. Members can vote to amend the bill, and after amendments are dispensed with, the bill is given its *third reading* before the vote of the full body is taken. The House also has a Fiscal Calendar, on which the chair of the House Ways and Means Committee or House Taxes Committee can call up for consideration any tax or finance bill that has had a second reading. The bills are debated, amended, and passed in one day.

In the Senate, bills approved by the "committee of the whole" are placed on the Calendar. At this point, the bill has its *third reading*, after which time the bill cannot be amended unless the entire body agrees to it. Toward the end of the session, the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration designates bills from the General Orders calendar to receive priority consideration. These Special Orders bills are debated, amended, and passed in one day.

A bill needs 68 votes to pass the House and 34 votes to pass the Senate. If the House and Senate each pass the same version of the bill, it goes to the governor for a signature.



a Law in Minnesota

Introduction

4 The chief House author of the bill introduces it in the House; the chief Senate author introduces it in the Senate. Identical bills introduced in each body are called *companion* bills. The bill introduction is called the *first reading*. The presiding officer of the House then refers it to an appropriate House committee for discussion; the same thing happens in the Senate.

Committee

5 The bill is discussed in one or more committees depending upon the subject matter. After discussion, committee members recommend action — approval or disapproval — to the full House and full Senate. The House committee then sends a report to the House about its action on the bill; the Senate committee does likewise in the Senate.

Floor

6 After the full House or Senate accepts the committee report, the bill has its *second reading* and is placed on the House agenda called the General Register or the Senate agenda called General Orders. (A committee can recommend that non-controversial bills bypass the General Register or General Orders and go onto the Consent Calendar, where bills usually pass without debate.) After this point, House and Senate procedures differ slightly.

Conference

9 If the House and Senate versions of the bill are different, they go to a conference committee. In the House, the speaker appoints three or five representatives, and in the Senate, the Subcommittee on Committees of the Committee on Rules and Administration selects the same number of senators to form the conference committee. The committee meets to work out differences in the two bills and to reach a compromise.

Floor

10 The conference committee's compromise bill then goes back to the House and the Senate for another vote. If both bodies pass the bill in this form, it is sent to the governor for his or her approval or disapproval. (If one or both bodies reject the report, it goes back to the conference committee for further consideration.)

Governor

11 Once the governor has the bill, he or she may: sign it, and the bill becomes law; veto it within three days; or allow it to become law by not signing it. During session, the House and Senate can override a governor's veto. This requires a two-thirds vote in the House (90 votes) and Senate (45 votes). The governor also may "line-item veto" parts of a money bill, or "pocket veto" a bill passed during the last three days of the session by not signing it within 14 days after final adjournment. ▼



Green the great outdoors

Environmental funding and policy package progresses

By NICOLE WOOD

Minnesota environmental agencies and commissions would be morphed into new entities and the state would spend nearly \$1 billion during fiscal years 2006-07 for environmental protection, natural resources management and outdoor recreation, under an omnibus bill passed 68-64 by the House May 5.

HF902, sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), now moves to the Senate.

Spending in the bill accounts for the environmental targets under both Option A and Option B of the House budget resolution. The target is below the governor's budget recommendation by \$3 million in Option B (with a racino) and by \$14.4 million in Option A.

"We've had to make some very tough choices," Ozment said. "We tried to find where we could craft it in such a way that could gain support and continue to have Minnesotans be proud of the way that we're trying to protect our environment and natural resources."

General Fund spending in Article 1 of the bill would equal the \$285.88 million target set under Option B; however, total spending would reach \$999.09 million when other funding sources such as lottery proceeds, license and permit fees, and federal dollars are added to the mix.

Department of Natural Resources

More than half of the overall package — \$609.41 million — would be directed toward the Department of Natural Resources for responsibilities such as wildlife, minerals and forestry management; state park operations; habitat improvement; game and fish law enforcement; and off-road vehicle trail development.

Off-highway vehicle policies in the bill would:

- allow conservation officers and other peace officers to issue civil citations for wetlands violations by off-highway vehicle riders, with penalties set at \$100 for the first offense, \$500 for the second and \$1,000 for subsequent offenses;

- direct the department to establish an off-highway vehicle safety and conservation grant program, based on an ambassador program in Wisconsin, to encourage vehicle clubs to participate in safety and environmental training; and
- classify state forests north of U.S. Highway 2 as managed rather than limited.

Legislation in 2003 required the department to take an inventory of all state forests and by 2007 change their designation from managed, meaning trails are open unless posted closed, to limited, meaning trails are closed unless posted open.

Unsuccessful amendments offered by Rep. Ray Cox (R-Northfield) would have placed a 96-decibel sound limit on all off-highway vehicles and deleted the provision allowing for managed state forest status north of U.S. Highway 2.

"We need to remember that the forests and public lands are used by a variety of people," Cox said.

"Managed" does not mean ATVs can go anywhere or destroy wetlands, said Rep. Maxine Penas (R-Badger) in support of a managed status for her region. "This is regional warfare at its best."

Under the bill, boaters who imbibe too much could lose more personal property if arrested. It would specify that boat trailers could be subject to seizure and forfeiture by the department because of a DWI arrest. Rep. Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake) unsuccessfully offered an amendment that would have required the proceeds from the department's sale of the trailer to be put toward the defendant's fine.

Department of Environmental Protection

Under the bill, the Pollution Control Agency and Office of Environmental Assistance would be merged into one department. The new entity, that would be known as the Department of Environmental Protection, would receive \$267.65 million for land, water, and air monitoring and clean-up; regulation

enforcement; solid waste management grants; environmental education; and recycling efforts.

Minnesota Conservation Heritage Council

A number of environmental projects would be funded through a \$39.28 million appropriation to the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources, although the bill would eliminate the commission. It would establish the Minnesota Conservation Heritage Council in its place to make decisions on Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund spending.

The council would consist of 11 citizen experts appointed by the governor with the consent of the Senate.

Proponents said the change would take politics out of the process.

"It needs to be in the hands of the people that actually went out there and campaigned to get the Environmental Trust Fund established," Ozment said.

Opponents said other factors were driving the reform, including efforts by the executive branch to control the purse strings.

"You know what's really behind this? Three governors have tried to grab that money," said Rep. Ron Erhardt (R-Edina).

Other spending

Smaller biennial budget amounts would include \$33.28 million for the Minnesota Zoological Board, \$31.39 million for the Board of Water and Soil Resources and \$14.9 million to the Metropolitan Council for regional parks.

The Minnesota Conservation Corps would receive \$1.68 million and the Science Museum of Minnesota appropriation would be set at \$1.5 million.

Select fee increases, revenue raisers

The bill would increase three-year watercraft license fees and place the funds in a dedicated account for boating facilities and public access improvements on public waters.

Ski pass fees would be increased to support the department's cross-country ski trail grant-in-aid program.

The bill would require resident snowmobilers to purchase a \$15 sticker to ride on state

Continued on page 22

Raising wages

Minimum wage increase awaits gubernatorial action

By **BRETT MARTIN**

Pay raises for minimum wage earners might be just a couple of pen strokes away.

Awaiting action by Gov. Tim Pawlenty is a bill that would increase the state's minimum wage by \$1 an hour for large employers and 35 cents an hour for smaller employers.

The House passed the bill 84-50 May 2, but not before debating amendments that would change the amount of the increase and which companies would be impacted.

The Senate approved the amended bill 44-22 the following day.

Sponsored by Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia) and Sen. Ellen R. Anderson (DFL-St. Paul), HF48/SF3* would impact approximately 50,000 Minnesotans who currently earn minimum wage.

"The win today is for some of the lowest paid people," Rukavina said.

As approved, the bill would require employers with annual gross sales of at least \$625,000 to increase the minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour to \$6.15 an hour beginning Aug. 1, 2005. Current definition defines a large employer as one with at least \$500,000 in annual sales. The \$5.15 hourly rate has been in place since Sept. 1, 1997.

Minimum wage for employers with annual gross sales of less than \$500,000 has been \$4.90 an hour since Jan. 1, 1998. That would increase to \$5.25 an hour, beginning Aug. 1, 2005, for companies with less than \$625,000 in annual sales.

Employers would be able to pay an employee under 20 years of age \$4.90 an hour for the first 90 consecutive days of employment. The hourly amount is now \$4.25.

The federal minimum wage for covered, nonexempt employees is \$5.15 an hour, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

"This would have a huge economic boost to the state," Rukavina said.

Some Republicans argued that the minimum wage increase would force pay increases in other income brackets, which Rukavina welcomes.

"What's wrong with someone making \$7 an hour making \$7.50?" he asked. "It does have an effect, but I think that's a good thing."

Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake) worried that increasing the minimum wage would hurt businesses, which would result in job losses and lead to more jobs being outsourced.

"I have grave concerns over what you're proposing," he said. "We cannot be short-sighted."

Rep. Dan Severson (R-Sauk Rapids) agreed, saying it would make Minnesota a less business-friendly state and would drive some small businesses, such as family-run restaurants, out of business.

"This is about denying jobs to our people," he said.

DFL members offered a different perspective. Rep. Frank Hornstein (DFL-Mpls) said a wide gap exists between basic necessities and what minimum wage earners can afford, and

the bill would help close that gap.

"You want to make sure kids are fed and the mortgage is paid," said Rep. Cy Thao (DFL-St. Paul). Both of his parents worked minimum wage jobs.

Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher (DFL-Mpls) said the increase would provide more financial freedom to workers.

"This minimum wage bill will attract more people to Minnesota who want to work," she said.

Rep. Marty Seifert (R-Marshall) offered an unsuccessful amendment to make it a "livable" wage by increasing the minimum pay to \$9.73 an hour.

"Let's do the whole enchilada," Seifert said. "You're only giving us half a taco."

He offered an amendment to change the \$500,000 gross sales limit that determines minimum wage pay rates to \$2 million. When that was defeated, he unsuccessfully offered another amendment to change it to \$1 million. A third amendment to change it to \$750,000 was orally amended to \$625,000 and approved.

An amendment by Rep. Tom Emmer

Continued on page 22



PHOTO BY SARAH STACKE

Tony Gomez prepares a sandwich at the Subway in Hugo. A bill that would raise the state's minimum wage for the first time since Jan. 1, 1998, would affect entry-level positions in fast food and other establishments.

One-stop shopping

State services as a single enterprise being proposed

By PATTY JANOVEC

Imagine beginning a new small business and only going to one state agency for all your licenses or permits.

One-stop shopping for state government services is what Gov. Tim Pawlenty had in mind with the Drive to Excellence campaign, according to Administration Commissioner Dana Badgerow.

The campaign details recommendations, in part, on how agencies can combine business and technology services as a single enterprise to create efficiencies and better customer service.

"Citizen access to services ought to be simple and intuitive, and today it is a complex web, very difficult for a citizen to navigate," Badgerow told the House State Government Finance Committee April 27.

By fiscal year 2011, a cumulative cost reduction of \$570 million is expected, with \$160 million per year once the "Transformational Roadmap" projects are completed. A governor's executive order will implement the six project areas (information technology, purchasing, licensing, code consolidation, grant management and real property management) with additional changes to follow.

"The first six Drive to Excellence projects could yield as much as \$458 million in cost reductions over seven years, after an estimated investment of \$72 million," according to details in a report that focuses on shared functions among state agencies.

"We spend at least \$1 billion on goods and services ... there are 543 people scattered among all the executive branch agencies that are doing buying of some kind," said Badgerow, noting that compared to the private sector that ratio is high.

The campaign calls for the consolidation of purchases by a statewide system for better sourcing and discounts. The result is "more bang for the buck," in state dollars, according

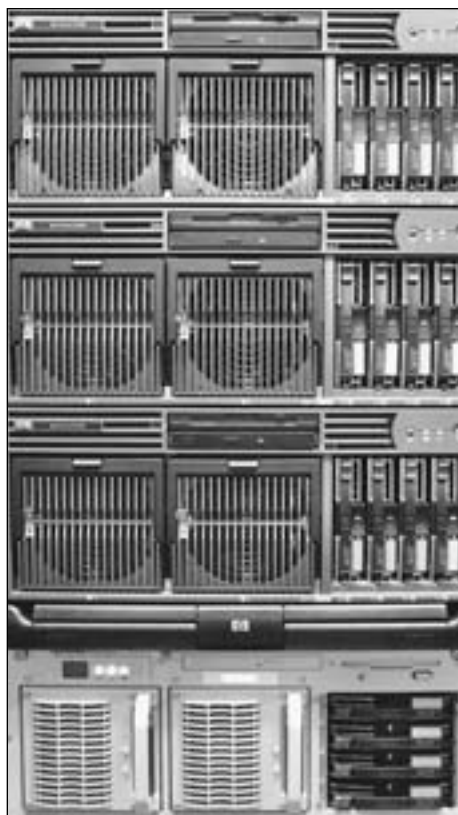


PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Part of the governor's Drive to Excellence orders the creation of a new Office of Technology which would standardize information technology across the state.

to a committee's overview report.

Internet technology "underpins everything we do in state government," Badgerow said. The second recommendation for change includes creating a shared technology organization for computer systems and telecommunication, consolidating data centers and creating a new purchasing process for state-wide licenses.

State agencies are operating more than 500 individual Web sites, according to campaign details. A governor's executive order mandates the creation of a new Office of Technology that would essentially be a standalone agency to "develop and implement policies, procedures, and standards ensuring the optimal leveraging of (Internet technology) across the state enterprise, and manage consistency and efficiency in IT activities including standardization of policies, procedures, data, and tools." It is expected that more uniformity would mean "more effective business processes, reduced costs, and improved customer service based on better use of technology."

The governor's recommendation includes making the "one-stop shop" approach into a customer-focused online licensing system for professional, occupational and business licensing.

"One million business and professional licensing transactions are handled each year by more than 40 agencies and 800 state employees, using over 60 licensing systems," according to the report.

Another focus for change includes the state grant management process. The report details, "the state currently pursues, distributes, and manages more than \$1.1 billion of incoming grant money from more than 500 grants. It also monitors the performance of

approximately 7,000 organizations that receive \$1.4 billion via 9,400 state grants."

With so many state agencies with their hands in the pot, the governor recommends creating a single grant management system to administer and meet the needs of 80 percent of state grant programs.

Pawlenty's recommendation also includes creating

Estimated savings from the Drive to Excellence

(Initial estimated dollars in millions)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Sourcing/Procurement	0	20	30	41	52	53	55	251
Information Technology	0	1	9	16	21	25	25	97
Licensing	0	11	15	15	15	14	14	84
Customer Service Innovation	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	7
Grant Management	0	1	1	4	6	7	7	26
Real Property		0	0	0	2	2	4	8
Subtotal								473

Source: Drive to Excellence Transformation Roadmap

Continued on page 22

A taxing deliberation

Provisions call for taxpayer input into proposed levy increases

By **MATT WETZEL**

The omnibus tax bill that would make military veterans happy, but make city officials cranky is under consideration by the House Taxes Committee.

Committee Chair Rep. Phil Krinkie (R-Shoreview) unveiled HF785 at the May 2 meeting. Public testimony was offered May 3 and amendments were debated May 5. Krinkie said a vote might occur late that night, after this edition of *Session Weekly* went to press.

Taxpayer satisfaction survey

The bill proposes to freeze property tax levies for counties, cities, towns and special taxing districts for taxes payable in 2006.

It also provides for a survey form to be enclosed with each taxpayer's truth-in-taxation statement beginning with taxes payable in 2007, asking for a "yes" or "no" reaction to any proposed levy increase.

If more than 20 percent of property owners

are dissatisfied, a special election on the proposed levy would be triggered. If voters do not approve the new levy, the levy reverts to the previous year.

City officials said the legislation was unnecessary. "If it isn't broke, don't fix it," said Judy Johnson, Plymouth mayor and president of the League of Minnesota Cities.

"We have an open process based on public participation. We conduct city business in the light of public meetings," she said. "This is about local control. The state needs to allow me to do the job I was elected to do. We believe this is a solution looking for a problem."

Rep. Paul Marquart (DFL-Dilworth) unsuccessfully offered an amendment to delete the taxpayer satisfaction surveys. "It will likely increase property taxes," he said, referring to the potential cost of holding an election, and the need to possibly wait until the last week in January for cities to set their budgets. "With increased expenses, it will increase property

taxes. I think it's insulting and disingenuous to our residents."

He also pointed out that renters would not receive the notices, and they pay property taxes through the rent they pay.

"What are you afraid of?" countered Krinkie. "I can't understand why all of our legislators who do this (send out voter surveys) on a regular basis think it's not a good idea?"

"This is a unique opportunity for citizens to participate. Just ask the folks who are paying the taxes if they approve of the levy."

Veterans

The bill proposes some tax breaks for veterans, both active and retired.

Veterans or surviving spouses who are totally or permanently disabled due to a service-related occurrence would get a \$200,000 valuation exclusion for their property when determining property taxes.

The state's tax form would be amended to allow taxpayers to voluntarily donate \$1 or more to a Minnesota Military Families Relief Account. Maximum grants of \$2,000 would be made as needed to National Guard or Reserve members ordered to federal active

Continued on page 20



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Department of Revenue Commissioner Dan Salomone, *right*, listens as Larry Wilkie, director of the department's Corporate and Sales Tax Division, answers a question from a member of the House Taxes Committee during a May 3 hearing.

A cut above the rest

'Ken the Barber' clips through party lines

By LAURA NOE

"Look what you have done to my hair! Stay cool," signed Gov. Tim Pawlenty, on his picture hanging in Ken Kirkpatrick's barber shop. Pawlenty is the fifth governor whose tresses have been trimmed by Kirkpatrick, who never got the chance to shave the head of former Gov. Jesse Ventura.

Governors, legislators and commissioners alike have been getting their hair cut in the basement of the State Office Building since 1932.

Kirkpatrick has owned Capitol Barbers for the past 33 years. Becoming a proprietor was always part of his plan to become a barber. "I knew I would right from the beginning. That's why I wanted to get into it."

It was just out of the military, while working construction, that Kirkpatrick decided to go into the profession.

"We were driving one day and passed a barber school and I went in and applied," he said. Nine months later he was cutting hair professionally. His first barber job, at age 23, was working for the North Star Inn in Minneapolis.

Some of his current customers have been with him for 30 years. Although his convenient location tends to lead people in, Kirkpatrick's joking demeanor and his skill draw people back.

His nickname, "Lawn Boy," comes from the speed of his work. "That was one of the better things they called me," laughs the man with an insatiable sense of humor.

So far, Kirkpatrick estimates he has performed around 325,000 haircuts. However, he only considers a modest couple of thousand people to be regulars. "Half of them are retired, so now they drive back in," he said.

Former Rep. Doug Ewald is a good example. He served the House from 1975-1982, but his loyalty to his barber has remained. He laughed when saying, "I keep coming back because I'm waiting for Ken to do it right!"

Though obviously not short on customers, Kirkpatrick welcomes new clients with open arms. "It happens all the time. We get new

people every day."

Scott Wiggins, assistant to the public safety commissioner, is relatively new because he's only been coming to Kirkpatrick for seven years.

"Friendly conversation," he said, is what makes him loyal.

That's exactly what Kirkpatrick loves most about his job. "It's like going on vacation. You have fun everyday. You got a 20 to 25 minute party with everybody that comes in."

In fact, Kirkpatrick can't think of anything he'd want to change, except to perhaps expand the shop. The Marquee, his shop in Maple-

Barbers is definitely touched by the political atmosphere of the House. Kirkpatrick gets dragged into debates all the time, "Whether I want to be or not," he said.

He's also not shy about encouraging debates between others.

"I usually start them," he chuckles. "If I knew there was somebody in here from the Department of Labor and somebody that was probably a Republican, I'd get it going. Then I'd walk out. That was my breakfast every morning."

In addition to being the number one barber at the Legislature, Kirkpatrick has been on the Board of Barber and Cosmetologist Examiners, which is responsible for regulating the practice of all barbers, cosmetologists, shops and schools, since 1980. He also served as president of the Barber Boards of America in 2002 and 2003.

Kirkpatrick just wishes it took up less time.



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Ken Kirkpatrick of Capitol Barbers trims the beard of Gerald Melin at his State Office Building shop May 4. Melin is a retired Department of Transportation employee, where he was an engineering technician for 34 years.

wood, is a full-service salon, including foot massages and body wraps.

Because Kirkpatrick has both a barber and cosmetology license, he would like to see something like that in the Capitol Complex. "If they'd give me the room," he said, "I would do it."

Those who expect a typical barbershop atmosphere should be warned that Capitol

"Because I'm here at the Capitol," he said, "I seem to get most of the calls."

Kirkpatrick plans on staying with Capitol Barbers until the end, and has already passed on his love for the profession to his two sons. Josh runs Kirkpatrick's shop in Maplewood,

Continued on page 22

War and remembrance

Representatives have ties to end of WWII

By Ruth Dunn

World events that took place across the Atlantic Ocean 60 years ago this month are of special interest to three House members.

As World War II was coming to an end in May 1945, Rep. Bernard Lieder (DFL-Crookston) was a 20-year-old Army infantryman on the front line of the Allied invasion of Nazi Germany.

At the same time, the parents of Rep. Frank Hornstein (DFL-Mpls) were struggling to survive in concentration camps where 6 million Jewish people had already died.

Although not as directly involved, Rep. Lloyd Cybart (R-Apple Valley), a retired Air Force sergeant now married to a German woman, has an avid interest in military history and a deep appreciation of the sacrifices made by people like Lieder and Hornstein's parents.

All three recently attended a commemora-

tion to honor concentration camp survivors and the veterans who helped liberate them six decades ago.

Liberating Army

Arriving in Europe in September 1944 as a replacement for troops killed in the beach landings in France, Lieder was in the front lines as the Allies moved toward Berlin.

His Army infantry unit would secure a town and prepare for a counterattack. His duties involved freeing inmates of worker camps that included Jews and other displaced people from Russia, Poland and France.

Lieder is humble about his role and explains that he wasn't involved in the liberation of big-name concentration camps like Dachau and Auschwitz.

But because he is bilingual, Lieder was brought in as a translator for many situations that he would not have otherwise been involved in as a private, including the interrogation of

World War II
Days of Remembrance

May 5: Yom HaShoah Holocaust Remembrance Day, commemorated since 1979

May 8, 1945: German surrender, Victory in Europe (V-E Day)

Aug. 15, 1945: Japanese surrender, Victory in Japan (V-J Day)

German soldiers and communication with civilians and inmates of worker camps. (Lieder grew up speaking German in the close-knit German Lutheran town of Hanover, Minn.)

After the Germans surrendered, Lieder's unit was preparing to go to the South Pacific, but avoided that fate when the Japanese surrendered on Aug. 15, 1945. Instead, he stayed in Germany until March 1946 as part of the occupation forces.

"I was surprised how quickly the country recovered," said Lieder, who has returned to Germany as a visitor about 10 times since the war and organized donations for schools in a German town where he was once stationed. He's also befriended a former SS soldier who is now a Catholic priest.

Thoughts of his war experience are never far away. "I think about it every day," he admits.

Family history

As a child, Hornstein didn't understand the significance of his family's history. His early memories were of his parents' foreign accents. When he realized that other children had grandparents and he didn't, he asked his parents why. He was told his grandparents died in the war. "I thought they were soldiers," he said.

By 1979, he had become so interested in the stories of his surviving relatives that he traveled to Israel and Germany to collect oral histories. He knew they were getting older and their powerful first-person accounts would otherwise be lost.

He's always been glad he has preserved those written memories to share with future generations, including his own three children.

During his search, he discovered what happened to all four grandparents who died in the camps, and that his parents, like most survivors, managed to live through a



Women and children survivors in the concentration camp in Mauthausen, Austria, speak to an American liberator through a barbed wire fence, May 5, 1945.

Photo courtesy United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, from the collection of Col. P. Robert Seibel (www.ushmm.org)

Continued on page 22

★ LATE ACTION

Cultivating rural Minnesota

With debate reflecting persistent differences among lawmakers over local feedlot permitting practices, the House passed an omnibus agriculture and rural development finance and policy package 104-27 May 5.

Sponsored by Rep. Dennis Ozment (R-Rosemount), HF1420 would dedicate approximately \$150 million toward the state's agricultural sector over the next fiscal biennium. It now moves to the Senate.

The net effect to the General Fund would be nearly \$86 million, in line with the House target. Total spending would reach \$150.39 million when all sources, such as the Agriculture and Remediation funds and federal dollars, are considered.

Under the bill, the Department of Agriculture would receive just under \$140 million. Of that amount, \$76.77 million is General Fund spending.

Ethanol producer payments in the bill would be disbursed at 13 cents per gallon, with \$34.01 million earmarked for those payments in fiscal years 2006-07.

Other earmarks for the department include: \$300,000 for increased groundwater monitoring for pesticides, \$220,000 for a contract with the University of Minnesota for livestock odor research, \$200,000 for training of local officials in livestock siting and land use planning and \$50,000 for a grant to Second Harvest Heartland for the purchase of milk for food banks.

A number of fee increases are forwarded under the bill, including apiary fees paid by beekeepers, nursery stock dealer fees and grain buyer and storage fees.

Many of the fees addressed in the bill haven't been increased since the 1980s, Ozment said.

The bill would also allocate \$7.62 million to the Animal Health Board, \$5.92 million of which is General Fund spending; \$3.2 million to the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute; and \$10,000 to the Minnesota Horticulture Society.

Policy issues in the bill would designate as private certain data collected by the Animal Health Board, encourage renewable fuel use in state vehicles with a so-called "SmartFleet" initiative" and grant food makers and sellers immunity from certain lawsuits stemming

from obesity claims.

Livestock siting provisions under HF1420 would place counties and townships on the same timeline for notifying the Pollution Control Agency and Agriculture Department of new or amended feedlot ordinances.

A township or county looking to adopt or revise feedlot ordinances would be required to prepare an economic impact statement at the request of any one member of its governing board.

An amendment offered by Rep. Frank Moe (DFL-Bemidji) that would have changed that requirement to a request from a majority of the governing board failed.

Under the bill, the Department of Commerce would be instructed to study the technical and economic benefits of using biodiesel fuel as a residential, commercial and industrial heating fuel.

Also, the bill would create an agricultural nutrient task force of lawmakers and public experts to examine fertilizer selection, application, storage and other soil nutrient issues. Rep. Rick Hansen (DFL-South St. Paul) successfully added another component to the study: ways of preventing anhydrous ammonia theft for manufacturing methamphetamine.

Continued from page 17

duty, or surviving family members. That would be effective beginning with income tax returns for tax year 2005.

Special taxes and fees, tax credits

The bill proposes some changes in sales and property taxes, and imposes some new fees.

For example, a dairy investment credit would be established against individual income or corporate franchise taxes owed to the state. The credit would amount to 10 percent of the first \$500,000 of investment, declining as the investment increases. The top eligible investment would be \$1 million, with a credit of \$75,000. Farmers can use their investment for items such as barns, fences, water and feed facilities, manure handling equipment and storage facilities. The credit is available for investments made after Dec. 31, 2004.

Owners of Canterbury Park would have to pay a franchise fee equal to 15 percent of gross revenues at their card club, effective after June 30, 2005.

Another provision calls for the retail sales tax on cigarettes to be replaced with a tax imposed at the wholesale level based on the average retail price of cigarettes.

The measure also would reduce the insurance premiums tax on life insurance to 1.5 percent, beginning Jan. 1, 2008.

JOBZ program

The bill makes some changes to the state JOBZ program, which, according to the Department of Employment and Economic Development, "provides substantial tax relief to companies that start up or expand in targeted areas of Greater Minnesota — from the date they sign a subsidy agreement until the program expires on December 31, 2015."

Under the bill, the local government must consider several things before executing a business subsidy agreement with a business. They must examine:

- how wages compare with 110 percent of the statewide poverty rate for a family of four,
- how wages compare to a regional industry average,
- the number of jobs created,
- the industry's economic outlook, and
- how the business will diversify the regional economy.

In addition, the business must increase full-time employment by five jobs or 20 percent; whichever is greater, in the first year. Retailers are not eligible.

Tax reform commission

A 15-member tax reform commission would be convened to examine the mix of state revenue between taxes and fees, the implications of demographic and economic changes on the revenue system and the fairness of the

current system.


The commission would make reports to the Legislature over a four-year period with the goal of long-term improvements.

The commission is to report its findings on corporate and business taxation by July 1, 2007; on general sales tax, motor vehicle sales tax and special excise taxes by July 1, 2008; on individual income tax by July 1, 2009; and on estate tax, insurance premiums tax, MinnesotaCare tax and all other taxes by July 1, 2010.

Miscellaneous

The state's tax form would be amended to allow taxpayers to donate \$1, or more, to a public safety memorial and survivors account. The money would be used to build and maintain memorials and help families of peace officers killed on duty.

All the check-offs will be placed on a separate form, with the total amount transferred to the main tax form. Each check-off would be removed if they fail to garner at least \$100,000 in contributions from at least 8 percent of all returns over two years.

The bill also provides a statutory definition of "tax." A tax is any fee, charge of assessment imposed by a governmental entity, according to the bill. The definition excludes amounts that an individual pays in return for goods or services. 

Members by Seniority

17th Term

Anderson, Irv (3A)*
Carlson, Lyndon (45B)
Kahn, Phyllis (59B)

15th Term

Jaros, Mike (7B)*
Murphy, Mary (6B)

14th Term

Sviggum, Steve (28B)

13th Term

Clark, Karen (61A)

12th Term

Solberg, Loren (3B)

11th Term

Lieder, Bernard (1B)
Ozment, Dennis (37B)

10th Term

Dorn, John (23B)
Pelowski, Jr., Gene (31A)
Rukavina, Tom (5A)
Wagenius, Jean (62B)

9th Term

Abrams, Ron (43B)
Hausman, Alice (66B)

8th Term

Daids, Gregory M. (31B)
Erhardt, Ron (41A)
Krinkie, Philip (53A)
Mariani, Carlos (65B)
Smith, Steve (33A)

7th Term

Dempsey, Jerry (28A)
Greiling, Mindy (54A)
Huntley, Thomas (7A)
Olson, Mark (16B)
Opatz, Joe (15B)

6th Term

Anderson, Bruce (19A)
Bradley, Fran (29B)
Entenza, Matt (64A)
Gunther, Bob (24A)
Knoblach, Jim (15A)
Paulsen, Erik (42B)
Sykora, Barb (33B)

5th Term

Erickson, Sondra (16A)
Hackbarth, Tom (48A)*
Hilty, Bill (8A)
Juhnke, Al (13B)
Mullery, Joe (58A)
Nornes, Bud (10A)
Otremba, Mary Ellen (11B)
Paymar, Michael (64B)
Seifert, Marty (21A)
Tingelstad, Kathy (49B)
Vandever, Ray (52A)
Westrom, Torrey (11A)

4th Term

Abeler, Jim (48B)
Buesgens, Mark (35B)
Dorman, Dan (27A)
Holberg, Mary Liz (36A)
Howes, Larry (4B)
Kelliher, Margaret Anderson (60A)
Larson, Dan (63B)
Lenczewski, Ann (40B)
Mahoney, Tim (67A)
Slawik, Nora (55B)*
Westerberg, Andrew "Andy" (51A)
Wilkin, Tim (38A)

3rd Term

Bernardy, Connie (51B)
Blaine, Greg (12B)
Davnie, Jim (62A)
Eastlund, Rob (17A)
Goodwin, Barbara (50A)
Hilstrom, Debra (46B)
Johnson, Jeff (43A)
Johnson, Ruth (23A)*
Johnson, Sheldon (67B)
Marquart, Paul (9B)
Penas, Maxine (1A)
Ruth, Connie (26A)
Sertich, Anthony "Tony" (5B)
Walker, Neva (61B)

2nd Term

Atkins, Joe (39B)
Beard, Michael (35A)
Brod, Laura (25A)
Cornish, Tony (24B)
Cox, Ray (25B)
DeLaForest, Chris (49A)
Demmer, Randy (29A)
Dill, David (6A)
Eken, Kent (2A)
Ellison, Keith (58B)
Finstad, Brad (21B)

Heidgerken, Bud (13A)
Hoppe, Joe (34B)
Hornstein, Frank (60B)
Klinzing, Karen (56B)
Koenen, Lyle (20B)
Kohls, Paul (34A)
Lanning, Morrie (9A)
Latz, Ron (44B)
Lesch, John (66A)
Magnus, Doug (22A)
McNamara, Denny (57B)
Meslow, Doug (53B)
Nelson, Michael (46A)
Nelson, Peter (17B)
Newman, Scott (18A)
Peterson, Aaron (20A)
Powell, Duke (40A)
Samuelson, Char (50B)
Severson, Dan (14A)
Sieben, Katie (57A)
Simpson, Dean (10B)
Soderstrom, Judy (8B)
Thao, Cy (65A)
Thissen, Paul (63A)
Urdahl, Dean (18B)
Wardlow, Lynn (38B)
Zellers, Kurt (32B)

1st Term

Charron, Mike (56A)
Cybart, Lloyd (37A)
Dean, Matt (52B)
Dittrich, Denise (47A)
Emmer, Tom (19B)
Fritz, Patti (26B)
Garofalo, Pat (36B)
Gazelka, Paul (12A)
Hamilton, Rod (22B)
Hansen, Rick (39A)
Hortman, Melissa (47B)
Hosch, Larry (14B)
Liebling, Tina (30A)
Lillie, Leon (55A)
Loeffler, Diane (59A)
Moe, Frank (4A)
Peppin, Joyce (32A)
Peterson, Neil W. (41B)
Peterson, Sandra (45A)
Poppe, Jeanne (27B)
Ruud, Maria (42A)
Sailer, Brita (2B)
Scalze, Bev (54B)
Simon, Steve (44A)
Walti, Andy (30B)

* - non-consecutive term

Environment continued from page 14

and grant-in-aid trails in order to defray trail grooming and maintenance costs.

Under the bill, municipalities, golf courses and landscape irrigators would pay a surcharge on water used during the summer months, if the amount is greater than January consumption levels. The surcharge would not apply to agricultural users. The increased fee could promote conservation, proponents said.


Also under the bill, a fee would be established to cover the department's costs for managing state-owned minerals. The minerals management fee would be set at 20 percent of mineral revenues generated. Currently, the money comes from the General Fund.

Plan B

If the House fails to pass a gaming measure, Article 2 would become a reality in order to meet the General Fund spending target of \$274.48 million. "Uff Da, if we get Option A," said Rep. Al Juhnke (DFL-Willmar).

"These cuts are pretty ironic or tragic when all we hear is the talk about cleaning up our polluted waters," said Rep. Jean Wagenius (DFL-Mpls).

Under that scenario, funding would be reduced for the following agencies:

- Department of Natural Resources (-\$8.31 million); however, reductions to the Reinvest in Minnesota program forwarded in the Article 1 funding plan would be canceled out by \$691,000;
- Board of Water and Soil Resources (-\$1.41 million);
- Department of Environmental Protection (-\$1 million);
- Minnesota Conservation Corps (-\$700,000);
- Metropolitan Council parks (-\$600,000); and
- Science Museum of Minnesota (-\$70,000). 

Wages continued from page 15

(R-Delano), which was withdrawn, would have repealed the state's minimum wage altogether.


Seven states don't have a minimum wage requirement, and the 14 states with a minimum wage standard higher than Minnesota also have higher unemployment, Emmer said.

"It's proven that it does not work," he said.

Rep. Bob Gunther (R-Fairmont) unsuccessfully offered an amendment to hold the minimum wage at \$5.25 an hour for waiters and waitresses, and \$6.15 an hour for

employees at companies with annual sales of more than \$1 million.

"This is fair," he said. "I want to see the minimum wage raised to \$6.15 an hour."

Gunther argued that tipped employees don't need the raise because they average more than \$17 an hour. 

Drive continued from page 16


a shared structure for the management of property and the use of shared technology for managing real estate. The system would include details such as rent, repair, maintenance and ownership.

Fourteen "custodial" agencies now manage more than 5,000 buildings on nearly 6 million acres, 880 leases totaling more than 4 million square feet and the budgeting and legislative processes are based on incomplete data, according to the report.

The governor's reorganizational order involves making uniform "programs and services related to the construction and building code licenses and regulation are being consolidated in the Department of Labor and Industry." Currently, multiple agencies oversee the building codes causing staff time to be spent on similar data collecting functions rather than enforcement activity.

The result would be, according to the report, "more efficient, effective, and less costly regulation of the construction industry," which accounts for nearly 20 percent of the state's economy.

Additional areas expected to be addressed later include: customer service innovation projects, such as consolidated contact centers, improvements on how the state handles financial transactions and combining human resource functions into a shared service.

Staff positions are expected to be reduced by about 1,300 with most of the reduction coming from attrition, rather than the "restructuring, relocations or layoff," which would happen over a five-year period, Badgerow said. 


Barber continued from page 18

and Kevin will be graduating from cosmetology school this year.

Kirkpatrick's other shops, including one in the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, and one opening in Stillwater, keep him busy. When he gets a chance, though, he enjoys getting outdoors.

"I do all kinds of fishing, and I do a lot of hunting trips." From Minnesota to Colorado and Wyoming, you'll find Kirkpatrick fishing for walleye and hunting elk, deer and antelope.

Kirkpatrick is a reservoir not only of skill and experience, but political secrets as well. "I know most everything that's going to happen before it happens," he said, but he'll never tell.

Then again, there is one thing Kirkpatrick thinks people should know: "This job is the best-kept secret in the world!" 

War continued from page 19

combination of street smarts and luck, said Hornstein. Both his parents spent time in forced labor camps — much like those that Lieder helped liberate — where the able-bodied tended to be sent first. His parents met after the war while on a train to a camp for displaced persons.

Hornstein's mother died in 1998, and his father, Stephen, now lives in St. Louis Park. Last year, Hornstein invited Lieder to his family's Passover Seder meal where the two older men immediately began talking about their war experiences.

"The vets who defeated Germany and liberated the camps are heroes," said Hornstein.

A soldier's view

When he was young, Cybart knew a concentration camp survivor who lived down the street from his aunt in Michigan. The woman, who had a camp number tattooed on her arm, would talk about her experiences. "That made it real," said Cybart.


During a seven-year stint in Germany with the Air Force military police in the 1980s, he visited Dachau, a concentration camp near Munich. "It was a somber place and a horrifying part of history," he said.

Cybart has tremendous respect for the "Greatest Generation" of World War II and the sacrifices they made. Through his wife, who is from Zell, Germany, he's talked with many Germans and heard their war experiences.

Retired a few years ago after 20 years of active duty, Cybart first met Lieder when he was seeking sponsors for a bill involving veteran's benefits.

"I have the utmost respect for what he went through," said Cybart.

Cybart feels strongly about honoring veterans and the sacrifices they made for the country. He's organizing the Memorial Day commemoration in Apple Valley this year.

"If we don't honor these people we forget their sacrifices and I don't want that to be forgotten." 

If you have Internet access, visit the House's Web page at:
<http://www.house.mn>

Friday, April 29

HF2488—Abrams (R)

Taxes

Streamlined sales tax agreements conforming changes provided relating to sales tax exemptions for drugs and medical devices.

HF2489—Mariani (DFL)

Taxes

Major and intermediate airports clarified as not included in metropolitan fiscal disparities.

HF2490—Krinkie (R)

Taxes

Pharmacy referrals by the state prohibited to pharmacies that are not collecting the MinnesotaCare tax on prescription drugs.

HF2491—Davnie (DFL)

Taxes

Land included in a soils condition district authorized for inclusion in a redevelopment tax increment financing district.

HF2492—Urdahl (R)

Education Policy & Reform

Uniform school lockdown plan; schools required to adopt, implement and practice a uniform lockdown plan.

HF2493—Poppe (DFL)

Agriculture, Environment &

Natural Resources Finance

Mower County Soil and Conservation District grant authorized to create a flood control demonstration project in the Cedar River Watershed and money appropriated.

HF2494—Klinzing (R)

Education Finance

School districts required to spend at least 65 percent of their total operating expenditures on direct classroom expenditures.

Monday, May 2

HF2495—Peterson, A. (DFL)

Local Government

Lac qui Parle County auditor, treasurer and recorder made appointive offices.

HF2496—Peterson, A. (DFL)

Local Government

Lac qui Parle County auditor and treasurer offices combined and combined auditor-treasurer and county recorder made appointive offices.

Tuesday, May 3

HF2497—Hornstein (DFL)

Commerce & Financial Institutions

Currency exchanges; separate licensure required for industrial loan and thrift companies acting as currency exchanges.

Wednesday, May 4

HF2498—Abrams (R)

Taxes

Public finance and tax increment financing provisions modified, purchases authorized, international economic development zone provided, tax incentives established and money appropriated.

HF2499—Lenczewski (DFL)

Public Safety Policy & Finance

Predatory offenders prohibited from attending meetings held to warn the public of the offenders' presence in a community.

HF2500—Wilkin (R)

Commerce & Financial Institutions

Individual health insurance policy forms filing and use regulated to establish a minimum loss ratio guarantee.

Thursday, May 5

HF2501—Charron (R)

Jobs & Economic

Opportunity Policy & Finance

Child care services improvements provided.

HF2502—Anderson, I. (DFL)

Public Safety Policy & Finance

A House resolution memorializing the President and Congress to prohibit the importation of pseudoephedrine from other countries into the United States.

HF2503—Anderson, B. (R)

Transportation

I-94 designated as 88th Infantry (Blue Devils) Division Highway.

FALLEN HEROES



PHOTO BY TOM OLMSCHIED

Memorials lay at the base of the Minnesota Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the 30th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam Conflict April 29. The names of 1,077 Minnesotans who died and 43 still missing in action are etched in the memorial's black granite, along with the inscription "We Were Young, We Died, Remember Us."

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MINNESOTA INDEX

Minnesota exports

State exports in 2004, in billions	\$18.8
Billions of manufactured exports from Minnesota in 2004 (record high)	\$11.8
Percent increase from 2003	12.5
Billions in services exported from state in 2004	\$5.5
Billions in bulk agricultural commodities	\$1.5
Percent of manufactured state exports that went to the European Union in 2004	37.1
Billions in export value	\$4.4
Growth rate between 2003 and 2004, as percent	14
State exports in 2004, as percent, that went to North American countries	28
Percent increase between 2003 and 2004	15.2
State exports in 2004, as percent, that went to Asia-Pacific region	27.8
Percent increase between 2003 and 2004	6.9
Foreign destinations Minnesota exported to in 2004	200
State manufactured exports, as percent of 2004 total, which went to Canada	23.9
Percent growth from 2003	11.6
Percent of state manufactured exports that went to Ireland in 2004	11
Percent growth from 2003	9
Manufactured goods as percent of state's 2004 total exports	63
State manufactured export growth, as percent, from 1998 to 2004	22.2
U.S. average adjusted for inflation, as percent	2.5
Percent of 2004 U.S. manufactured imports coming from Minnesota	1.62
State rank	20
Value of computer and electronic products (largest state exporting industries in 2004), in billions	\$3.5
Percent increase from 2003	5.3
Computer and electronic products as percent of total 2004 manufactured state exports	30
Percent decrease from 2000	11
U.S. percent increase between 2000 and 2004	9.5
Value of machinery exported from state in 2004, in billions	\$1.9
Percent increase from 2003	26
Percent of Minnesota's private-sector employment that are export-supported jobs	6.5

Sources: *Minnesota Annual Export Statistics, April 2005, Minnesota Trade Office of the Department of Employment and Economic Development; other office publications; Minnesota: Exports, Jobs, and Foreign Investment, April 2005, International Trade Administration.*

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